



Adsum

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

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Having had a very grace-filled Holy Week and Easter Octave, we find ourselves abruptly at the end of another scholastic year. This week the seminarians will finish their classes, and next week they will have their required three day retreat in preparation for Clerical Tonsure and two of the Minor Orders. On May 11, the feast of Sts. Philip and James, Marcellus Moylan (Hawaii) will receive Tonsure; Creagh Goble (South Africa) and Nino Molina (Philippines) will receive the Orders of Porter and Lector; Frater Anthony Short, CMRI (Colorado), Carlos Borja (Oklahoma), and Julian Voth (Germany) will receive the Orders of Exorcist and Acolyte. Please remember them in your prayers.

As many of you know, Christ the King Monastery in



Seminarians chanting Tenebrae



The chanting of the Passion by Fr. Anaya, Fr. Gregory Drahman, CMRI and Fr. Gronenthal

Alabama has taken a sadly different direction since the death of Abbot Leonard Giardina, OSB. Fr. Sebastian, the prior, himself admitted that for several years he had the consideration to return to the modern Conciliar Church of Vatican II. It should be no wonder then that he rid the monastery and convent of its traditional religious. The truly tragic issue is that all the work of the late Abbot to preserve the traditional Benedictine way of life has been destroyed in a few brief months. To make matters worse, the two remaining priests, Fr. Sebastian and Fr. Michael have published the latest *Speculum* in which they claim the Abbot approved of their return to the Conciliar Church. For those who were close to the Abbot, they know better. In his life time, Abbot Leonard did not reconcile with the Conciliar Church despite the many opportunities at his disposal. Are we now to believe Fr. Sebastian's claim that the Abbot approved of their "return" (compromise/betrayal of the true Faith)?

Since the closing of the monastery to the faithful for Mass, our priests have provided for the spiritual needs of Christ's flock in Alabama every Sunday (except the Sunday after the devastating tornados). If there is a lesson to be



The blessing of Holy Oils on Holy Thursday

learned in this tragedy, it is the reminder of the words of Our Lord, “He that perseveres to the end shall be saved.” In the last *Speculum*, it claimed that “obedience” compelled Fr. Sebastian and Fr. Michael to return to the Conciliar Church. The Conciliar Church which emanated from the Second Vatican Council has openly disobeyed the 1st Commandment, “I am the Lord, thy God, thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.” In the name of false ecumenism and religious indifferentism, the Conciliar Church breaks the First Commandment and it sins against faith by the recognition of and interfaith worship with all the religions of the world. How can these two monks talk about obedience to the Conciliar Church when this apostate institution has contradicted the Divine Law and the infallible teachings of the Catholic Church? The one consolation in this tragedy is that the majority of Abbot Leonard’s faithful have retained the true Faith and attend the traditional Latin Mass.

With the natural disasters that have recently occurred in the earthquakes both in New Zealand and Japan and



*The chanting of the Lessons on Holy Saturday
by Frater Anthony Short, CMRI*

the devastating tornados that have ravaged the southeast States in our country, many people have wondered if Almighty God is telling us something. When people are called to eternity and buildings are obliterated in a matter of moments, the lesson to be learned is that we live in a vale of tears and this present life is not our true home. It is a stark reminder of what life is all about — to know, love, and serve God in this world in order to be happy with Him in the next.

This month of May is the month of Our Heavenly Mother, the Mother of God. In these days of trials and temptations, let us remember the words spoken by God in the Book of Genesis to Satan: “I will put enmities between thee and the Woman, between thy seed and her seed and she shall crush thy head” (Genesis 3:15). May she lovingly protect and keep all of you safe and sound from all spiritual and physical harm.

With our prayers and blessing,
Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



The blessing of the Paschal fire and the Paschal candle



The blessing of the Baptismal Water during the Easter Vigil

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

Bathing Beauty Contests/Cheerleading

Question: What decision should priests give in regard to certain spectacles, quite common nowadays in America, wherein the attention of the spectators is deliberately drawn to the physical charms of scantily clad girls? The example to which I refer particularly are the “bathing beauty contest” and the “majorette” who marches before a band. Many priests seem to regard such procedures as perfectly lawful. At any rate, they do not explicitly condemn girls who take part. And certainly, if we can judge by names, many of the bathing beauty contestants are Catholics. I have even heard that some Catholic bands have majorettes. It seems high time for us to take a stand on these modern American customs, either by pronouncing them perfectly innocent or by vigorously condemning them.

Answer: The theological principle pertinent to the problem proposed by our correspondent is found in our manuals under the subject of passive scandal. According to this principle, a person is not permitted to perform an action (even though the action is perfectly good in itself) which will certainly or probably be an occasion of sin to others, unless the reason for performing this action is sufficiently grave to justify him in omitting an act of charity—namely, the prevention of the sin in question. This principle is simply an application of the more general “principle of the twofold effect” usually found in the treatise on human acts.

Now, the facts in the case proposed are these: at the so-called “bathing beauty contests” (if one can judge by the newspaper pictures and accounts) the participants, garbed in the scantiest costumes, appear before the spectators to be gazed at and evaluated for perfection of physical beauty and form. In some instances even measurements are taken to determine how close they approach to presumably ideal standards. The affair bears a great resemblance to a dog-show or a horse-show, except that human beings, instead of irrational animals, are the objects of scrutiny—and they are presented in a manner that offers a strong sex appeal. The other example adduced by the questioner, that of the majorette, would seem to refer to the case of a girl in a short skirt, who marches before a band, twirling a baton and exhibiting a considerable amount of her anatomy with her gyrations and high-stepping. This may not be so crude and indecent as the beauty contest, yet it undoubtedly deserves to be put in the same category. For its main purpose is unquestionably to call attention to the physical attractiveness of the girl, at least when the band is composed of men or boys. Certainly, if the chief object were to secure an efficient drum-major, the normal thing would be to have a boy or man perform this function for a male band.

Very little knowledge of human nature is required to realize that girls who participate in bathing beauty contest or act as majorettes (in the way described) provide an occasion of sin to some (at least) of the spectators. Indeed, it can be unhesitatingly asserted that when an exhibition of this kind is witnessed by a large number of persons, some mortal sins are sure to be committed, at least in the form of morose delectations and impure desires. It should be emphasized that we are concerned with cases in which not only the manner of dress of the girls is a factor, but also the fact that they are intended to be gazed at closely. The question therefore, comes down to this: Has a girl sufficient reason to exhibit herself in either of the ways described with the certainty that mortal sins will be committed of which she will be the occasion?

For my part I think that the scandal arising from the incidents in question cannot be justified by the temporal advantages just mentioned, and I protest vigorously against these loathsome customs in modern American life, particularly when Catholic girls are the participants. I would not hesitate to tell a girl who is planning to enter a bathing beauty contest that if she does so she will be guilty of mortal sin. In support of this grave denunciation the words of St. Alphonsus (referring to a girl who knows that her presence will be the occasion of sins of desire on the part of a man) are appropriate: “I could not excuse her from mortal sin if, led by vanity, she would deliberately (*data opera*) offer herself to the gaze of a man, even though she does not intend to scandalize him.” (*Theologia moralis* [Gaude, Rome, 1905], Lib. II, n. 53)

I have heard of a bishop who expelled a girl from a Catholic college because she took part in a bathing beauty contest. I have also heard of a Holy Name parade from which all majorettes were excluded by order of the diocesan chancery. But unfortunately, such decisive action, commendable though it is, seems to be the exception. Catholic girls appear before the eyes of a large group of men in a manner calculated to inspire lustful thoughts and desire, and yet their pastors have little or nothing to say about it. Is it not time that priests in the United States do more than they are doing to prevent the numerous sins of scandal that are being committed in our land under the flimsy pretext of promoting the appreciation of beauty and of art—sins which are gross violations of the norms of purity proclaimed by the tradition of the Catholic Church and the instructions of many Popes?

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