

Stevens's latest letter was to actor Ralph Macchio of "The Karate Kid" fame. Stevens wants to talk Macchio into playing the life of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, a young Renaissance prince who gave up his title and fortune to become a Jesuit priest. Stevens is working on a book about Gonzaga and wants to get Franco Zeffirelli to direct the film. He wants Macchio because of his Italian look and Zeffirelli because he directed "Romeo and Juliet" and "Jesus of Nazareth." Gonzaga's life would make a superb story, Stevens says, because of a conflict between two brothers; one who was a saint and one who was a scoundrel.

"Renaissance court life was more disgraceful than anything that has ever happened on Dallas," Stevens says chuckling.

Stevens also dreams of having a Catholic TV network modeled after the Public Broadcasting Co. Not the kind of show that evangelizes, he stresses, but for Catholic

education, historical programs, talk shows and drama. And if the monastery was still in its beginning stage when the next shuttle is launched, he would like to be the first priest on the moon. After last year's shuttle tragedy, Stevens says, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration is going to need a chaplain on the next shuttle.

"Imagine the first mass from space," he says wistfully. "I could chant Gregorian chants from space."

And so if Tintern were to fail, Stevens would not despair. He won't see it as a failure but as a beginning.

"When the advantages of success far outweigh the disadvantages, one is a fool not to try," he says.

If the monastery doesn't pan out, Stevens says, and then quickly adds, "even though it won't," it will not have been in vain.

"What would I have lost?" Stevens chirps. "Absolutely nothing. I go back to parish work. Somebody has got to try."



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