

(FOR THE CATHOLIC STUDENT AT NOTRE DAME)

Novena for Exams:  
Begins Thurs.: Mass,  
Communion, Grotto,  
Litany of Sac. Heart.

University of Notre Dame  
Religious Bulletin  
June 9, 1944

Fill out the Questionnaire  
and drop it in the box  
by the pamphlet rack.

"The Dumb Ox"

(Patron of those taking Examinations.)

Thomas Aquinas made a brilliant start in school. At fourteen he was ready for university work. Thomas entered the famous Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino, now in ruins, at the age of seven. In seven years he had mastered everything the five century old medieval school could give him. The young genius moved on to the University of Naples where he attracted the attention of all.

Then Thomas slumped. The light seemed to go out very suddenly. Thomas became tight-lipped at the University of Paris, where he took advanced work. Stupidity was in evidence. Classmates began calling him "The Dumb Ox". A well known incident acted as proof that this Dominican monk was becoming a simpleton. One day as Thomas was studying in his cell, he was told to come to the window of an adjoining cell to witness an unusual sight - a flying ox. Thomas promptly came to the window and scanned the heavens. When asked why he believed in such a tale, he answered that he would rather believe it possible for an ox to fly than that a friar would lie.

A young friar had pity on Thomas and offered to give him extra help in theology. All went well until the charitable instructor came upon a difficult passage. It was too much for him. He tried to cover over his ignorance by a flood of words. Thomas saw the poor fellow's plight. His charity prompted him to unmask himself. "The Dumb Ox" explained the passage with astounding clarity and precision. It was profound thinking that had brought silence and the appearance of simplicity to Thomas. He became tutor to the man who tried to tutor him.

A good student often gets lost in his study. More than once Thomas demonstrated his powers of concentration and abstraction. At a party given by the king and queen Thomas became absorbed in a problem on which he had been working before departing for the banquet hall. Suddenly, in the midst of the feasting, Thomas jumped up, pounded the table and shouted, "At last I have the clinching argument against the Manicheans." Thomas took no drug when undergoing a surgical operation. He became unaware of pain by simply contemplating on the things of God.

Thomas was humble enough to call on God for help in his studies. He did not depend on the powers of his own intellect. Our Lady once appeared to him to reassure him that his theology was true. At another time, a passage in Scripture baffled him. He prayed and fasted for several days. And then one evening, St. Peter and St. Paul appeared in his cell and discoursed with him about the problem.

Thomas ranks as one of the world's greatest intellects. He is in heaven now, a mighty influence before the throne of God. He is a canonized saint, the patron of students.

There were times when Thomas did not know the answers. So he will understand your case when you pray for his help. Maybe you are not so dumb as your grade would prove. Like Thomas, maybe some little thing is covering up your genius. Persevering prayer works wonders.

The Prayer for Study in the N.D. Prayerbook will bring "The Dumb Ox" to your side. Pal around with him during these pre-exams days. Maybe you should really possess his name, but don't forget, he can work miracles - if you ask him.

PRAYERS: (deceased) brother of Sister Dolorissima, C.S.C.; mother of Jack Tinkle, ex.'45; father of Brother Paul, C.S.C.; Rev. John Staunton, brother of Prof. Henry Staunton; brother of Lieut. Robert Meyer, USNR, killed in action; William Holahan, ex.'32. (Ill) friend of Jim Wallo (BP); cousin of al Vodicka (Cav), missing in action; Ralph Valva (OC) - operation. 2 Spec. Int. One Thanksgiving.