

**Your main commentary should be focused on *nominal morphology*. Other topics may also be addressed**

"Hey, that's easy, I don't think I'll ever blow that one again."

The three returned to their studies.

5 It was standing room only in the streetcar. But the few who were left standing were men dressed for manual labor. Had there been one or more women standees, one or all of the seminarians surely would have stood and offered his seat. The trio's privately shared slogan was: Chivalry is not dead; it's just ailing.

10 Many of the passengers near the threesome were smiling. Some realized that had they themselves studied so diligently when they were in school, they might now be headed for a job at somewhere other than an automotive assembly line.

Bob Koesler shook his head in silent wonderment. He was preparing for what his teacher called a "pepper-upper" test. The subject was Latin/Religion. All it involved was translating the faithful old Baltimore Catechism into Latin.

15 To Bob, the project seemed useless — as if the Department of Divinity Studies had run out of honest-to-goodness subjects and, in desperation, had turned to the Catechism as a fill-in.

But he had to admit that at least it was an exercise in becoming more familiar with Latin.

20 For parochial students, the Catechism's questions and answers were as old hat as the familiar prayers the kids had memorized long ago.

"Who made me?"

"God made me."

"Why did God make me?"

25 "God made me to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him in this life and be happy with Him forever in the next."

30 It went on, seemingly interminably, through questions and answers about the Creed, the Sacraments, Church law, and the Commandments. By the time Koesler started this course, the Baltimore Catechism was like a tired old friend.

But the language of his Church rite was Latin. In only a few more years, when he and his classmates reached the theologate, Latin would be the language of textbooks, prayer, tests — and sometimes even conversations.

35 Getting more familiar with the language now made sense considering how frequently it would be used by major seminarians and priests. Every morning of every day, Bob would celebrate Mass at least once, speaking and chanting in Latin.

On second thought, he concluded, turning the venerable Q and A of the Baltimore Catechism into Latin was not such a bad idea.

40 He tried to write on his pad. It was challenging, Detroit streetcars ran on ancient tracks. There was a fair amount of swaying and bouncing. It was difficult not only to write but also to read.

The repeated jerking and swaying, and the heat pouring from the registers induced a subtle temptation to nap.

45 The car squeaked to a stop to let some passengers leave and others board. Suddenly everyone was aware of a new element. Raucous voices could be heard coming from the front of the car.

What was causing the problem? Only those toward the front could know.

50 The driver's voice could clearly be heard. He was telling the latest boarders that they would not be permitted to bring something into the car—something that from the sound of it they very much wanted to keep with them. The driver could be understood. The other voices were unintelligible.

Koesler thought he might as well go back to the Catechism and its Latin challenge as try to translate the loud gibberish emanating from the front.

55 Michael Smith glanced at his two companions. They both shrugged. Mike rose from his seat and stretched in an attempt to see what was going on. He wasn't quite tall enough. He too shrugged, then resumed his seat and his study.

60 The dispute up front intensified. The streetcar was not going to move until whoever or whatever the driver wanted removed was gone.

Something akin to an undercurrent of anger made itself evident. Passengers were not taking a streetcar this early in the morning just to secure a favoured table on Belle Isle. They were going to work or to school. They had no patience with anyone or anything that threatened tardiness or immobility.