



Let Your Medal Show

Fr. Todd Angele

Membership in the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen is a great privilege. Holy Mother Church's liturgical law presupposes that the Mass server is a tonsured cleric, and that men or boys are used for serving Holy Mass only when a cleric is unavailable. In our day it can seem that the serving of the Holy Sacrifice by those who are not tonsured is the rule, but a look at the following from the Congregation of Sacred Rites makes it evident that this is not the case: "The server at Low Mass should be a tonsured cleric, if possible. If a tonsured cleric is not available, the server shall be a man or a boy of the laity who is well instructed in the ministerial duties to be performed and in the prayers to be said and who shall wear cassock and surplice at the altar" (Matters Liturgical, Wuest, Mullaney and Barry; Frederick Pustet Company, 1959; No. 186, b). Hence, the lay server in our parishes is being granted an honor normally reserved to tonsured clerics when he serves the Dread Mysteries.

Members of the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen take this a step further. Anyone who serves the Holy Sacrifice should, in view of the greatness of his task, take very special care to ensure he knows his duties well. Guild members actually bind themselves to do so by a special promise they make on the day of their induction into the Archconfraternity. When they are received into the Guild the new members make the following four promises:

To serve at the altar reverently, intelligently and punctually.

To make the short acts of preparation before, and of thanksgiving after, serving Holy Mass.

To observe silence in the sacristy, and great reverence in the sanctuary.

To recite daily the Guild prayer.

Archconfraternity Handbook.

The first rule is to serve at the altar reverently, intelligently and punctually. When a server is reverent he pays attention to what is going on

at Holy Mass. He does not joke or think about other things. He knows that Holy Mass is very important, so he follows what the priest is doing at the altar. The Guild member also promises to serve intelligently. To do this he must learn how to serve properly. Before a postulant can become a member and start wearing the Guild medal he must have all the Latin responses for Low Mass memorized. When the Guild member promises to be punctual he is saying that he will be on time when he is scheduled to serve. The server knows that he cannot arrive at the church at the last minute. He must arrive, at least, fifteen minutes before the ceremony begins, and sometimes he must arrive even earlier.

Of course, the contents of this first rule are nothing more than common sense. Anyone who knows the value of the Holy Sacrifice will consider it a duty to observe all of these regulations, even without being told to do so. Members of the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen do more, though. For them it is not enough to leave all this up to the common sense of the individual. Guild members take the seriousness of their sublime duties a step further by promising, on the day of their induction, to observe all of the above. This impresses on the minds of the servers the grandeur of the duties they fulfill.

Like any other important organization, the Archconfraternity has rules. By promising to follow these rules, the member is showing his understanding that he is joining something that is bigger than him. He is joining an organization with high ideals. He knows that in joining this organization he is taking on important responsibilities. Others will be relying on him to fulfill the promises he made to the best of his ability.

Isn't it true that just a few members of an organization can bring discredit on the entire organization? If Holy Mass frequently begins late due to the failure of servers to arrive on time, or if the congregation is regularly distracted by poor performance on the part of the Mass servers, the entire chapter of the Guild in that parish seems lax. The entire chapter seems remiss in its duties to

look after those things that pertain to the Holy Sacrifice in a worthy manner.

Now, let servers consider that this applies not only to the way they carry out their duties in the sanctuary, but also to the way they carry themselves outside the sanctuary. Guild members, being more thoroughly instructed with regard to the sacred liturgy than the average Catholic, can be a great source of edification to the other parishioners by setting an example of attending Holy Mass well. It is certain that the Mass servers can help turn the thoughts of those attending the Holy Sacrifice to God by their reverent demeanor in the sanctuary, they can also do so by maintaining such a demeanor even when not serving, but merely attending Holy Mass.

How about at other times? Can the members of the Archconfraternity help uplift the hearts of

others outside those times when they are serving or attending Holy Mass and other Church functions? Indeed they can! As members of this important organization, those inducted into the Guild do, in fact, have a position of leadership within the parish. Hence, the way the members behave outside of Church functions also has an impact on others. If their behavior is Christ-like, others will be edified.

Let all the members of the Archconfraternity keep these things in mind. Let them be aware that they can do so much good for souls by their good example, both within and outside the sanctuary. Let all guild members strive, with the help of God's grace, to carry themselves in such a way that it is obvious to others that they are members of this elite organization.

In short, let your medal show!

The Oblates

Expansion to Western Canada

In this issue, we will examine the expansion of the Oblates to Western Canada. Let us follow them, therefore, in their apostolate in Oregon. Oregon, you wonder? An American state? What does it have to do with Canada? Father Donat Levasseur provides the answer in his book " Histoire des Missionnaires Oblats de Marie Immaculée".

Rev. Fr. Roger Guéguen

Two requests for missionaries to Oregon were sent to the Oblates simultaneously. The first was addressed to Bishop de Mazenod himself by Bishop Norbert Blanchet, Archbishop of Oregon City in 1845 and 1846. The second was addressed to Father Bruno Guigues in Montreal, superior of the Oblates in North America, by Bishop Magloire Blanchet, brother of the Archbishop of Oregon City, who had recently been appointed bishop of the diocese of Walla Walla in Oregon.

The founder, Bishop de Mazenod, had not granted the first request, but when Fr. Gigués agreed to send missionaries to Oregon for the Bishop of Walla Walla, he honoured the promise of his North American representative. In 1847, Oregon was a vast territory comprising the

present states of Oregon and Washington, with ecclesiastical jurisdiction over British Columbia as well.

Fr. Ricard, the scholastics Pandosy, Chirouse, and Blanchet, and Br. Verney were chosen for this mission. They left Le Havre, France, on February 4, 1847, but only arrived in Walla Walla on September 5th.

Oregon

The newcomers opened several missions among the Yakima Indians, but I will skip the details. In 1852, Fr. Chirouse began missionary work among the Cayuses, another Indian tribe.

As Fr. Levasseur explains in his history, the activities of missionaries in Oregon bore little