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Adsum

Adsum is published by the seminarians of **Mater Dei Seminary** for the enjoyment of our families, friends, and benefactors.



Clerical Tonsure of Joseph Minges during the Pontifical Mass on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

As we begin a new scholastic year at Mater Dei Seminary, there are thirteen seminarians—both religious and secular—in formation for the holy priesthood. During our first week of classes, we celebrated the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (September 8) with a Pontifical High Mass, at which Joseph Minges (California) received clerical tonsure. It is to Mary, the Mother of God, that we have recourse in the spiritual formation of our seminarians into other Christs. Our Lord Himself gave us this beautiful example by His humble, simple life in union with His Mother for thirty years.

We want our seminarians to reflect Christ in their lives that they might truly be the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world.” Our Blessed Mother will help us to achieve this.

As important as the seminarians’ classes are in Philosophy, Latin, Dogmatic and Moral Theology, Canon Law, etc., their spiritual formation is most important. We need *holy* priests who are meek and humble of heart after the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We need zealous priests who burn with the love of God and zeal for the salvation of souls.

Our spiritual exercises begin with morning prayers and meditation, followed by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass,

with the thanksgiving and the Little Hour of Prime afterward. After breakfast and classes, at noon, we pray the Angelus and the Little Hours of Terce, Sext, and None, followed by a midday meditation and examination. After lunch, afternoon classes, and recreation, we pray the Rosary and the Holy Hour of Vespers, followed by a half hour of spiritual reading. In the evening time, before retiring, we have night prayers, final meditation and examination, and the Holy Hour of Compline. All of these spiritual exercises are in the Presence of Our Divine Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, which is the center of our lives.

Although our seminarians vary in age, nationality, and temperament, they have the same goal—the holy priesthood. Their years in the seminary may be compared to a garden in which the soil of the soul must be plowed, planted, weeded, and watered. They need to mortify their fallen human nature and conquer sin and imperfection in their lives. They need to plant solid virtue and water their souls with the grace of God, received through prayer and the reception of the Sacraments.

Please pray for the spiritual success of this seminary year and be assured of our prayers for all of you, our friends and benefactors.

With my prayers and blessings,
Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



Bishop, priests, and seminarians

“Take up Thy Cross and Follow Me” by a seminarian

There are certain feasts in the United States that are unique to our beloved country and that are not found on the Universal Calendar of the Church. Among these we find celebrated on September 26, the feast of the North American Martyrs.

These zealous martyrs were French Jesuit priests who abandoned the comfortable living they enjoyed in Europe to preach the Catholic Faith to some of the Indians of North America—the Hurons, the Algonquins, and the Iroquois. What sacrifices these men had to endure among these uncivilized people!

Yet, in spite of all these sacrifices, these priests had the one burning desire to bring the knowledge of the true God and the Catholic Faith to the Indians. When one reads of the tremendous sacrifices they had to endure as missionaries, it makes the small sacrifices we endure in the seminary seem like nothing. Living in common at the seminary provides opportunities for adjustment and sacrifice, but this is mild in comparison with living among savages.

“Definition of Fear” by a seminarian

In the security of the classroom, the recitation of Latin and the singing of Gregorian chant can be a wonderful and peaceful experience. On the other hand, when it comes to the “real thing,” a seminarian learns not only how to define “fear,” but he can also experience it.

During Holy Week, at the chanting of Tenebrae (the anticipation of Matins and Lauds for Holy Thursday), the chanting of the Lessons on Ember Days, or the Epistle at a Solemn High Mass, what goes on in the mind, heart, legs, arms, and voice of a young cleric? Well, it is probably very similar to what one experiences when he gives his first public speech.

In his mind a certain fog drifts in, and suddenly he begins to wonder how much Latin he really does know. His heart rate rises quickly from its normal rate of 65 to 70 beats and pounds well over a 100 times a minute. He begins to ponder how it happened that his heart is throbbing in his throat and that a certain paralysis affects his legs and arms, together with a minor tremor throughout the whole body. As a seminarian begins the chant, the grace of God uplifts him in his fear and reminds him of the glory that he is giving to God. He realizes that he is doing

St. Isaac Jogues was captured by the Iroquois and was made to run the gauntlet many times. During one of these occasions, an Indian chewed off his thumb. After his escape, he was given special permission by the Pope to offer Mass with his first and middle fingers for the Consecration. The Pope said, “It would not be right to refuse to a martyr of Christ to drink the blood of Christ.” Upon his return to the mission field in North America, St. Isaac Jogues was again captured and put to death by the blow of a hatchet. St. Rene Goupil was martyred by being struck in the head with a tomahawk. St. John de Brebeuf was burned at the stake; he exhibited such courage that an Indian brave cut out his heart and drank his blood in the superstitious belief that he would receive the saint’s courage. Some of the other North American martyrs were Charles Garnier, Anthony Daniel, Noel Chabanel, John de Lalande, and Gabriel Lallemand. The story of their lives among the Indians is both fascinating and inspirational.

Let each of us in our own way look to these North American Martyrs for inspiration. As seminarians, we look to these missionary priests as wonderful examples of the virtue of zeal for the salvation of souls.

what other clerics who have gone before him have done for centuries. When he finishes the Epistle, his heart experiences what is said in response, “Deo Gratias!” As he returns to his place in the sanctuary, he realizes that it was not as difficult as he anticipated, and he begins to eagerly anticipate his next opportunity to participate in the Sacred Liturgy.



Rev. Mr. Brendan Legg chants the Epistle

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

by Very Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D., LL.D., L.H.D.

Catholics Assisting at an Invalid Marriage

Question: If a Catholic assists at the attempted marriage of a Catholic before a non-Catholic clergyman, does he incur the same excommunication that is incurred by the Catholic party of the marriage? The reason for believing he may incur this penalty is the statement of Canon 2231 that in certain circumstances, those who concur in the perpetration of a delict incur the same penalty as the chief culprit.

Answer: According to Canon 2231, only those co-operators incur the same penalty as the principle offender who co-operate in the ways mentioned in Canon 2209 1-3. Now, the mere assistance at an attempted marriage of a Catholic before a non-Catholic clergyman would not put one in any of the categories mentioned in these paragraphs; though it would do so if it constituted an inducement to the marriage so that otherwise the other party would not attempt it.

However, it is well to remember that, even though a penalty is not incurred, the assistance of a Catholic at the attempted marriage of a Catholic before a non-Catholic minister, except in very rare cases, is so proximately a cause of grave scandal and even a manifestation of contempt of the authority of the Church that it must be regarded as a grave sin. A decree of the Congregation of the Propaganda in 1874 stated that regularly such attendance is forbidden, though it added that it could be tolerated for the sake of civil duty only (*civilis officii causa tantum*), provided there be no scandal, danger of perversion, or contempt of ecclesiastical authority (*Collectanea S. Cong. e Prop. Fide, n. 1410*). In our country today the danger of scandal and contempt for ecclesiastical authority are almost always present. Hence, when priests are asked about the lawfulness of attending the marriage of a Catholic relative or friend in a non-Catholic church, the answer should practically always be “NO.”

Davis says: “Assistance at a mixed marriage in a Protestant church would not be tolerated, since this would be co-operating in violating a serious church law which forbids mixed marriages without dispensation, and such a marriage would now be invalid” (*Moral and Pastoral Theology* [London, 1945], I,286). Treating the subject more fully, Bancroft says: “It is certain that Catholics may not be present at such marriages when their presence contains, manifests or implies an approval of the marriage. It seems that, barring other dangers and sinful intention, friends and distant relatives may be present for a more grave reason in proportion to the greater danger of scandal. Near relatives, and especially parents, brothers and sisters, however, would seldom have a reason justifying their presence, because of their obligation to admonish the one who is sinning, and in some cases, because of contempt for the regulations of the Church” (*Communication in Religious Worship with non-Catholics* [Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1943], p. 129).

Adsum, a publication by the seminarians of **MATER DEI SEMINARY** for the reading enjoyment of friends and benefactors, is sent free of charge to all who request it. If you are interested, please provide your name and mailing address to:

MATER DEI SEMINARY
7745 Military Avenue
Omaha NE 68134-3356