



# 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,

This newsletter is composed just before my departure to Spokane for the Fatima Conference. As I will be gone for four days, the first and second year seminarians will be busy taking mid-quarter exams in philosophy and dogmatic theology, while the more advanced seminarians will continue their studies in moral theology and canon law. This is in addition to the courses which Fr. Gregory teaches. Altogether, the seminarians have five and a half hours of classes daily.

Since Fr. Gregory and I have covered the various courses repeatedly, we have well organized files of examinations for each of our subjects. In the beginning, it was certainly tedious to formulate tests for each subject, but after so many years, the work has become much more facilitated.

As I was going through my files of tests on the different branches of philosophy, I showed the younger seminarians the various exams given in the past which

dated back to the early 1980's and which pre-dated many of their own dates of birth. Over the years, we have been able to acquire all the textbooks traditionally used in seminaries of old. By the time the seminarians are ordained to the priesthood they have a good collection of books to use for future reference. Thanks to computers, scanners and printers, any books that we can no longer acquire are reprinted for our present and future seminarians.

Over the years, we have been very fortunate to discover around the country a number of bookstores with old liturgical books, such as the Roman breviary, the Roman ritual and the Pontificale Romanum, that are no longer in print today and which would be extremely difficult to reprint. We have a very respectable collection which we acquired at quite reasonable prices.

Besides our prayers and studies, our seminarians have had the motto of St. Benedict, "ora et labora," that is pray and work. With over 60 priests, religious Sisters, seminarians and boarder boys and girls to feed every day, this fall has been occupied with multiple chores to cut our food costs. To begin with, three of our



*Students & Faculty of Mater Dei Academy 2013*



*Seminarians loading bales of alfalfa*



*Boarder girls and the first truckload of apples*



*Brother Philip with two more new arrivals*

dairy cows have had calves, which brings our herd to 8 animals. As alfalfa is their main diet, the seminarians helped put up over 800 bales into storage to last us through the winter and spring until our pasture land turns green again. Another food orientated project is the renewal of our flock of egg laying chickens. The fertilized chicken eggs are incubated at the seminary until the chicks hatch. When the chicks acquire all their feathers they are taken to the convent to join the older hens. We've also been fortunate to have access to some orchards in the area which have provided us with an abundance of apples that are turned into apple cider, apple vinegar, and apple sauce. After processing two truckloads of apples, I am not sure if any of the seminarians, religious Sisters, or boarder students want to see another apple in their life!

This month we celebrate the titular feast of the seminary, convent, and academy—the Divine Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. From this dignity of Our Lady flows her other prerogatives—her Immaculate Conception, her bodily Assumption into heaven, and her glorious Coronation as Queen of heaven and earth. May she who has been chosen by God to crush the head of Satan intercede for us that God bless our undertakings and protect us from the wiles and snares of the devil!

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



*Postulants bottle feeding new calves*



# *The History of Today's Calendar*

*by a Seminarian*

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Most people in the world and perhaps many Catholics take for granted that we have a calendar to follow; yet, how many know that the calendar we use today came into existence only during the 1500's, by means of the Council of Trent?

We owe our calendar to Pope Gregory XIII, who promulgated this masterpiece of science and time during the last session of that Council.

The work of this calendar was not an easy undertaking. To grasp in a small way the tremendous task, we must understand our year.

The Year, or the Tropical Year, is the period of time in which the earth travels around the sun. The constellations in the night sky, or the zodiac, were used to determine how long this took. For example, when the position of the earth came back to the same zodiac sign, the New Year began. This was reckoned to be 365 days and some odd hours. Ancient astronomers used the equinoxes as easy references to govern this. However, it was a difficult task to find out the accurate amount of time that had passed since the previous year.

Julius Caesar attempted to rectify this situation by implementing a system in which the year was calculated to be 365 days and 6 hours long. He had asked the assistance of the astronomers of Alexandria. It was determined then, that after every four years, in the fourth year, an extra day would be added to make up for the extra time. He implemented this calendar in 46 B.C. The problem was that this calculation was inaccurate. The year is actually 11 minutes and 14 seconds shorter than what was figured. With the former calculation, by the fifth year, the new year would have begun 44 minutes and 52 seconds after the sun had actually passed the equinox. Thus, the extra day every four years was about 45 minutes too long. After about four centuries, the calendar would have been 3 days off. To make matters worse, Julius Caesar was murdered just two years after having implemented the new calendar and also there happened to be a misunderstanding about leap year. It was thought to occur every three years instead of four.

After the Julian reform, the vernal equinox was designated to be on the 25th of March. But at the

Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.) this was changed permanently to the 21st day of March which had great bearing on determining the feast of Easter.

Unfortunately, with a mistaken system of leap year occurring every three years, the order of things began to be disturbed. By the thirteenth century, the calendar was already seven days behind the Nicene calculation. By the sixteenth century, it was behind by ten days. This meant that the vernal equinox fell on the 11th of March, the autumnal equinox on the 11th of September, and the winter and summer solstices were on the 11th of December and the 11th of June.

These mistakes in the calendar were too obvious to be ignored. Many observers had tried to point them out and attempted to devise a way of correcting them, but to no avail. Finally, the dilemma was addressed at the Council of Trent. Pope Gregory XIII had consulted the most brilliant minds of their times (Lilius, Clavius, and Chacon) for devising the new calendar. First of all, the ten extra days were eliminated. As a matter of fact, St. Teresa of Avila was in her last agony on the 4th of October; she died the next day on the 15th of October! This just happened to be at the time when the Church decided to remove the ten extra days. The Church also determined that it would omit three leap years from every four centuries, and thus eliminate the three superfluous days. Then it was determined that the centurion year, or the year that a new century started, would be a leap year only if the number of the year was divisible by 4. So the calendar was made almost accurate. The year is still 26 seconds over the actual astronomical calculation, but with the present system, it will be about thirty-four more centuries before the calendar will be off a day, which will not occur until about the year 5300 A.D.

The New Calendar of the Church Year contained in the Roman Missal was promulgated along with this calendar of which we are speaking by the aforementioned Pope. We definitely should be grateful to our Holy Mother the Church for giving us such an accurate calendar.

*Reference used: The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. III, 1908, pp. 168-9)*

# Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

## Public Mass for Non-Catholics

**Question:** Canon 2262, § 2, 2, forbids the celebration of Mass for an excommunicated person unless it takes place privately; and if he is a *vitandus* the intention may be only for his conversion. Does it follow from this that one may not celebrate Mass publicly for the conversion of non-Catholics?

**Answer:** It would seem that if Mass is to be offered for the conversion of an individual heretic, schismatic, or apostate, the function must be private—that is, without any external pomp or public announcement. For baptized non-Catholics are treated in law as excommunicated persons. However, since they are not in the category of *excommunicatei vitandi*, there is no reason why the Holy Sacrifice may not be offered privately, not only for their conversion, but also for their other spiritual and temporal needs—e.g., for peace of soul, recovery of health (Cf. Cappello, *De sacramentis* [Rome, 1938], I, n. 618). Unbaptized non-Catholics cannot be excommunicated persons; hence, *per se* Mass could be offered for them publicly. However, *per accidens*, because of the danger of scandal, this should not be done ordinarily (cf. Damen, *Theologia moralis* [Turin, 1947], II, n. 193). But these rules evidently are concerned primarily with the application of the Holy Sacrifice for determined individuals. There would seem to be no objection to the public offering of Mass for the conversion of heretics, schismatics, and apostates and infidels, in general. Indeed, one of the votive Masses in the Missal is directed to the removal of schism.

## The Freezing of the Sacred Species

**Question:** Chemists tell us that when wine freezes, a chemical change takes place. If that is true, it would seem that in the event that the consecrated species of wine freeze, the Real Presence ceases. If, then, an accident of this nature occurs when a priest is celebrating Mass, should he consider that Our Lord is no longer present under the frozen species and accordingly consecrate more wine or perhaps re-consecrate the contents of the chalice after the species have been thawed out?

**Answer :** The rubrics of the Missal are quite explicit on this matter: “if in the winter the Blood is frozen in the chalice, the chalice shall be wrapped in heated cloths; if that would not avail, it shall be placed in hot water near the altar, provided the water does not get into the chalice, until it thaws out” (*De Defectibus*, X, 11). Evidently the Church is convinced that the Real Presence abides even in the frozen species, since the Missal refers to them as “the Blood” and there is no provision made for a repetition of the consecration of the wine after the species have been thawed out.

To the difficulty adduced by the questioner, based on the findings of chemistry, the answer is that Our Lord instituted the sacraments in such wise that the norms for judging the requirements for their validity are to be sought in the judgment of the ordinary person rather than in the technical principles of science. Now, when wine is frozen, the ordinary person still refers to it as wine and considers that it has undergone no substantial change. Applying this concept to the Holy Eucharist, we conclude that, whatever the chemists may say, the freezing of the consecrated species is not to be regarded as a substantial change, and accordingly that it does not cause the cessation of the Real Presence. For this reason, when the species have been thawed out, the priest is to continue the Mass without consecrating a new quantity of wine or re-consecrating what was consecrated previously.

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