



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,

As a new school year for our students and a new scholastic year for our seminarians begins, it is indeed an understatement to say things have been busy here. Fr. Gregory, Fr. Gronenthal, and myself teach classes all day in our seminary and high school, and on the weekends maintain multiple Mass centers throughout the Midwest.

It is truly a joy to experience the tremendous growth in our parishes, schools, and seminary. This year we will have eleven seminarians, two young men having been temporarily delayed. Our academy (K-12 grades) which has now reached over 100 students, is our primary source for vocations. With daily Mass, the recitation of the Rosary before the Blessed Sacrament and the good example of our priests and religious, the seeds of priestly and religious vocations are planted in the hearts and souls of our youth.

On September 8th, the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Brother Pius Maria, CMRI (Dominic Davis from Colorado) was received as a novice brother; Michael Walt from Wisconsin and Dominic Crawford from California entered CMRI as postulants.



*Mater Dei Seminary —
our 21st scholastic year*

Two more young men will join the seminary as CMRI religious in the next few weeks — one will be received as a postulant and another, from St. Joseph's Minor Seminary, who is already a postulant will be received as a novice.

Whether a young man feels called to the priesthood as a religious or a secular, the important thing is that he does



Mater Dei Academy—our 24th school year

God's will. Our CMRI priests have been assisted by our secular priests for many years now and they work in harmony. In these difficult times, our clergy recognize the need and the advantages of working together. With the ordination of Fr. Michael Oswald and Fr. Brendan Legg this past June, there are now thirty-two priests who work under me. Every day during the Memento of the Living at Holy Mass, I pray for all of our priests. Within the next two years, there will be more priests to ordain and this should help relieve our priests who are already over-extended.

On an entirely different topic, the flooding of the Missouri River is finally receding and has left behind devastated interstate highways between Nebraska and Iowa. This has been a major inconvenience for our religious Sisters and our boarder girls who reside in Iowa and who have had to take alternate routes every day to come for Holy Mass and school. The repair of these highways may take as long as the end of 2012 for completion. What a cross! Fiat!

Thank you for your prayers and support!

With my prayers and blessings,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



Carlos Borja chants the epistle during the Solemn High Mass on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Br. Pius Maria, CMRI (Dominic Davis) receives the religious habit



Michael Walt and Dominic Crawford enter CMRI as postulants

Assessment of the Assisi Meetings 1986 and 2011

by Bishop Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the interfaith prayer service convoked by John Paul II. In this 1986 meeting, the leaders of non-Catholic Churches and non-Christian religions were invited to pray for world peace.

Although this ecumenical gathering was one of many arranged by John Paul II, it was significant that the once Catholic churches of Assisi were used by the various Churches and religions, including the Buddhists who placed a statue of Buddha on the tabernacle and offered incense to it.

How important it is for traditional Catholics today to be able to properly assess how evil and scandalous this event was.

To begin our assessment, let us consider the first Commandment of God, “I am the Lord Thy God, thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.” By the first Commandment Catholics are forbidden to worship with other religions, for there is but one religion revealed by God. This one religion alone has the divine proof—miracles and prophecies, which St. Pius X taught in his Oath against Modernism, are the surest signs of the divine origin of the Christian religion. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, perfectly fulfilled all the prophecies which related to the Messiah and worked miracles of the most stupendous nature to prove His Divine Nature and mission. No other religion in the world has this divine proof. Christ Our Lord founded one true Church and commissioned that Church “to teach all nations all things whatsoever He commanded” (Matthew 28:19).

For this reason, the Catholic Church has always condemned religious indifferentism—that erroneous belief that all religions are more or less good and praiseworthy. Pope Pius IX in his Syllabus of Errors, in 1864, explicitly condemned this error. The 1917 Code of Canon Law (Canon 1258) forbids Catholics to participate in the worship of non-Catholics. Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Mortalium Animos*, 1928, explicitly condemned false ecumenism.

Let us read the teachings of Pope Pius XI in light of the abomination that took place in Assisi in 1986 under John Paul II and the celebration of the anniversary of this abomination this year by Benedict XVI.

Mortalium Animos

Pope Pius XI

“With this object, congresses, meetings, and addresses are arranged, attended by a large concourse of hearers, where all without distinction, unbelievers of every kind as well as Christians, even those who unhappily have rejected Christ and denied His Divine Nature or mission, are invited to join in the discussion. Now, such efforts can meet with no kind of approval among Catholics. They presuppose the erroneous view that all religions are more or less good and praiseworthy, inasmuch as all give expression, under various

forms, to that innate sense which leads men to God and to the obedient acknowledgment of His rule. Those who hold such a view are not only in error; they distort the true idea of religion, and thus reject it, falling gradually into naturalism and atheism. To favor this opinion, therefore, and to encourage such undertakings is **tantamount to abandoning the religion revealed by God.**”

Further on in his encyclical, Pope Pius XI explains the principles upon which he condemns this false ecumenism:

“God, the Creator of all things, made us that we might know Him and serve Him; to our service, therefore, He has a full right. He might indeed have been contented to prescribe for man’s government the natural law alone, that is, the law which in creation He has written upon man’s heart, and have regulated the progress of that law by His ordinary Providence. He willed, however, to make positive laws which we should obey, and progressively, from the beginning of the human race until the coming and preaching of Jesus Christ, He Himself taught mankind the duties which a rational creature owes to his Creator. ‘*God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all in these days hath spoken to us by His Son*’ (Heb. 1:1, seq.) Evidently, therefore, no religion can be true save that which rests upon the revelation of God, a revelation begun from the very first, continued under the Old Law, and brought to completion by Jesus Christ Himself under the New. Now, if God has spoken—and it is historically certain that He has in fact spoken—then it is clearly man’s duty implicitly to believe His revelation and to obey His commands. That we might rightly do both, for the glory of God and for our own salvation, the only-begotten Son of God founded His Church on earth. None, we think, of those who claim to be Christians will deny that a Church, and one sole Church, was founded by Christ.”

As we see the formation of a one world religion unfolding before us, this encyclical of Pope Pius XI is truly providential for us in these times of apostasy.

Anyone can logically conclude from the 1986 Assisi meeting that John Paul II, the head of the Conciliar Church of Vatican II, recognizes the value of prayers offered to false gods. If this is not the logical conclusion, then why did he invite the Buddhists, the Hindus, and a multitude of other non-Christian religions to Assisi to pray for world peace? Are we to now suppose that there are no longer any false gods in the world? Are we to suppose that there should now only be nine Commandments because the first Commandment is no longer relevant?

The 1986 Assisi meeting was an abomination, and for Benedict XVI to celebrate this event manifests to all that he continues the apostasy of his predecessor.

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

Country or Conscience

Question: One of the questions sometimes put to Catholics in the United States is this: “In the event that there was a conflict between the laws of our country and the teachings of the Catholic Church, which would you obey?” What reply should a Catholic give to this query?

Answer: The question quoted by our correspondent is often intended to put Catholics in a situation in which they can be blamed, whatever answer they may give. If they answer that they would obey the civil law, they will be told that they are not consistent with the principles of the Catholic faith; if they answer that they would obey the teachings of the Church, they will be accused of disloyalty to their country.

I believe that the best rejoinder to this question is to question the interrogator: “What would you do if a civil law was passed that would be contrary to the law of God as your conscience dictates?” If the person questioned answers that under all circumstances he would regard the civil law as superior to every other form of legislation—in other words, if he accepts the principle “My country, right or wrong”—there would not be much advantage in arguing with him, since there is no common ground on which a discussion can be conducted. But I do not believe that there are many Americans who follow such an extreme view.

Most of the citizens of our land accept the principle that in a conflict between civil legislation and the divine law, the latter should be given precedence. Actually, the American government put this principle into operation several years ago, to refute some of the Nazi war criminals. When they claimed that they performed acts of cruelty because they were commanded to do so by their civil laws or by their superiors, they were told that there is a higher law (the law which is called the natural law by Catholics) which must be obeyed, even when it is contrary to the civil laws or the laws of superiors. Most of the citizens of our land accept this principle, whatever be their religious beliefs.

However, if some legislative act were passed in our land which the Church would officially declare contrary to the law of God, Catholics would accept the decision of the Church. For example, if any state legalized “mercy killing” (and attempts are being made to pass such a measure in some of our states) Catholics would be bound in conscience to refuse all participation in this procedure, which is simply murder. Thus, a Catholic judge would not be permitted to authorize the killing of a sick person, a Catholic doctor would not be allowed to administer a lethal drug, even though this were commanded by state law or civil officials. Catholics should not hesitate to explain these principles to their non-Catholic fellow citizens. We are not ashamed to declare our stand—that in the event of a conflict between civil law and God’s law as authoritatively declared by our Church, we should give preference to God’s law.

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