

The **Acolyte**
Magazine



Issue # 9

Spring 2009

The Acolyte Magazine • Issue #9, Spring 2009
by the ArchConfraternity of Saint Stephen
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A decorative border of white scrollwork and leaf motifs on a black background, framing the central text.

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Letter from the Top

Dear Members of the Archconfraternity of Saint Stephen,

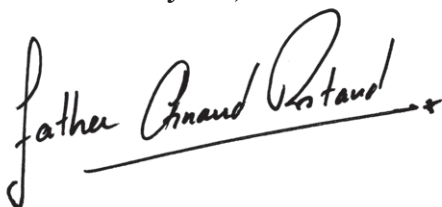
To be allowed to serve Mass, to enter the sanctuary, to be at the foot of the Altar to assist the priest at Mass is a great privilege and honor. I am sure that you realize this when you prepare to serve as you put on your cassock and surplice. The prayers you say before and after Mass also help you in understanding that distinction.

Each time you enter the sanctuary to assist at Mass, remember these words from the Holy Scriptures: "How fearful is this place! It is the house of God and the gate of Heaven." Keep them in mind so that you may never forget how holy is the house of God, and therefore how respectfully and reverently you must serve.

The more you serve, the more you may be tempted to become complacent, neglectful, relaxed and even careless while in the sanctuary: it is a danger.

Therefore ask the Blessed Virgin Mary to be at your side so that your hearts, thoughts, and actions may always be as worthy as possible of your sacred mission.

In the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Father Arnaud Rostand" followed by a small cross symbol. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Father Arnaud Rostand
District Superior of the United States

⚡ GRAVI NUNTII ⚡

Letter from the Secretary,

Greetings to you and many blessings from our Good King and God, Jesus Christ!

A whole year has passed since the last issue of the *Acolyte* and my first administrative letter to all the chapter presidents. In general, I must thank you all for your cooperation and prompt execution of your duties, for it is only under these conditions that the Guild can operate with efficiency and grow. Dear presidents, your job is of no little importance for the success of your individual Chapters and the strength of the Guild as a whole, strive to keep that first fervor. We must endeavor as one body to raise the standards of serving across the whole map for the greater Glory of God and the edification of our faithful. Please persevere in frequently encouraging your men to continually strive and meet the high expectations required by the ArchConfraternity.

Here are a few new points I ask you to note.

- ⤴ Please remember to expect three week processing time for any orders, this is simply because we do not have the staff available for taking and filling orders on demand. Any *rush* orders that **must** be filled and sent within ten days will have an additional \$15.00 surcharge.
- ⤴ Please remember to keep your census forms up to date. It is recommended that at the end of each year you send in your revised version, only the new names being required on the form.
- ⤴ Please remember to keep that camera ready for those rare moments of glory (or for those many not so glorious moments) which could be used in the *Pinacotheca Gildica*. Any picture showing your Chapter faithfully fulfilling

its duty is a picture worth taking. Remember, your Chapter's contribution to this section is a participation in the active apostolate of the Guild to aid in the moral support of Chapters around the world through concrete examples.

- ⤴ Beginning with this issue we plan to list on the inside of the back cover of the *Acolyte* the names of all those generous benefactors who donate their time and expertise to the Guild, enabling us to remain in operation for a fraction of the cost it would otherwise entail. The least we can do, nay, our duty out of charity as members benefiting from their sweat and blood, is to remember their intentions in our prayers.
- ⤴ In the *St. Stephen Storehouse* Section you will find a new type of "cord" for the Junior Acolytes which, as you can see, is in fact a ribbon. This new design is far more durable than the previous style and one quarter the price. It is our intention to eventually change over completely to this style due to the many problems we have been having with the present cord, however we will continue to carry the "old" version a little while longer.
- ⤴ Lastly I would like to take this opportunity to thank those chapters who rose to the occasion, and (laughing in the face of all obstacles), responded to our plea for donations to cover the expenses of our last *Acolyte* mailing. Here follows the list printed in full; The *Sts. Peter and Paul Chapter* under the presidency of Mr. Tom Stanich... we can always pray this list will grow! O Lord, grant us many holy benefactors... from all those *other* chapters!

In company of Saint Stephen,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Br. Rene of Mary". The signature is written in dark ink and has a fluid, elegant style.

Brother Rene of Mary
National Secretary for the ACSS

Soul of the Acolyte

Guaranteed

by Father Gerard Beck

Don Bosco was watching the boys from the Oratory play soccer at recreation one day, and suddenly he called to one of them. “Hey, John! Come here for a moment!”

John was very obedient fellow, and went immediately as he was called. “Yes, Father. You wanted something?”

“Would you be willing to do something for me, John?” the saint asked.

“Sure, Father. Whatever you want.”

The saint looked at him steadily, then said, “I want you to help me save your soul, John.”

John wrinkled up his nose, perplexed. “Wha... what do you mean, Father?”

“I need you to help me save your soul.”

“Uh... yea, okay, Father,” John stuttered. “But... *how*?”

Don Bosco’s gaze didn’t waver for an instant. “By your good will.”

It’s very important that we understand what Don Bosco meant. Why? Because Our Lord asks the exact same thing of each one of us every day! We cannot save our souls unless we are willing to help Him by our good will.



So what *does* it mean? It means that becoming a saint is a joint effort on two sides: God's side and our side. God's side is grace, without we can never save our souls. *Our* side is our good will, and that translates firstly into wanting to *know* what God asks of us. Many *don't* want to know, you see. They think that if they don't know what God expects of them, that gets them off the hook, so to speak. So they don't want to hear what Dad has to say or what the teacher in catechism class has to say or what the priest has to say in the Sunday sermon. I knew a boy once who heard that his parish priest had preached a sermon the previous Sunday on the danger of video games. His triumphant response, since he had been out of town and hadn't heard the sermon, was, "Hah! I wasn't there!" See, he didn't *want* to hear what the priest might have to say against video games, so he was happy he hadn't been there and figured he was off the hook and could play them as much as he wanted. That's not the good will Our Lord needs from us.

Truly good will means even more, however, than being willing to hear what Our Lord expects of us. It also means *trying one's best* to do whatever He asks, even if it is difficult. Many boys *know* what God expects of them – their prayers, their chores, obedience to the rules at school, etc. – but they don't really see the importance of doing those things always, to the best of their ability. Sometimes they make an effort; sometimes they don't. And some things they figure just aren't that big of a deal, so they pretty much let them go. They do the easy things God asks of them, when they feel like it. But that's not good will. God needs our *best efforts, always*.

How important is this effort? Enormously. In a way, of course, our efforts are a very small part of us becoming a saint. *God* must do the "heavy lifting," so to speak, to raise a soul to sanctity. But St. Augustine explains that God cannot save any soul unless the soul is willing to do its part. "God who created you without you, cannot save you without you," he said. God is all-powerful, and can do *incredible* things. He can pluck the sun from the sky like you can pluck an apple from a tree! He can hold the whole universe in the palm of His Hand like you can hold a baseball in yours! But one thing God cannot do. He cannot save your soul without the efforts of your good will.

Let us strive then, to have this good will. And in your prayers each day, tell Our Lord where you are at. Tell Him you *want* to hear Him, whatever He would ask of you, whether by your parents, your priest, or whomever. And tell him you are determined to do your level best, always, to do everything He asks. Do that, and one day you will be a saint. Guaranteed. Ω

THE APOLOGIST

Just What is Religion, Anyway?

by the Brothers of the SSPX



Religion. People are afraid of this word and they often will avoid you if they think you are going to talk about it. But, we, being Catholics, know that it is not the evil that the world makes it out to be, in fact, we should be very pleased to speak of it, and ready with good answers when other people want to discuss it. With this in mind, let's consider just what *Religion* is.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

Plainly and simply, *Religion* is man's approach to God. The word *Religion* comes from the Latin: *religare*, which means "to bind." From *ligare* we also have the word, *ligament* - like that tissue which *binds* your bones together. Religion *binds* our soul to God. This attachment to God is necessary to man in order that man may realize his proper place in Creation, and act accordingly. Usually, we associate *religion* with *church*, an English word that comes from the German, *kirika* or *kirche*, which the Goths inherited from the Greek, *kyriakon*, that is, "house of the ruler," or "house of the Lord." A ruler or Lord *binds* his subjects to their proper place.

WHAT DOES RELIGION DO?

Religion acknowledges God as Creator and renders to God the payment of our debt to Him for creating us. It provides the manner by which we relate and communicate with God. It makes demands upon our life so we may please Him. Since God is our Creator, sustainer, our source of life, then we, in order to recognize Him as such, must think and act and live in a manner that expresses it. His demands become laws for us, binding our souls to Him from the inside out.

WHY ARE PEOPLE AFRAID OF RELIGION?

People fear Religion precisely because of what it is. People are stingy and they like to think of themselves and their own interests, so they try to stay away from anything that asks them for sacrifices. They try to avoid anything that demands something from them. People try to avoid giving God what they owe to Him; they don't want to be ruled. The best way to avoid Religion is by not hearing or thinking about it.

CAN A MAN BE WITHOUT RELIGION?

No: even a man who does not believe in God, nor desire God binds himself to something! That atheist makes himself into his own god, because his “religion” is to bind himself to himself. He makes himself the center of all things, and he lives to fulfill his own demands. His sacrifices are made to himself. Religion always exalts that to which man intends to bind himself - which is no true religion; the 1st Commandment forbids idolatry.

CAN RELIGION BE FALSE?

Yes. Religion as man adapts it to his own whims and false reasoning will most certainly be wrong. Religion as God has established it cannot be false because God cannot be false. Any defecting from God's demands is an attempt to establish one's own demands. The Israelites were constantly abandoning God's demands to follow their own ideas. Through the Prophets, God continually re-binded them to His demands. It is plain and simple, a person cannot create his own *true* religion because only God can make something true.

TO BE CONTINUED...

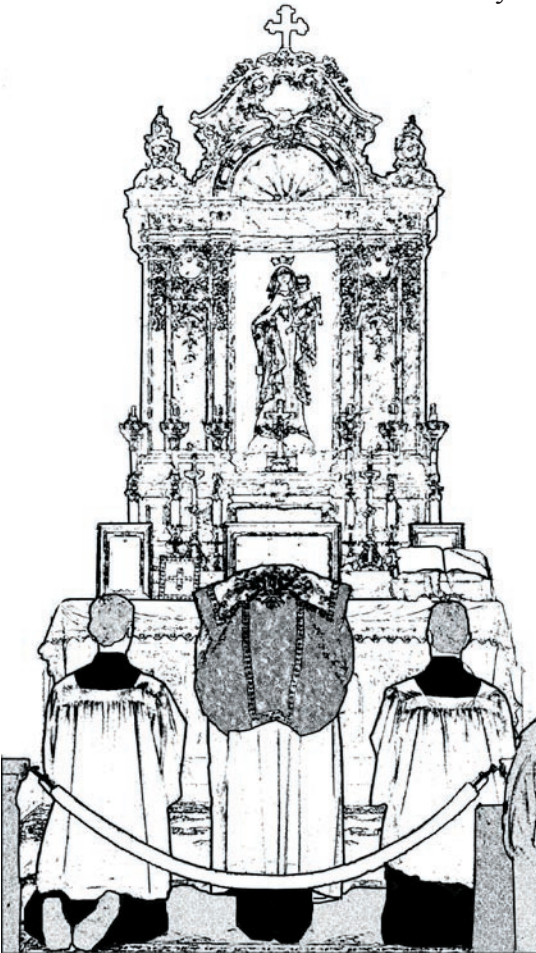
If Religion can be false, how can we know what the True Religion is? In the next issue of the Acolyte Magazine, we will continue this discussion and show how to further prove the credentials of the TRUE RELIGION. Here are some of the headers:

- ✚ How can we know what God demands?
- ✚ Is there one true Religion?
- ✚ What does the True Religion do?
- ✚ How can we know which is the True Institution?
- ✚ What if the True Church loses the True Religion?
- ✚ How does one find the True Religion?
- ✚ How does a person come to believe this True Religion?
- ✚ What happens to the man who accepts the True Religion?
- ✚ What is the name of this True Religion? Ω

per breviores OR per longiores

Ratione Accommodationis

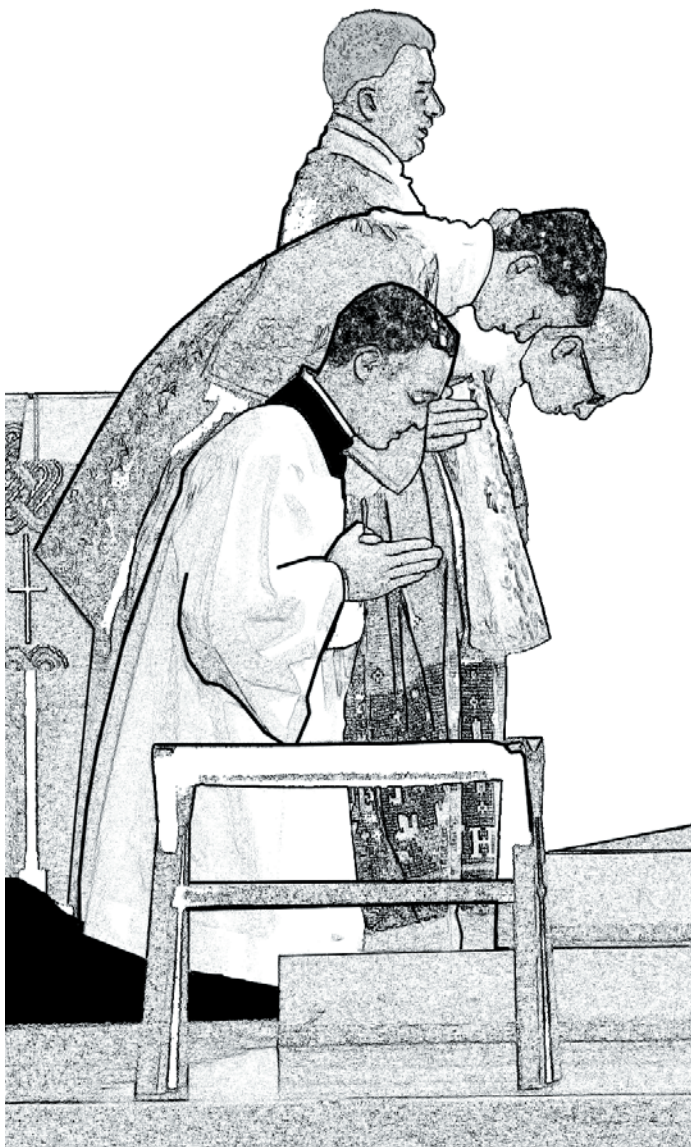
by Louis J. Tofari



Ever wondered why the Roman Rite is called *Roman*? You might say, “*because it comes from Rome*,” and this is true. But there is an even deeper reason. The main characteristic of the Roman Rite is *románitas* (pronounced *roh-mah-nee-tahs*), a Latin term that means *to be Roman*. To be Roman is to engender the ideals of the ancient Romans of which there were two main elements: **simplicity** (to do things *in a practical manner*) and **logic** (to do things because they *make sense*). The Roman Rite is consequently imbued with *romanitas*, especially through its general principles which govern the liturgical ceremonies.

The principle that we will be examining here particularly exemplifies the element of logic, as even its name suggests. Its Latin name is *ratione accommodationis* (*rah-tsee-oh-neh ah-cohm-moh-dah-tsee-oh-nees*), which in English means *by reason of accommodation*. In summary, *ratione accommodationis* is a principle of exception to the usual rules of when to make a reverence¹ for the sake of preserving unity between ministers performing a common action. So how does it work in practice?

¹ A bow or genuflection.



As we know there are certain rules — or principles — that dictate when a reverence (such as a bow or genuflection) is made during the sacred ceremonies. For instance, it is usually required to genuflect when crossing the center of the altar, or to bow when the Holy Name is said aloud. These principles are applicable to all ministers. However, sometimes a principle is applicable to one minister but not to another. This is even truer for sacred ministers, who enjoy certain privileges due to the dignity of their liturgical offices. Hence there is a special set of principles² that apply only to sacred ministers. Consequently, there are times during the ceremonies when a minister will have to alter how he would normally act when accompanying another minister, be it an inferior or sacred minister. I will give some examples of this in a moment.

You have probably guessed by now the reason why this is done: for the sake of *uniformity of action*. Otherwise certain actions would look rather odd with one minister genuflecting while the other accompanying one does not; again this is done because it *makes sense*. Now that I have explained the reason for the principle of *ratione accommodationis*, let's see how it works in practice with a few examples.

² They are actually all part of the same set of general principles. Rubricians however usually mention the general principles for all in one section, and the particular rules for sacred ministers within their explanations about the sacred ministers' positions during Solemn and Pontifical Mass.

Bowing

When kneeling, an inferior minister usually bows at the mention of various names or phrases said aloud by the celebrant (e.g., “*Jesus*,” “*Maria*,” “*Oremus*,” or during the *Gloria* and *Credo*).³ This rule is different though for a sacred minister who does *not* normally bow when kneeling.⁴ The difference is that kneeling is usually a position of *deportment* (or posture) for inferior ministers, but one of *reverence* for sacred ministers. So when an inferior minister is kneeling *next to a kneeling sacred minister* and a word is said aloud that the inferior minister would normally bow for, nonetheless, he does not bow by reason of accommodation to the sacred minister.⁵ This regularly occurs after Low Mass during the Leonine Prayers (or Prayers for the Conversion of Russia) when the priest invokes the Holy Name during the concluding ejaculation: “*Most Sacred Heart of Jesus....*”

Genuflecting

The rules concerning genuflecting can also be slightly different between the two types of ministers. For instance inferior ministers do not have the privilege of genuflecting on the predella,⁶ though sacred ministers do. This is why even when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, the inferior ministers always genuflect *in plano*⁷ before ascending to and after descending from the predella.⁸

An inferior minister may only genuflect on the predella (the altar platform) when he *is accompanying a sacred minister*. We see the application of this rule at every High Mass when the master of ceremonies and thurifer genuflect on the predella while assisting the celebrant during the incensations of the altar.

We also see the principle of *ratione accommodationis* exercised during Low Mass when both acolytes genuflect together at the foot of the altar before proceeding to the credence for the Offertory. In this case, though the second acolyte (on the Gospel side) will have to cross the center

3 This is a general principle and is specifically mentioned in regards to the acolyte at Low Mass by L. O’Connell, *The Book of Ceremonies* (1958), p. 156-163 and p. 93, J.B. O’Connell in *The Celebration of Mass* (1964 — for 1962 *Missale Romanum*), p. 354 and 357-360, and by most other major rubricians as well.

4 Nonetheless, there are four exceptions to this rule for sacred ministers. The first is during Mass: if the sacred ministers kneel for the sung *Credo*, they are required to bow for the words “*Et homo factus est*”; J.B. O’Connell regarding the ceremonies of Solemn Mass, p. 486 citing SRC 2915⁶. All other rubricists can also be cited *by application of the rule* that must be followed for the feasts of the Nativity and Annunciation). The other three times occur during Benediction: 1) before standing to impose incense; 2) before and after incensing the Blessed Sacrament; 3) at the words “*veneremur cernui*” during the *Tantum ergo*.

5 They would of course bow *with* the sacred ministers for the exceptions given in ff 1 above.

6 This is true even when these positions are being exercised by major clerics as is assumed to be the case during a Pontifical Mass, when it is assume that the head master of ceremonies is at least a priest, with the second a subdeacon, though this is not always the case.

7 Meaning “*on the floor*.”

8 L. O’Connell, p. 38, ff 18, d., citing SRC 4135³ and Callewaert, *Ceremoniale in Missa Privata et Solemni* (1941), p. 28, and J.B. O’Connell, p. 364 citing SRC 3975¹ in ff 66).

of the altar to reach the credence, the first acolyte (on the Epistle side) will not. However, because they are proceeding *to the same location together*, the first acolyte goes to the center to genuflect with the second, then both (after turning inwards) proceed to the credence together shoulder to shoulder.

As a side note to make a proper distinction, the principle of *ratione accommodationis* would not apply to the action of the acolyte switching the missal in preparation for the Gospel. In this case, *only one acolyte is required for this task*,⁹ so only the single server involved actually moves, while the other remains stationary.¹⁰

Delaying or even omitting a reverence

It can also occur that a minister may have to omit, or *delay*, a reverence when accompanying another minister. One example of when *ratione accommodationis* is enacted for this case is when a group of ministers are lining up *recta linea* (in a straight line) at the foot, causing some to cross the center of the altar. However, none of the ministers genuflect (not even those crossing the center) until all are arranged and ready. This is practiced at High Mass not only for those servers who line up at the foot for the Gospel action or for Communion.

Gestures need not apply

Though the principle of *ratione accommodationis* can alter how a reverence is made, this rule does not affect the making of the various liturgical gestures (*i.e.*, signing the cross and striking the breast). Hence, when a minister is *impeded* from making a gesture, because he is following the principle *that a gesture is not made when holding an object* (*e.g.*, a candle, thurible, torch, Communion plate), *ratione accommodationis* does not apply. So those ministers not holding an object will make the gestures as usual even when next to a minister who cannot.

In conclusion

This fairly covers the principle of *ratione accommodationis* which hopefully is now better understood, if not simply recognized by certain actions that take place during the sacred liturgy. Ω

9 By custom in the United States, usually the second acolyte does this, though in some places it is the first acolyte instead.

10 This practice is in conformity with the general principles of genuflecting and is specifically outlined by L. O'Connell, p. 166.

Pinarothena Gildica

The ACSS Chapter Updates



Deep in the heart of what to us westerners may seem an impenetrable jungle where every tree is crawling with countless poisonous vipers, the ground is a moving mass of killer ants that stand three inches high and measure five inches long and could probably carry off a full grown man; and behind every bush there is

Father Gendron with his faithful band.

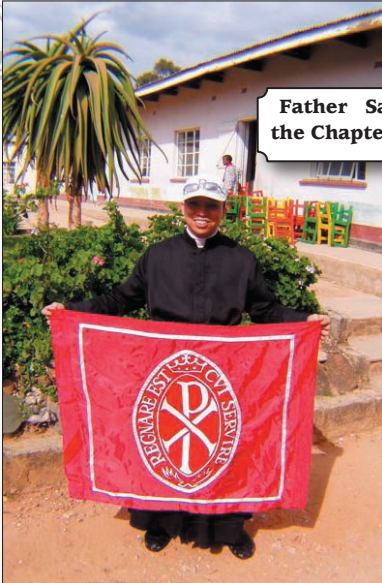


Vicious Friend of the Acolytes - one of many close encounters

either an enraged elephant waiting to crush every bone in your body or a prowling lion waiting for the right moment to charge at you, tear you to shreds with his razor sharp claws and then devour you in less than a minute - one can find among the Indian teepees Saint Peter's Priory with its two missionaries, Fathers Gendron and Saa and their faithful band of dedicated Arch-Confraternity servers who help bring refinement to this savage scene.

Pinaroche

The AQSS Ch



Father Saa with the Chapter's Flag



Harare
Zimbabwe



Father Saa (top center) taking a moment during a head-count ..."Yeah, I guess we did lose a few to that lion!"



Here we can see them atop one of the elephants - all part of the advanced techniques.



Statistics:

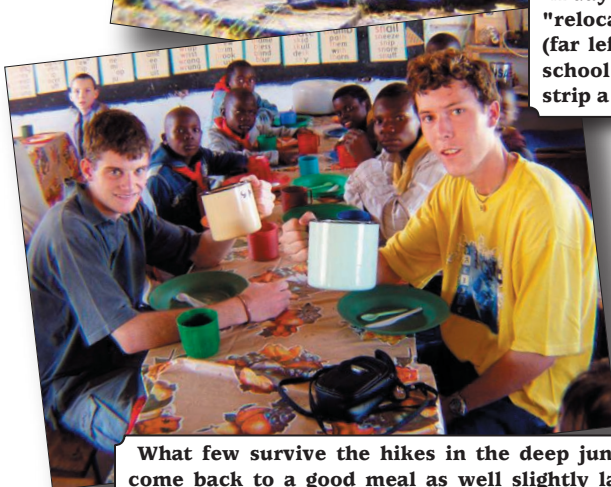
Started December 2003
by Father Gendron
First President was
John Paul Bhika

Number of Servers:
x7 Masters of Ceremonies
x1 Senior Acolytes
x11 Junior Acolytes
x15 Postulants

And one former MC is
now a seminarian at
Holy Cross Seminary in
Australia



A day hike to the water falls in Nyanza with their "relocated" senior acolyte, Pius, now a seminarian (far left). No doubt they are inches away from a school of man-eating piranhas - fish which can strip a horse of all its flesh in seconds.



What few survive the hikes in the deep jungle come back to a good meal as well slightly large cups of beer... root beer, that is!



A proud winner displaying his hard-earned booty - a beautiful crucifix.

those enraged
anced training

When this little band of civilized savages are not out hunting wild water buffalo with their poisoned blowgun darts, they can serve any ceremony you throw at them. This height of expertise can only come from constant drilling maneuvers and other advanced training techniques. Here is the basic schedule they follow:

- ☞ At the end of each school trimester this tribe meets for a weekend starting Friday afternoon and ending midday after Sung Mass on Sunday.
- ☞ At the end of the school year they meet for a one week camp
- ☞ Throughout the year they gather on the first and third Sunday of every month.

At each of these meetings (depending upon the weather, upcoming ceremonies and the time they have), they learn basic rubrics for Holy Mass, practice special ceremonies that require mental refreshing, attend conferences and spiritual talks given by senior acolytes, the president or the director and review necessary strategies for any upcoming soccer games. In addition to this strenuous program they also find time for games, swimming, day outings, camp fires, songs and skits. Combine the training of a good goalie and the art of campfire fire starter and you've got yourself a killer thurifer.



Mr. Bliks, their president (far left) with the chapter members sporting their new guild T-shirts.

Though these men and boys come from very poor and humble backgrounds, by the help of their director and president, they serve the coveted ceremonial positions with dignity and respect – may God, who sees their hard work and good intentions, bless their chapter abundantly. Ω



The Hint of an Explanation

By Graham Greene
...continued from Acolyte # 8...

From *Nineteen Stories* by Graham Greene. © 1949 by Graham Greene. Reprinted with permission of Penguin Books.

“I could get you one out of the box,’ I said. I think I still imagined that his interest was a baker’s interest—to see how they were made.

“Oh, no,’ he said, ‘I want to see what your God tastes like.’

“I couldn’t do that.’

“Not for a whole electric train, just for yourself? You wouldn’t have any trouble at home. I’d pack it up and put a label inside that your dad could see: ‘For my bank manager’s little boy from a grateful client.’ He’d be pleased as punch with that.’

“Now that we are grown men it seems a trivial temptation, doesn’t it? But try to think back to your own childhood. There was a whole circuit of rails there on the floor at our feet, straight rails and curved, and a little station with porters and passengers, a tunnel, a foot-bridge, a level crossing, two signals, buffers, of course—and, above all, a turntable. The tears of longing came into my eyes when I looked at the turntable. It was my favorite piece—it looked so ugly and practical and true. I said weakly, ‘I wouldn’t know how.’

“How carefully he had been studying the ground! He must have slipped several times into Mass at the back of the church. It would have been no good, you understand, in a little town like that, presenting himself for communion. Everybody there knew him for what he was. He said to me, ‘When you’ve been given communion you could just put it under your tongue a moment. He serves you and the other boy first, and I saw you once go out behind the curtain straight afterwards. You’d forgotten one of those little bottles.’

“The cruet,’ I said.

“Pepper and salt.’ He grinned at me jovially, and I—well, I looked at the little

railway which I could no longer come and play with when term started. I said, 'You'd just swallow it, wouldn't you?'

"'Oh, yes,' he said. 'I'd just swallow it.'

"Somehow I didn't want to play with the train any more that day. I got up and made for the door, but he detained me, gripping my lapel. He said, 'This will be a secret between you and me. Tomorrow's Sunday. You come along here in the afternoon. Put it in an envelope and post it to me. Monday morning the train will be delivered bright and early.'

"'Not tomorrow,' I implored him.

"'I'm not interested in any other Sunday,' he said.

"'It's your only chance.'

He shook me gently backwards and forwards. 'It will always have to be a secret between you and me,' he said. 'Why, if anyone knew they'd take away the train and there'd be me to reckon with. I'd bleed you something awful. You know how I'm always about on Sunday walks. You can't avoid a man like me. I crop up. You wouldn't even be safe in your own house. I know ways to get into houses when people are asleep.'

He pulled me into the shop after him and opened a drawer. In the drawer was an odd looking key and a cut-throat razor. He said, 'There's a master key that opens all locks and that—that's what I bleed people with.' Then he patted my cheek with his plump floury fingers and said, 'Forget it. You and me are friends.'

"That Sunday Mass stays in my head, every detail of it, as though it had happened only a week ago. From the moment of the Confession to the moment of Consecration it had a terrible importance; only one other Mass has ever been so important to me—perhaps not even one, for this was a solitary Mass which would never happen again. It seemed as final as the last Sacrament when the priest bent down and put the wafer in my mouth where I knelt before the altar with my fellow-server.

"I suppose I had made up my mind to commit this awful act— for, you know, to us it must always seem an awful act— from the moment when I saw Blacker watching from the back of the church. He had put on his best black Sunday clothes and, as though he could never quite escape the smear of his profession, he had a dab of dried talcum on his cheek, which he had presumably applied after using that cut-throat of his. He was watching me closely all the time, and I think it was fear—fear of that terrible undefined thing called bleeding— as much as covetousness that drove me to carry out my instructions.

"My fellow-server got briskly up and, taking the paten, preceded Father Carey to the altar rail where the other communicants knelt. I had the Host lodged under my

tongue: it felt like a blister. I got up and made for the curtain to get the cruet that I had purposely left in the sacristy. When I was there I looked quickly round for a hiding place and saw an old copy of the *Universe* lying on a chair. I took the Host from my mouth and inserted it between two sheets—a little damp mess of pulp. Then I thought: perhaps Father Carey has put out the paper for a particular purpose and he will find the Host before I have time to remove it, and the enormity of my act began to come home to me when I tried to imagine what punishment I should incur. Murder is sufficiently trivial to have its appropriate punishment, but for this act, the mind boggled at the thought of any retribution at all. I tried to remove the Host, but it stuck clammily between the pages, and in desperation I tore out a piece of the newspaper and, screwing the whole thing up, stuck it in my trousers pocket. When I came back through the



curtain carrying the cruet, my eyes met Blacker's. He gave me a grin of encouragement and unhappiness—yes, I am sure, unhappiness. Was it perhaps that the poor man was all the time seeking something incorruptible?

"I can remember little more of that day. I think my mind was shocked and

stunned, and I was caught up too in the family bustle of Sunday. Sunday in a provincial town is the day for relations. All the family is at home, and unfamiliar cousins and uncles are apt to arrive, packed in the back seats of other people's cars. I remember that, some crowd of the kind descended on us and pushed Blacker temporarily out of the foreground of my mind. There was somebody called Aunt Lucy, with a loud hollow laugh that filled the house with mechanical merriment like the sound of recorded laughter from inside a hall of mirrors, and I had no opportunity to go out alone even if I had wished to. When six o'clock came and Aunt Lucy and the cousins departed and peace returned, it was too late to go to Blacker's, and at eight, it was my own bed-time.

"I think I had half forgotten what I had in my pocket. As I emptied my pocket, the little screw of newspaper brought quickly back the Mass, the priest bending over me, Blacker's grin. I laid the packet on the chair by my bed and tried to go to sleep, but I was haunted by the shadows on the wall where the curtains blew, the squeak of furniture, the rustle in the chimney, haunted by the presence of God there on the chair. The Host had always been to me—well, the Host. I knew theoretically, as I have said, what I had to believe, but suddenly, as someone whistled in the road outside, whistled secretively, knowingly, to me, I knew that this which I had beside my bed was something of infinite value—something a man would pay for with his whole peace of mind, something that was so hated one could love it as one loves an outcast or a bullied child. These are adult words, and it was a child of ten who lay scared in bed, listening to the whistle from the road, Blacker's whistle, but I think he felt fairly clearly what I am describing now. That is what I meant when I said this Thing, whatever it is, that seizes every possible weapon against God, is always, everywhere, disappointed at the moment of success. It must have felt as certain of me as Blacker did. It must have felt certain too of Blacker. But I wonder, if one knew what happened later to that poor man, whether one would not find again that the weapon had been turned against its own breast.

"At last I couldn't bear that whistle any more and got out of bed. I opened the curtains a little way, and there right under my window, the moonlight on his face, was Blacker. If I had stretched my hand down, his fingers reaching up could almost have touched mine. He looked up at me, flashing the one good eye, with hunger—I realize now that near-success must have developed his obsession almost to the point of madness. Desperation had driven him to the house.

"He whispered up at me. 'David, where is it?' I jerked my head back at the room.

"'Give it me,' he said. 'Quick. You shall have the train in the morning.' I shook my head.

"He said, 'I've got the bleeder here, and the key. You'd better toss it down.'

"'Go away,' I said, but I could hardly speak for fear.

"I'll bleed you first and then I'll have it just the same.'

"Oh, no, you won't,' I said. I went to the chair and picked it- Him- up. There was only one place where He was safe. I couldn't separate the Host from the paper, so I swallowed both. The newsprint stuck like a prune skin to the back of my throat, but I rinsed it down with water from the ewer. Then I went back to the window and looked down at Blacker. He began to wheedle me.

'What have you done with it, David? What's the fuss? It's only a bit of bread,' looking so longingly and pleadingly up at me that even as a child I wondered whether he could really think that, and yet desire it so much.

"I swallowed it,' I said.

"Swallowed it?'

"Yes," I said. "Go away.'

"Then something happened which seems to me now more terrible than his desire to corrupt or my thoughtless act: he began to weep- the tears ran lopsidedly out of the one good eye and his shoulders shook. I only saw his face for a moment before he bent his head and strode off, the bald turnip head shaking, into the dark. When I think of it now, it's almost as if I had seen that Thing weeping for its inevitable defeat. It had tried to use me as a weapon, and now I had broken in its hands and it wept its hopeless tears through one of Blacker's eyes."

The black furnaces of Bedwell Junction gathered around the line. The points switched and we were tossed from one set of rails to another. A spray of sparks, a signal light changing to red, tall chimneys jetting into the gray night sky, the fumes of steam from stationary engines- half the cold journey was over, and now remained the long wait for the slow cross-country train. I said, "It's an interesting story. I think I should have given Blacker what he wanted. I wonder what he would have done with it."

"I really believe," my companion said, "that he would first of all have put it under his microscope—before he did all the other things I expect he had planned."

"And the hints," I said. "I don't quite see what you mean by that."

"Oh, well," he said vaguely, "you know for me it was an odd beginning, that affair, when you come to think of it, but I never should have known what he meant had not his coat, when he rose to take his bag from the rack, come open and disclosed the collar of a priest."

I said, "I suppose you think you owe a lot to Blacker."

"Yes," he said, "you see, I am a very happy man." Ω

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SAINT STEPHEN'S SUPPLY CATALOG

| Item and Description | | Item # | Cost |
|--|--|----------------|--------------|
| Medals and Cords <i>(see note on starred items)</i> | | | |
| President's medal* <i>(black), medal only</i> | | M-P | 4.00 |
| Master of Ceremonies medal* <i>(gold), medal only</i> | | M-MC | 4.00 |
| Junior/ Senior Acolyte medal* <i>(silver), medal only</i> | | M-A | 4.00 |
| Tasselled cord with bead <i>(for President, MC and Senior Ac.)</i> | | C-SA | 8.00 |
| Junior Acolyte cord <i>(only until supply runs out)</i> | | C-JA | 4.00 |
| Junior Acolyte ribbon | | R-JA | 1.00 |
| Medal and Cord Sets (pre-assembled) | | | |
| President's cord and medal* | | SET-P | 13.00 |
| Master of Ceremonies' cord and medal* | | SET-MC | 13.00 |
| Senior Acolyte's cord and medal* | | SET-SA | 13.00 |
| Junior Acolyte's cord and medal* | | SET-JA | 9.00 |
| Junior Acolyte's ribbon and medal* | | SET-JAR | 5.00 |
| ACSS Servers' Prayer Cards | | | |
| Daily Prayer card <i>(cardstock)</i> | | DP-C | .25 |
| Daily Prayer card <i>(laminated)</i> | | DP-L | .50 |
| Before and After Mass <i>(cardstock)</i> | | BAM-C | .50 |
| Before and After Mass <i>(laminated)</i> | | BAM-L | 2.25 |
| Seasonal Prayers <i>(cardstock)</i> | | SEA-C | .50 |
| Seasonal Prayers <i>(laminated)</i> | | SEA-L | 2.25 |
| Acolyte Vesting Prayers <i>(cardstock)</i> | | VP-A | 2.00 |
| Saint Stephen holy card <i>(has Guild promise prayer on back)</i> NEW! | | SS-GP | .25 |
| Special Guild Supplies | | | |
| The Acolyte Magazine <i>(please specify which issue)</i> | | ACO | 2.00 |
| ACSS Server's Handbook | | HAN | 3.00 |
| Certificate of Enrollment | | ENR | .50 |
| Official ACSS ranking tests with answer keys* <i>(printed)</i> | | TEST | FREE |
| | | | |

* indicates that only a Director or a President may request these items

...continued on next page...

SAINT STEPHEN'S SUPPLY CATALOG

| Item and Description | | Item # | Cost |
|--|---|---------------|--------------|
| Liturgical Supplies | | | |
| Prayers after Mass card (<i>Leonine Prayers - laminated, Latin & English</i>) | | LEO | 3.00 |
| Vesting Prayers for the Priest (<i>cardstock; Standard size: 6 7/8 x 9 7/8</i>) | | VPP-F | 1.50 |
| | <i>Laminated NEW!</i> | VPP-FL | 3.00 |
| Vesting Prayers for the Priest (<i>cardstock; Skinny size: 3 7/8 x 9 7/16</i>) | | VPP-S | 1.50 |
| | <i>Laminated NEW!</i> | VPP-SL | 3.00 |
| ACSS Guild Uniforms | | | |
| T-Shirts | | | |
| Extra Small (<i>says large on the tag</i>) | | SH-XS | 20.00 |
| Small | | SH-S | 20.00 |
| Medium | | SH-M | 20.00 |
| Large | | SH-L | 20.00 |
| Extra Large | | SH-X | 20.00 |
| Custom Coat-of-Arms design | | SH-DZ | 35.00 |
| ACSS Lapel Pins | | | |
| President's pin (<i>black & gold</i>) | | PIN-PR | 2.00 |
| MC pin (<i>black & red & gold</i>) | | PIN-MC | 2.00 |
| Senior Acolyte pin (<i>gray & red & silver</i>) | | PIN-SA | 2.00 |
| Junior Acolyte pin (<i>gray & silver</i>) | | PIN-JA | 2.00 |
| Digital Supplies (e-mail address necessary) | | | |
| Saint Stephen's Storehouse 1.1 (<i>the ACSS Digital Catalog</i>) |  | D-CAT | FREE |
| Explanation of the ACSS 1.0 (<i>short summary of who and why</i>) |  | D-EXP | FREE |
| Acolyte Handbook 1.0 |  | D-HAN | FREE |
| Acolyte Magazine (<i>specify which issue; only # 1-7 available</i>) |  | D-ACO | FREE |
| Official Servers' tests and answer keys* 1.0 |  | D-TEST | FREE |
| Introduction to the Guild (<i>Q & A for the Parish Priest</i>) |  | D-INTR | FREE |
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