



Adsum

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LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

One of the main highlights of this past month was our biannual priests' meeting held at Mount St. Michael in Spokane, Washington.

This particular gathering was attended by 21 priests and presented a tremendous opportunity for the clergy—both religious and secular—to make a necessary review of Canon Law, moral theology and dogmatic theology, to discuss various issues that affect our churches and chapels around the country, and to coordinate activities throughout the next six months (Confirmations, ordinations, religious vows).

At our meetings, each priest addresses his fellow priests as to his sphere of priestly work and presents any thoughts and concerns for their consideration. The primary purpose of these meetings is to maintain unity

among our priests and to resolve any difficulties which might arise. There is strength in unity and our Divine Lord prayed at the Last Supper that the Apostles would be united in faith and charity.

Among the goals projected for the near future, I presented to the priests the advantage of having additional priests or religious at each of our Mass centers. In the Gospel of St. Luke, Our Lord gave us the example when He sent out His disciples two by two. By way of exception and to provide for the urgent, spiritual needs of the faithful, some of our priests are stationed by themselves. This is an exception but certainly not the rule. How beneficial it is for the clergy to have fellow clergymen to pray their Divine Office in common and to be a spiritual support for one another.

Our experience is that when our priests do have the opportunity to be together for these priest meetings or ordinations that a real spiritual bond is strengthened.





*Clerical Tonsure at St. Joseph Seminary
in Rathdrum, Idaho*

Our Lord has warned that a house divided cannot stand and how essential is unity in these times.

During this week, Fr. Bernard Welp, CMRI, pronounced his final vows as a religious. The reason that he was ordained before his final vows was that he entered the seminary as a secular seminarian and later on was called also to the religious life.

Also, Robert Letourneau (Boston, Massachusetts), who resides at St. Joseph Minor Seminary in Rathdrum, Idaho, having completed his study of Philosophy, received First Clerical Tonsure. Robert is a late vocation and by way of exception he makes his studies with Fr. Benedict Hughes, CMRI.

This year Fr. Dominic Radecki, CMRI, and his twin brother Fr. Francisco Radecki, CMRI, will celebrate their silver jubilees of ordination to the priesthood. Let us please remember them in our prayers and give thanks to God for all the spiritual good that has been accomplished through their priestly instrumentality.

As we begin the holy season of Lent, let us remember the purpose and the necessity of penance—to atone for our past sins and to subjugate our fallen human nature. Let us also remember how beneficial it is to meditate seriously on the Passion of Christ by means of the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary and also the Stations of the Cross.

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

Your Cross

by St. Francis de Sales

The everlasting God has in His wisdom foreseen from eternity the cross that He now presents to you as a gift from His all-knowing eyes, understood with His Divine mind, tested with His wise justice, warmed with loving arms and weighted with His own hands to see that it be not one inch too large and not one ounce too heavy for you. He has blessed it with His holy Name, anointed it with His grace, perfumed it with His consolation, taken one last glance at you and your courage, and then sent it to you from heaven, a special greeting from God to you, an alms of the all-merciful love of God.



The Infant of Prague

by a seminarian

In 1624, the Discalced Carmelites, who came from Austria, Spain, and Italy, founded a monastery in Prague, and lived there in the most austere poverty. One day in 1628, Princess Polyxena Labkowitz brought them a waxen image of the Child Jesus. The Prior Father gladly accepted the statue and committed the community to assemble before it twice a day for meditation and prayer. Soon thereafter they enthroned the statue, and almost immediately the conditions of the Carmelites improved. First, the Emperor Ferdinand II issued a royal decree that each monastery should receive two thousand florin a month. Another happening that took place was that a vineyard which had been fruitless for years suddenly began to flourish. However, from the oppression of the Protestants, the monks were forced to leave the city of Prague, and even Bohemia itself, having to take refuge in Bavaria in southern Germany. These invaders desecrated many churches and monasteries, casting this precious statue from its place of honor to the trash heap. Miraculously, the statue survived this ordeal, except that the hands were broken off.

Once peace was restored to the country, the monks returned to the monastery, and, upon finding the Infant Jesus in the rubble with His hands broken off, they restored Him to His place of honor. One of the monks was particularly devoted to the Infant Jesus. This was Father Cyril of the Mother of God, who, while praying to the Infant Jesus, heard a very distinct and child-like voice saying, "Have pity on Me, and I will honor you. Give Me My hands and I will give you peace. The more you honor Me, the more will I bless you." He was bound and determined to have the hands repaired, but, due to the poverty of the monastery and the hard times, he met with great opposition and the repair was postponed.

After much trouble, however, a benefactor was found and the hands were repaired. Just as the Infant Jesus had

promised, miracles occurred almost instantly. The man who repaired the statue, having suffered many years of marital discord, experienced peace and a happy home-life. The plague, which was rapidly spreading through Europe and the monastery, was on the verge of claiming the Prior himself. However, when he humbly besought the Divine Infant, his health was restored.

Because of this great favor, the Prior realized the great religious treasure which they possessed, and thereupon ordered a general devotion to the Infant Jesus for the whole community. The statue was relocated from the Carmelite monastery to the Church of Our Lady of Victory so that the faithful might also pray to the Divine Infant.

The devotion to the Infant of Prague became very great due to the answered prayers and the many miracles. Numerous cures are recorded and historically accredited directly to the Infant Jesus. Just a few examples: the Countess Elizabeth Kolowrat, who became critically ill was restored to full health; the only son of Adam Ulrich and Anna Maria Poppelina, who had been seriously ill, was miraculously healed. Once again, the needs of the monastery were obtained by the intercession of the Divine Infant Jesus due to the donations of many prominent people.

When war threatened again, this time by the Swedish in 1648, the monks remained in their monastery trusting in the Divine Infant Jesus that He would not desert them, and they were not harmed. So it is with these few and the many other recorded instances of the miraculous intervention of the Divine Infant that the statue is so well known.

This is once again another beautiful example of our traditional Catholic Faith and its endurance in troubling times of sickness, persecution, war, and death itself. Devotion to the Infant Jesus has proven to be a great help in spiritual and physical trials in the past and will continue to be so in the future.



Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

Courtship Before the Declaration of Nullity

Question: A priest finds that a young woman is keeping company with a man who was previously married and is now civilly divorced, but who has applied to ecclesiastical authorities for a declaration of nullity. May the young woman be allowed to continue the courtship?

Answer: If the reason which this man is adducing in the attempt to prove his previous marriage invalid is one that is doubtful, so that the outcome of the case is uncertain, the courtship must be broken off at once, and the young woman should be told that to continue would be a mortal sin. Such would be the case if the petition for a declaration of nullity is based on alleged lack of consent or on a claim of unjust fear in entering the union. A case of this kind is usually decided only after a long period of investigation, and even then the declaration may be a refusal of the petition for nullification. If the couple have been keeping company in the meantime, they are very likely to attempt a civil marriage because the ecclesiastical court seems too slow or because the response to the petition is unfavorable. Company-keeping in this situation is a serious occasion of sin and in itself is an act of scandal.

If the reason on which the man is basing his petition for a declaration of nullity is one that offers practical certainty of the favorable outcome—for example, the fact that the previous marriage of the man, a Catholic, took place before a civil magistrate—some might be inclined to judge the case more leniently and allow a girl to keep company with him even before the ecclesiastical court has given its decision. I cannot agree with this opinion because I fear it offers an opening wedge to general laxity in this matter. I believe that company-keeping with a view to future marriage can be allowed only after the declaration of nullity has actually been given, no matter how evident the nullity of the previous marriage may appear.

Instructions on Modesty in Dress

Question: The attitude of priests in regard to preaching and instructing their people on modesty in dress seems to vary considerably. Some denounce the modern styles vehemently, not hesitating to state that those who adopt these types of dress are guilty of grave sin. Others follow a lenient policy, and even declare that we should be broadminded in this matter and not make any protest when our Catholics adopt modern styles. Which attitude, do you think, is the better?

Answer : I believe that a middle course is the more commendable. We must admit that some changes in dress are admissible, so that a garb that would be regarded as immodest a generation ago would not necessarily be forbidden today. Hence, a priest would not be acting prudently if he regarded as the proper norms of decent dress the standards accepted thirty or forty years ago. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that there are many girls and women who dress immodestly, even taking into consideration these changes of styles. Priests who bring this fact to the notice of their people and urge them to avoid any type of dress that might be an occasion of sin to those who see them or associate with them are following the example of the Holy See, which from time to time issues a warning on the subject of dress. This is another example of the fundamental truth that we must ever keep before the minds of our Catholic people—that they may not indiscriminately follow the ways of the world and at the same time convince themselves that they are good Catholics. They cannot serve God and Mammon. And priests should not be deterred from speaking on the obligation to dress modestly by the fact that many of their hearers will not heed their admonition. In this matter—as in respect to contraception, graft, excessive drinking, etc.—we must preach Catholic doctrine constantly and without compromise, even though many will not heed our words.

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