

jhs



ABBAY OF GETHSEMANI
TRAPPIST, KENTUCKY

April 7, 1963

Dear Victor and Carolyn:

You probably realize the quandary I am in. I just got a letter from the President of the U. of Kentucky, with about a normal delay (dated April 2), and I observe that I am to be Queen of the May. This is a new role for me.

Precisely, in case you don't know the full news, and you may not, I have been awarded an honorary LL.D. which suggests that someone there is under the delusion that I can read and write. Perhaps so. But also, and of this they are aware, I am not able to appear at the foot of the maypole and receive my degree.

They have asked me to get someone else to do it for me. Obviously the first person I think of is Victor, but at the same time I am sure he is even less disposed to be Queen of the May than I am. I do not know exactly what it involves. I am not sure whether a speech is required, and whether I am supposed to write one and have my noble proxy, whoever he may be, read it. I certainly do not want to inflict this on Victor. But if it is just a matter of sitting there in a top hat, and then receiving the sheepskin and making a bow of some sort, then perhaps he would not mind. But as I say, I would not inflict this on him for worlds, if he does not want it, or if it is too much bother. I can see that it probably is.

Anyway, Victor is my first choice. After that, I could probably embarrass a professor at the College of the Bible into doing it. Or else I would have to look around in Louisville, or perhaps I could get Dan Walsh here to do it. That might be a solution except that he has got to be Queen of the May at Bellarmine, and I don't know if it is on the same day.

I am really very pleased to receive an honorary LL.D. I will wear my cap and gown all around the monastery for a full week, including in choir, and make myself entirely odious to everyone. But really, I think it is very kind of them, and when I find out who is to be my proxy, I will write a letter of thanks. Can you tell me if I have to send a speech or statement?

In haste, and looking forward to seeing you early in May,
With all blessings and good wishes,
in Christ,

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Tom.