

SECRET LIFE OF ALTAR BOYS

I walk into the dimly lit sanctuary of the church. I go through the motions I learned long ago, ingrained in my muscle memory. I can't walk past the tabernacle without genuflecting. I move into the pew and kneel down. I feel the bulk of my diaper between my legs. I've tried to stay away from the church over the years, but I still return, always diapered. Not because I have an allegiance to the church, or perhaps even a belief in God, but due to the memory of long ago.

I attempt a silent prayer. The organ starts to play, and my mind wanders. I think back to my childhood. An altar boy enters and genuflects and goes about the business of lighting the altar candles. Was I ever that young? He finishes, and soon the organ starts into another piece. People rise, and the processional begins. It's a lovely ritual that is playing out. More than anything I love the ritual. It's what started me on the path.

I remember growing up Catholic. I went to CCD and prepared for the first sacraments, reconciliation, and Eucharist. I loved what was going on before me on the altar. Some of it I had been educated about, some was a mystery. The priest, the lector, the boys, not much older than I was, all in this fantastic ritual. I was enthralled.

I asked my parents if I could be an altar boy. They thought it was a passing desire, but I kept at it. Finally, my mother told me I'd need to see a priest to find out what was involved. I decided to go to confession one Saturday, and after getting my absolution, I waited in the church for Father Murphy to come out of the confessional. I nervously moved to meet him.

"Father," I said to him.

"Hello, my son. Did you want to make a confession?"

"No, father. I already did. I wanted to ask you something else."

"Go ahead."

I took a deep breath and stammered it out. "I want to be an altar boy."

"I see. Come with me, and we'll talk about it."

We walked back to a small office. He impressed on me that it was a lot of work just to get to the point where I could be ready. Then it would be a time-consuming responsibility going forward. I just nodded. When he had finished, I reiterated. "I want to become an altar boy."

"OK," he said. "Here's our altar boy handbook," he said pushing a mimeographed document towards me. "Learn everything that's in this. That's the first step. When you think you know it, come back, and we'll talk."

"Thank you, father."

I took the document home. It must have forty pages. It started with the admonitions of the responsibility and piety required. That I was to be neatly dressed and conduct myself with decorum. It then went on to the rituals which I relished studying. It started with the prayers. I hadn't realized there were so many prayers. Prayers for putting on the cassock, prayers for putting on the surplice, prayers to say before the mass, after the mass, and to the patron saint of altar boys. I knew I was going to have to know the liturgy of the mass by heart. I read through these several times and knew I'd have to come back and study them more.

The next section was more interesting. It was all the things had to be done during the mass. I had seen the rituals, but they were more involved than I had realized. Still, I went over and over these again. The next morning I showed up for weekday mass, which I rarely did just to watch and follow what I had read about carefully.

Then there was the terminology; it wasn't just a plate it was a platen. It wasn't just a wash bowl but a lavabo. The urn with all the hosts in it was a ciborium. The priest's napkin was a purificator. The thing that spread incense was a thurible. Another piece of cloth was the corporal. The cover over the paten I had seen was called the pall. I memorized all this.

A week later I was back in front of Father Murphy. He started asking me questions, and I answered without hesitation. "Do you know the vestment prayers." I wasn't exactly sure what he was asking. Then I knew. I launched into the prayer for the cassock. "Prayers before the mass," he added, and I started reciting these.

He then led me to the altar. Crossing I remembered to genuflect, even before he started to do so himself. He led me to the altar asking me the names of things. He opened the tabernacle, and I identified the things there. He then took me back to the rectory.

"I'm going to ask one of the knights," he paused. "One of the older boys, who wears the red cassocks, to mentor you further. When he believes you're ready, we'll test you out on a weekday mass."

So a few days later Mike came to me. "Father Murphy tells me you want to be an altar boy," he said with a smile. Mike was great. We went through every step of the mass. We practiced in an empty classroom. Mike had a box with a bunch of makeshift items: a chalice, platen, ciborium, pall, purificator, cruets, and the like. We practiced the entire ritual with Mike playing the role of the priest. We went into the sanctuary, and he taught me how to ring the bell at the appropriate time in the service. We practiced walking graciously around the altar performing our duties.

We met every other day. I'd have loved to do it daily, but Mike had other responsibilities. One day, Father Murphy interrupted our practice. "Is he ready?" Father asked Mike.

"Yes, he is."

"Be here at seven tomorrow morning. We'll give you a test run."

I was there fifteen minutes early. At seven, Mike showed up and opened the vestry. "We've got lots of time. Mass is at 7:30. We usually only need to be here fifteen minutes early, but Father wanted to give you extra time."

We went in, and Mike gave me my vestments. I said the prayers and put them on. Mike handed me the wand to go light the candles while he dressed. I entered the sanctuary. I was wearing the uniform of an altar boy performing my first official act, even if it was just lighting the candles. I did so, remembering to genuflect when crossing the tabernacle. I finished and extinguished the flame in the wand and went back into the vestry. Mike and Father were there waiting.

"Are you ready?" Father Murphy said. I rasped out an affirmative answer. We headed to the back of the church. Mike handed me the large red book the Sacramentary. I'd used a phone book for practice, but this was even heavier. Mike picked up the crucifix, and we marched up to the altar. The congregation was sparse as it usually was for the weekday masses. A few older people and a dozen or so nuns.

I was trying to avoid shaking with the nervous anticipation. Mike leaned over and whispered in my ear, "Try not to wet your pants." I thought this was a snide comment, but then he followed it with "Not yet." I had no idea what he meant by that. We ascended the altar, and I stood and opened the book and held it for Father as he did the opening benediction.

I made the appropriate responses and then set the book on the lectern. Things moved quickly, and the rest was a blur. Soon we were walking back out of the sanctuary and were back in the vestry. "Shut the door, Mike," Father instructed. Mike did so and returned to us. "Sit down," Father told us, and we all took seats.

"You did well," Father said to me. "Don't you think, Mike?" Mike agreed with him. It was discussed that the next day I'd serve mass and I'd do everything. Mike would be there just to cover me if I messed up. I got to the church early and set about getting the altar ready, setting things out, lighting the candles. This time I carried the crucifix and Mike carried the book. After the processional, I did all the altar boy duties without much prompting from Mike.

Afterward, Father Murphy asked Mike if I was ready to go solo and Mike stated yes. Mike would come in one more time for tomorrow's mass and make sure I was ready, but he would sit in the congregation.

I got to the church and again made sure everything was ready. I prayed to the heavenly father to make sure I was ready and that I didn't mess up. Things went well. I was perhaps a beat too late ringing the bells thrice when the host was consecrated, but I got it done. After Mass, I went back to the vestry and returned the cassock and surplice to the rack.

At this point, Mike and a few other of the knights that I had noticed in the congregation came in. Mike introduced me to the other boys.

“Well, Joe,” Mike began. “You did well. You can consider yourself an official altar boy. You were given a scapular after your first communion, right?” I had been. I fished the little plastic medallion out from under my shirt.

“That one’s not appropriate for a person of your standing.” He handed me a little box, and I opened it. A chain and a medal with the face of a man on it. It was quite an improvement over what I had been wearing.

“That’s Saint John Berchmans. He’s the patron saint of altar boys. You are now a squire of the saint as were we,” he said indicating the other knights. “We have progressed to knights of the order.” I beamed and put the medal around my neck.

“Now, that it’s official, there’s one last part of the vestments that we need to discuss. I should let you know that this is a very private and holy matter. You should not discuss this outside of the vestry.”

I vowed that I would not. “Let’s remove our outer vestments.” The knights started taking off their clothes. I was surprised, but I followed along and took mine off as well. I was standing there with my underpants and my new medal around my neck. The other boys had more ornate medals and odd underwear on below.

Mike went to a cabinet and pulled a few items from a drawer and returned to me. The top item was a large piece of cloth.

“This is called the purificator magnum,” he said. I knew the purificator was the towel the priest used during preparation of the Eucharist. We wear this during Mass. He held up the other item. It was clearly a pair of briefs, plastic. “This we wear over it so that we do not have leaks.” I thought about it, and then I looked at Mike and knights. They were wearing a diaper and plastic pants. I started to realize what Mike was getting at the other day when he told me not to wet myself, YET.

“You really wear a diaper during Mass?”

“Purificator magnum,” Mike corrected. And we do. And you’ll find it handy to use it as well. My head spun. “All the boys in the order wear them. You’ll get used to it.”

Mike had me remove my pants and lay down on the floor. He placed the diaper under me and did it up. He then pulled the plastic pants up. “Good, now you try it yourself.” I couldn’t see the point, but I did it. OK, see you tomorrow.

The next morning we went to the vestry, and I put the diaper on. Mike checked it and then I got into the rest of the vestments. I served the Mass and returned to the vestry. Mike was waiting as I disrobed. He came and patted my rear and then tapped the medal on my chest.

“These two things are the sacred mysteries of our order. They will become very important to you over time, and I stress the importance that you maintain the secret of the order.”

I was proud to belong to the order. The medal was a badge of honor. I wasn't sure about the diaper, but I got strange feelings wearing it. I promised to Mike that I would maintain the secret.

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Sunday came around, and I was in the congregation again. I watched the altar boys serving the Sunday Mass with envy. It was a bigger deal than the weekday ones with four altar boys attending the priests. I got in line for communion with the priest that Mike was assisting. Mike gave me a wink as I approached the priest. I knew all the boys serving were wearing diapers, I mean purificators.

I was leaving the church afterward when Mike came up to me in his street clothes. He must have done a really fast change out of the cassock. I'm sure the other boys were cleaning up. Being the senior knight had its privileges. "Did you see the notice in the bulletin?" he asked me.

"No," I said.

"Order meeting tomorrow afternoon. Be there, aloha," he said and bounced off.

I flipped through the bulletin, and sure enough, it said there would be a meeting of the Altar Servers Monday at 3:30 in the vestry. The next day I made my way to the vestry. There were some other boys there but not Mike or anybody I knew. They were getting undressed. One looked up at me standing they're confused.

"You must be the new guy," he said extending his hand. "I'm Jim."

I shook it and nodded. "Jason."

"Well, you better get undressed. Order meetings are just purificators and medallions." I remembered how Mike and the knights appeared to me when they gave me the medal. I got undressed. I pulled a purificator from the cabinet and quickly got it on. I pulled the plastic pants over it. I saw the boys heading through a door I'd not ever used before. I followed them into a room with a conference table and extra chairs along the walls. Jim signaled me to one of the chairs along the wall next to him.

"So, you just started last week," Jim said to me.

"Yeah. I only officially got into the order on Thursday."

"Well, it's great to have a new guy. I hate getting up early to do the weekday masses. I know you think it's great but after you do it for a while, it gets a little tedious."

"So you like Sundays?"

"Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation are good. Weddings and funerals are the best, however."

More and more boys entered. All were clad in the plastic pants over diapers and wearing the medals like mine. A few arrived and took seats at the table. These were the knights as they sported the more ornate medals.

Mike called the meeting to order. "First, I'd like to introduce our newest squire, Jason." He motioned for me to stand. I did so, and there was a brief round of applause. I would have been more embarrassed if everybody else hadn't also been wearing a diaper. The applause subsided, and I sat down.

Next item, schedule. Anybody got any absences planned for the next month? A few boys made statements, and Mike noted them. He started to rearrange the schedule. "Jason, are you good covering all the weekday masses the next two weeks?" I nodded. "Good, we'll also put you on the 9 AM Sunday mass if you are OK with that." I nodded emphatically; I was moving up. "Don't burn yourself out though. We want you to stay a long time. We can go back to taking turns on the weekday masses." I waved my hand to say it was OK for now.

"The ushers ask that if we're in church and not serving mass that we check with them. They have been coming up short on volunteers and wanted to know if we can help. That's entirely voluntary on your part, but they'd appreciate it."

Mike then paused and appeared to be looking at his notes. I noticed a yellow tinge start to appear behind his plastic pants. My eyes widened, and then I realized Mike was looking at me. He was peeing. I looked away quickly. Mike continued with the next item.

Later as we were changing back into our clothes, I was talking to Jim and confessed my embarrassment at watching Mike wet his diaper.

"Yeah, he's worn so long that he probably doesn't even think about it," Jim said.

"That could cause problems at times," I said.

"I'm pretty sure he wears a diaper all the time, not just during Mass and meetings," Jim said. I thought to myself that's got to be pretty strange.

I continued to do the weekday mass and was happy to be doing the early Sunday mass. One morning after Mass there was a knock at the vestry door. I opened it, and one of the nuns was there.

"I came to pick up the laundry," she said. I let her in, and she went and pulled the bin where we put the used diapers.

"I was wondering how those got taken care of."

"We wash them with ours," she said.

"Yours?"

"All of us wear diapers in our order. All the time." She smiled and left. All the time? That certainly was odd. I thought about it. The nuns had on diapers? I'd never be able to look at them the same way again I thought. The next morning's mass I was there in my cassock and diapers, and as the nuns

came up for communion, I looked at each one. The habits didn't show it any more than my cassock and surplice did.

Wednesday came, and I was late. Father was already getting ready, and I hurried through the prayers for the vestment and got my diaper and other clothing of the order on and lit the candle lighter and got out and lit the candles. As soon as I was back, father was ready.

About halfway through the mass, I realized in his rush; I hadn't had a chance to use the bathroom. I had to go now. Here goes nothing, I thought. I tried and couldn't. I closed his eyes for a second, and the flow started and gave relief. I opened his eyes quickly checking to see if anybody had noticed, but of course, they hadn't. I sat there with the warm, wetness in my crotch

When communion came, I watched the nuns file up. I noticed something I had seen before but hadn't realized the significance. As the priest held the host aloft and said "Body of Christ" and the nun responded "Amen," they then closed their eyes while he placed it on their tongue. Some lingered a second before turning. Had they closed their eyes for the same reason I had? To urinate at that moment?

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As the weeks passed, I moved up as an additional server during the noon mass on Sundays, the most attended. I also was given senior position in the 9 AM mass. I still was covering the daily masses, but Mike came to me and said I had a new trainee and I should put him through the paces as Mike had done for me. I felt honored to be teaching someone else.

Jim arrived the next morning. I walked him through getting things ready. I let him work the candle lighter and all. I told him to follow along with me during the actual mass. On the second day, I let him take the lead standing close to him to advise. It took him a few days, but finally, I was able to stand back completely while he served the mass.

This gave me the opportunity to watch the nuns. Could I make out the diapers under their habits? I was more and more sure that they were wetting themselves at communion.

By the end of the week, Jim was getting the sanctuary ready while I lingered behind to put my purificator on. A nun came in the vestry. "Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you were out front."

"No problem, that's Jim, my trainee. Are you hear to pick up the diapers?"

She nodded.

"Can I ask you something?"

"Of course," the nun said.

"Do the nuns wet at the moment they are receiving communion?"

She smiled. “ You’ve noticed that?”

“Well, I’m wearing a diaper, too, you know. I just wanted to confirm.”

“Yes, we all aspire to wet or mess ourselves at the moment we receive the living God. It makes us closer to Jesus.”

I thought it was weird, but I just nodded. She took the bag of diapers and left.

I called Mike and told him that Jim was ready for his checkride. We sat together in the congregation and watched him perform. Afterward, we took him back to the vestry and gave him his medal of the order and introduced him to the purificator magnum.

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What the nun had told me kept gnawing at me. The diaper, whatever it was called, was becoming part of my spiritual life. I felt a stronger bond putting it on than putting on the other vestments. I felt it between my legs during the mass. Would wetting during communion make me feel closer?

I had made it a rule to always use the bathroom before showing up for mass. I decided to change my routine. I drank two glasses of water before mass and didn’t pee first. At first, while I had to go, I couldn’t go on command at communion. I couldn’t even go standing around helping serve. This was going to take some practice.

I tried during the next mass to just wet earlier on. If we had Father Jessup saying mass, he tended to ramble on his exposition on the Gospel passage. Also during the whole Eucharistic prayer, I had little to do than to ring the bells at the appropriate time and I did that on autopilot. I finally got to the point where I could pee during mass, but still couldn’t get the timing right.

One day, I decided I needed practice when I didn’t have to worry about serving mass at the same time. I’d take some diapers home and practice. The next day I brought an empty backpack to the vestry with me. After everybody else had cleared out, I grabbed two diapers and plastic pants and was stuffing them into my bag when Mike came in.

“Getting a couple to go?” Mike said.

“Oh, um...” I started. What could I say? Well, nothing better than the truth I said. “I wanted to practice at home.”

“Practice?”

“Did you know the nuns wet themselves when they receive communion?”

“Yes. I do that at times as well.”

“I can’t get the timing right.”

“Pooping is easier to time,” Mike said. “But with practice, you can get the peeing down.”

“Pooping?”

“Sure, we do that, too,” Mike explained.

He used “we.” Did he mean him and the nuns? Him and the knights?

He went over and opened a drawer and handed me a foil-lined package. “Pop one or two of these in your rear before Mass. You won’t have any problem by the time communion comes.”

He made his way out of the vestry, and I just stood there staring at the package. Poop? I put the package in the backpack with the diapers.

Mom had me doing some chores that evening, so I didn’t get time to do the practice I envisioned. The next evening I had some reading and math homework to do so I told my mom I’d be up in my room on the school work. I grabbed a bottle of water and headed upstairs. I put on one of the diapers and downed the bottle of water and started on my school work.

After a bit of reading, I had to go. I tried relaxing, but it didn’t help. I continued reading. Periodically, I’d try to go but no. I finally stood, still reading the passage and I got the flow started. I sat down while continuing to both read and pee. I finished the chapter, and it was time to start on math. I decided to take a break for another bottle of water and a diaper change.

I launched into the math problems. This time when I got the urge, I was able to get the flow going. I was getting better.

The next day I brought the wet diapers from the night before and put them in the bin for the nuns to clean up. I got dressed and started the mass preparations. I had to pee by the time communion came around, but again I couldn’t get the flow going on demand. More practice was going to be needed.

The next day was Jason’s day to serve. Still, I saw it as an opportunity. I put a diaper on at home and headed over to the church. I sat in the church behind the nuns. I imagined them all sitting there in their diapers alone. That was probably a sin of some sort. I followed them up to communion. I tried to gauge each one. Yes, they were definitely doing it. I was sure the nun directly in front of me pooped.

It was my turn. “The body of Christ,” the father said.

“Amen,” I replied. I opened my mouth and extended my tongue and closed my eyes at the same time. I got the flow started just at the time the host touched my tongue. I brought it in and continued to pee as I made the sign of the cross and turned away. I had done it. It felt wonderful.

The next day was my day to serve. I wanted to try again but when the priest served us at communion, it was pretty busy, and I didn't know if I could. I was busy stuffing the wet diaper from the day before in the bin when I noticed the foil package in the knapsack. I figured now was as good a time as any.

I got a diaper out, and just before I pulled it in place, I unwrapped the package. A white bullet-shaped capsule was there. I pushed it in place. Mike said one or two. I unwrapped a second and put it in place. I got the diaper on, and my vestments and went and washed my hands. I went out to serve the mass.

Sure enough, by the time we got to the gospel, I could feel the pills working. I was getting quite uncomfortable during the Eucharistic prayer. I rang the bells with vigor hoping it could speed the coming of communion. Perhaps two was too much. Finally, I was standing there holding the platen under my chin when the father placed the host on my tongue. I released my bowels. It was a gloriously spiritual release.

That quickly subsided. I stood there cognizant of the large load on my rear while I held the platen in front of the other communicants. The nun who I had asked about the peeing smiled at me while she took her communion. Did she know I had pooped?

The only real downside was that I needed to sit for one last section of the mass while the priest made a few announcements. Squishing into the poop, I began to feel this might not have been such a good idea after all.

Soon we were done. I doused the candles and went back and got undressed. I carefully cleaned myself up. It was going to take some more time to get used to that, but at the moment of receiving the host, it was worth it.

The days went on. I attended mass every day even though Jason was now taking most of the daily mass chores off my hands. Still, I wore a diaper and attempted to pee at communion, and I was getting pretty good at it.

I started to pull more Sunday shifts which I enjoyed. I even got to serve a wedding. After the service, we were standing out front with Father and the wedding party getting pictures. We were just window dressing. Boys in their nice black and white robes as a backdrop to the bridesmaids. Afterward, a man who I figured was the bride's father came and talked to the priest. He then came and shook each of our hands. When I drew my hand back, I noticed it had a ten dollar bill in it.

I was staring at it when Mike said, "Pretty neat, eh. But the real money is at funerals. Especially if you can get yourself to shed a few tears."

We had more monthly guild meetings, always in the conference room in just our purificators and medals. At one Mike said we'd be having a pizza party for the guild. It was going to be in a private room at Alonzo's down the street. I'd been by Alonzo's. It was mostly a bar, but they did have tables and supposedly really good Italian food. "Purificators and regalia," Mike said as the dress code.

I got ready that day. I had brought a diaper home and put it on under my clothes. I hung my medal around my neck and made my way to Alonzo's. "St. Andrew's Guild party?" I said to the hostess. I decided she probably wouldn't know what John Berchman was so I used the name of the church. She led me to a stairway and told me they were downstairs.

I made my way down, and a half a dozen boys were already there. They were all down to their diapers and medals. I hadn't realized it was going to be like that, but I got my clothes off.

"You were already dressed, I see," Mike said to me.

"I brought one home and put it on before I came," I said. Mike smiled and nodded. More boys showed up. Some had to pull diapers from a stack in the corner and put them on, and soon the party was in full swing. Periodically, a waitress would bring down another pitcher of cokes or a new pie and never seemed to say anything about the room full of boys in diapers. I guess they'd seen it before.

With all that soda, I had used my diaper a few times. I figured I had better change it, so I went to the corner and grabbed another off the stack.

Mike was soon next to me. "Yeah, I had that idea as well. Don't want to leak on their chairs." And set to changing his as well. We stuffed ours in a plastic bag that someone had brought to haul back the dirties. "Stay a minute after everybody else goes, can you? We'd like to talk to you." I nodded. I wondered what this was about.

At the high point of the party, Mike stood up. "I'd like to thank everybody for coming. I know the idea of free pizza was a draw for you. The main reason for today's celebration is a sad one. Frankie has decided to leave the order."

There was a chorus of "ahhs" and suggestions that he should stay. Frankie stood up. He was one of the knights by the medal he was wearing. "Thank you all for your kind words. I'd love to stay, but I've really got too many other commitments at this point. You'll always be brothers to me."

There were more words and then people started filing out. I lingered, and soon Mike and some of the other knights approached me. Mike started. It took some convincing on my part to the rest of the knights, but I was convinced you were ready.

Ready? I thought.

You did really good with Jason and have been one of our most reliable servers. I see you're working with another kid.

"Joey," I said. "Father said me might be interested, so I started helping him with his book work."

"That's right," Mike said. "Father mentioned he had asked you to help. It's OK with me. Do you think he'll make it."

“He’s a bit slow on memorizing things, but I think he’ll pass Father’s test. Then we’ll have to work on him in earnest.”

“This is exactly the kind of thing that leads me to believe that we should make you a knight,” Mike said matter of factly.

A knight? Me? I hadn’t even thought about it yet.

- “A knight? Me?” I said my thoughts out loud.

“Yes, Frankie’s departure leaves an opening. You’re younger than we usually consider, but you’ve shown yourself to be worthy. I do have to tell you. However, there are some serious responsibilities and requirements. You’ll have to discuss this with your parents. But if you’re willing, we’d be happy to elevate you.”

The other knights made remarks agreeing with Mike’s assessment. They were soon putting on clothes and making their way out. Mike and I remained. “So what do I need to talk to my parents about?”

Mostly, we need to know if you can make the commitment and your parents will allow it.

Commitment?

I know you’ve taken diapers home and you’ve worn them to mass when you weren’t serving. Any other times?

I was a little embarrassed. “Just a few times to practice my timing for communion.”

He smiled. Finally, I had to ask “What?”

“OK, back to the subject. The major commitment other than leadership in the guild is that the knights wear the purificator all the time.”

“All the time?” I said, though it now made sense. This is why the knights were always already diapered at mass and got out quickly afterward. They didn’t have to take the diaper on and off then. This was why Mike smiled at my extracurricular diaper wearing.

“I don’t know if my parents would go for that.”

“Try them. And if necessary, we can arrange for someone to talk to them.”

“OK, I’ll try.”

I put my clothes back on. I had my diaper on underneath really because I had no choice having come wearing one. I got home, and my parents were both there, so I figured there was no time like the present.

“Mom, Dad?” I started timidly.

“Yes?”

“I just came from a meeting of the altar boy’s guild. Well, it was really a pizza party. But afterward...”

I decided to give the “good news” first.

They have an opening as a knight. It’s kind of the officers of the order. They have been really impressed with me and working with the new kids.

“Oh, that’s wonderful news, son. Your mom and I are very proud.”

So far so good. “OK, but there’s one thing that’s required that I need your permission for.” Here it goes. “I never told you, but the altar boys all wear diapers under our vestments during the mass.”

Mom and dad didn’t say anything, but they gave each other a long look. Finally, mom told me to go on.

“The knights take that a step further. They wear them all the time.”

Mom and dad kind of nodded to each other. Something was going on.

“We wondered about that,” finally mom responded. “I found diapers in your room. I was going to ask. I was concerned that you might be having problems.” She said that last word like it was an emphasis for a disease or mental disorder.

I explained about the purificator magnum. I told them that the nuns at the church were also diapered. I said that I had brought them home just for convenience to make changing at the church and meetings like the pizza party easier. OK, I left out the part about practicing peeing.

There was another pause. My father spoke, “You are sure this is what you want.”

I had gone through this argument with myself continually since Mike made the offer.

“This is what I want.”

I went back to Mike and told him I had ran it by my parents and we had decided I would become a knight. Mike told me they would have a small elevation ceremony for me. After some consultation, it was decided it would be Sunday after the noon Mass was done. He arranged that me and several of the current knights would serve that Mass.

I stood proud serving the Mass even though I was the only one in a black cassock. I knew soon I’d be wearing a red one. I managed to perfectly time my urination at communion. I could hardly wait. Mike led us all away from the sanctuary.

“We’re not meeting in the conference room?” I asked. I figured it would be there like always.

“No, the sisters are letting us use their chapel.” We got to the convent door, and Mike knocked. A sister opened the door and led us inside. We went down a hallway into a small chapel. After we entered the sister smiled and closed the door as she left.

The knights started getting out of their vestments, so I did the same. Mike looked at my diaper and patted the front. "I see you're making good use of it. I should tell you that I rarely use a toilet anymore. You just get used to it."

Soon Mike was at the lectern at the chapel. "We are gathered here for a joyous ceremony. We're elevating one of our order to the position of knight. Bill will you come forward and kneel. I did so. One of the other knights unwrapped a package revealing a gleaming, ornate sword.

Bill Jacobs, he held the sword up as if it were a cross, "Do you promise to faithfully execute the rights and responsibilities of the position of Knight of the order."

"I do."

"By the power invested in me as senior Knight, I appoint you Bill Jacobs, Knight of St. John Berchman. Arise."

I stood up to the applause of the others. "Let me have your medal," Mike said. I took it off. He was handed my new medal. "I invest upon the insignia of your office." He hung the ornate medal around me to more applause.

"Now come." He led me towards the back of the chapel. He unwrapped a package and handed me a red cassock. I put it on followed by the suplice. "You now have both the inward and outward sign of your office."

The other boys got dressed, and Mike made a knock at the back door. The nun reappeared with a package for me. "This will get you going with diapers," she said to me. I realized it had happened. I was a knight, and I'd be wearing diapers full time.

The nun told me to bring by the dirties when I came in for mass, and they would take care of them. I hoped this part would be reassuring to my mother that she wouldn't be washing diapers. I got home and went up to my room. I opened my top drawer and scooped out all my underwear. I found a cardboard box and put them in and placed it in the closet. I loaded the dresser with the diapers.

It took me almost a week to get used to having the diaper on. At times I'd forget and unzip my fly and then realize there was no way I was going to be able to pee normally. I'd usually go and unpin the diaper and sit on the toilet, but sometimes I decided it was just easier to wet the diaper.

Things moved quickly at that point. Another new boy came in for training. This time, I was given the authority to train and evaluate the boys on the weekday masses myself. In fact, I was responsible for all except the Sunday masses and the days of holy obligation. I set the schedules among my boys. I also handled the early Sunday mass and often stayed for the busiest Mass of the day at noon.

Mike still ran most of the order, but I felt like I was his right-hand man. He even called me the "Training Officer" at one point. I was proud. Of course, when it came time to pick people for weddings and funerals, I could count on Mike to give me the nod.

During the masses, I attended I still did my best to pee at communion. A few times when I felt the need, I held my bowels and pooped instead. I was beginning to think that the nuns may be right in their belief. While wearing the cassock of the order made me feel like a Knight and proud, going while receiving communion made me feel holy.

Months went by, and more and more I got less interested in using the toilet. It was just too much hassle to take down the diaper. I nearly always peed in the diaper. I got used to determining when I was going to need a change and optimizing my day. On occasion, even when I wasn't at mass, I'd poop in them as well.

We had people come and go from the order. Some knights moved on, and Mike and I chose new boys to replace them. I was indeed the executive officer of the order second only to Mike. We worked a funeral and Mike turned to me during the service. "Yank out a nose hair or something."

"What?" I said.

"Make yourself tear up." I understood what he meant. I closed my eyes and thought about the time years ago that my dog had died. I opened my eyes with a glassy stare. A tear dripped on my cheek.

"Good," Mike whispered. We followed the priest around with the various instruments he needed. I passed forward a vial to him at the appropriate time.

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," the priest intoned pouring the contents of the vial on the head of the coffin. He handed it back to me and proceeded. We stood silently as the mourners approached the casket. Some touched it, some just crossed themselves, some dropped flowers. It was very moving, and I didn't even know the deceased. More tears welled up.

After the mourners made their way back to the limousine a man in a black suit came up. He had been standing to the side during the whole proceeding. He shook the priest's hand and said a few words and then came to Mike and then to me to shake our hands. As he withdrew I knew he had slipped a bill into my hand. As Mike and I headed back to the church I looked down at my palm. A \$100 bill.

"You did good," Mike said. "Tears always brings the big payout."

We got back and got out of our cassocks. Mike started peeling out his diaper as it was very wet. I decided I could use a change as well. After putting on a clean diaper, he just sat down in the diaper and his medal. "I need to bring something up," he said. It sounded very serious. I sat down, facing him dressed as the same way. I was afraid I'd done something wrong.

"I'm leaving the order," he said. "I want you to take over."

I was now prouder than I ever was. I tried not to let it go to my head. I mean, pride, after all, was a deadly sin. But still working with the priests to arrange for service of the Mass and other duties made me feel special. Standing at church serving mass let me know I was part of the service of the church. I tried to be humble when working with the order. I was fair and open to everybody and worked to help the others with their advancement in the order. I loved the order and those in it.

As time progressed, I got more and more used to being in the diapers all the time. It no longer was even convenient or necessary to use the toilet. I just filled my diapers. My mother had arranged with the school to allow me to duck into the nurse's office where I kept a backpack with diapers to change myself. At our meetings and other order events, I stood and realized I didn't care any more than Mike had about wetting myself in front of others. Of course, I continued my efforts to void while receiving communion as the nuns did.

I was getting older and beginning to think about girls. One good thing about being in church for Sunday masses was that girls than almost always wore dresses to Mass. It was something about a girl in a dress that was special. At school, pretty much everybody had taken to wearing jeans. One girl, in particular, caught my eye. She often wore this dress with an iridescent sheen to it. That coupled with her long straight blond hair made me watch her carefully. I'd work at making sure I was serving the communion line where she would line up. One week just after taking communion she looked at me. She had lovely blue eyes. She smiled.

I asked one of the other boys if he knew anything about her. "That's Rachel Kelly. She goes to Cardinal Mooney." That was the Catholic high school. No wonder. I had just started at the public Central high.

I still didn't know how I'd meet her. I persisted at being with her at communion. She would continue to smile at me. Then one day after Mass, father had told me there was to be a baptism. I had forgotten to arrange coverage, so I stayed. As the family gathered around, I saw Rachel was there. After the baptism, the families moved out of the sanctuary for photos. I saw her standing alone. I went up to her.

"Hi," I said. "I'm Jason."

She smiled at me. "I'm Rachel."

"Would you like to...," I started and stammered a bit.

She looked around and then leaned towards me. "I have to go. Meet me at the mall food court at four tomorrow."

Then she was gone. But I had a date!! I could hardly contain myself for the next day. I got to the mall early. I had my backpack diaper bag with me and went to the men's room and changed into a clean one. I wanted to make a good impression. I got to the food court and scanned around. Soon I saw Rachel making her way towards me. We sat down at a table.

"Hi," I said.

"Hi, I take it you go to Central and not Mooney," she said.

"Yes, that's right. My parents thought that I'd do better there."

"Yeah, mine thought I'd do better at the Catholic school. I wish I were at Central."

I didn't know what to say next, so I asked if she wanted something to eat. She said no, but she'd like a soda. I got up and went over to the nearest counter and ordered two Cokes. I returned, and she was just staring at me.

"Is everything, OK?" I asked.

She seemed to snap out of it. "So you're an altar boy?"

"Yeah," I said. "Actually, I'm the head altar boy."

"Ah, so that's why you wear red when the others wear black."

"All the knights, the senior altar boys, wear red."

"Oh," she said. "I thought it might be neat to be an altar girl. But they don't have those."

"Some churches do. Perhaps, I can ask Father if we could start."

"Nah, it's too late for me now."

We continued to talk, and things got easier. The coke was working its way through me. I had to pee. I could excuse myself and use the men's room. I could just wet the diaper as usual. Neither I wanted to do in front of Rachel at this point.

Then she struck me with a question I hadn't anticipated. "You have what looks like diapers in your backpack." She must have looked in my pack while I was getting the drinks.

I was stunned. Now, what did I say? "The altar boys all wear them during mass," I explained.

She still looked confused. "But why do you have them with you now?"

I inhaled. "The knights wear diapers all the time."

"You have a diaper on now?"

"Yes."

She got an odd look on her face and then burst into laughter.

"What?" I said.

"Why don't you wear your red dress all the time, too?" she said in between giggles. I was beginning to burn from embarrassment. I was about to protest that the cassock was not a dress when she asked: "Do you use the diapers?"

"Yes." She began to get herself composed

"Pee, poop?"

"Both."

She made a face and then stood up.

"Where are you going?"

"I can't deal with a boy in stinky pants." The laughter returned. She started away "Sorry!" I started after begging her to wait, but she waived me off. I just stood there. I had blown it. I finally released my bladder into the diaper.

I cursed myself for days. I had blown the chance to hook up with the girl of my dreams. I didn't even know how to get in contact with her. I waited until mass on Sunday and then when she came up for communion I gave a pleading look. She just frowned and shook her head. There didn't appear to be any way to recover.

I was disheartened. I just wasn't into being part of the order anymore. I started to get irritable. Finally, I decided it was in everybody's best interest that I step down. After all, you couldn't be an altar boy all your life, and I wasn't interested in the priesthood. I turned the order over to the boy I had been grooming to replace me and called it quits. I had a little money from weddings and funerals, so I went straight to the store and bought underwear. I gathered up all the diapers I had and took them to the vestry and dumped them.

I soon was back to using the toilet again. I didn't even want to attend mass unless I had to. I continued to go as my parents insisted. I dated some girls, but they never matched my ideal of Rachel.

I went off to college. By now, I had left the church and never attended. I got on with my life. I graduated and took a good job in another city. After a few years, I got a transfer back to my hometown. I was nostalgically wandering the streets when I came to the church. I went inside. Odd that I was here after so long of a time. I just sat in a pew in the rear. A few others were sitting or kneeling in reflective prayer. An altar boy came out and started to light the candles. Was I ever that young? A mass would be starting soon. I didn't want to stay for that, so I made my way out.

I stepped out into the sun again. I needed a drink. I headed down the street to Alonso's. Last time I was here I wasn't old enough to order alcohol. Not a problem now. I sat down on the bar stool and ordered a bourbon. I was sipping it when a woman sat beside me.

"Hi, I saw you at St. Andrews, just now," she said.

"Yeah," I responded. "Used to go there. Not too religious now I guess."

"Me, too. I used to be in the convent there, but I decided it wasn't for me."

"Got tired of wearing diapers," I asked. I immediately regretted it. It sounded snarky.

"Nobody has ever asked me that," she giggled. "But that was probably part of it."

I smiled. "I know what you mean. I was an altar boy there and wore them, too."

"I know," she said and paused. "You don't recognize me? I took a good look at her. No."

"The last time I talked to you I made a crack about your red dress." It finally struck me. "Rachel?"

"Yes."

Her appearance was different now. The blond hair had been cut short, but the blue eyes were still there. She broke into a smile and then my memories of her came back.

"Do you want to get something to eat?" I asked. This had been how our first date started.

"Yes," she said. We moved from the bar to a table. She ordered a salad, and I got one of Alonso's famous burgers. I recounted how I had left the order after her rejection and how my life had progressed since then.

"I felt bad about that," she said. "Not right away, but it ate at me. By the time I regretted it and wanted to apologize, you had stopped serving mass. I had no idea how to reach you."

I smiled. What might have been?

"Anyhow, after graduation, I didn't know what I wanted to do. Despite my folks putting me in Mooney, my grades weren't all that good. I wanted to teach, but it was going to be hard to get into college. The nuns suggested I join their order. I figured what the hell."

"And then you found out about the diapers," I said.

"Yes," she said. "They ease you into it. You're already indoctrinated that you are married to Christ and all as a novice. Once you become full-fledged, they spring it on you as part of the ritual. You almost think it's normal."

"Almost?"

"I knew it was odd. I knew that I had chastised you for wearing them. But I accepted them as I figured it was my penance for being cruel to you."

We finished our dinners and had more drinks. She recounted that she had a crisis of faith and asked to be released from her vows. "You just can't up and leave if you want to remain in good graces with the church." She went to the community college and then got into the state university and finally got her teaching credentials. She was teaching at Central, a school she was never allowed to attend.

More drinks. "Where are you living now?" she asked me. I explained I'd taken an apartment near my job. "My place is closer. I only live a block away. We better head there."

We held on to each other for physical and emotional support as we made our way to her apartment. It was a few rooms over a little bookstore. I asked to use her bathroom, no diaper this time. When I returned, she was sitting on her bed in just a little camisole and panties.

"You're overdressed," she said. I got out of my clothes, and she smiled that smile that had hooked me so many years ago. We got onto the bed. I slid the panties away but left the camisole. I slid my hands underneath to inspect what was obscured. We kissed long and hard and then made love.

I awoke the next morning to find her nestled against me. Her hand was on my cock. I kissed her, and the hand gripped my member and squeezed it. It responded by stiffening immediately. We made love again.

"What should we do today?" I asked.

"We could go to mass," she said, and we laughed. We then decided it wasn't a bad idea. Either for redemption or nostalgia. I showered and when I returned she handed me an item. I looked down at it. It was a diaper.

"I kept a few when I was retraining myself after leaving the order. I thought you might like the extra bit of nostalgia."

Why not? I thought. I put it on and then got dressed. I noticed she put one on herself. We got to the church early. I watched the altar boy get ready for the mass as I had been instructed, and how I had instructed countless others. We watched the ritual of the mass, me noting all the duties the altar boys performed. Not just boys. There was a girl in a red cassock. Not only had they admitted girls to the order, and some had advanced to knight status.

Communion came and Rachel tugged at my hand. We stood in line for communion. Just before she reached the priest, she turned back at me and smiled. She took the host and then turned and smiled at me again. I knew what she had done.

"The body of Christ," the priest intoned. The altar girl held the platen towards me as the priest placed the host on my tongue. I drew it back and despite years of absence, released myself and felt the warmth spreading in my crotch. I was with God, and all was right in the world.

Amen.