



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,

One of the most common means to renew our spiritual fervor as priests and religious is the practice of the annual retreat. It has been our custom for many years at the seminary to make this spiritual exercise a few days prior to the feast of Corpus Christi and to conclude it on this feast with a Solemn High Mass and the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament at which all of the priests assist.

It is an interesting fact that there are a number of large corporations that recommend, if not require, their top executives to make the time to become “disconnected” from all electrical technology in order to “rebuild” themselves mentally, emotionally, and physically. I have read of a major corporation whose CEO becomes a “recluse” every year in order to present innovative ideas to his company.

What people in the world have begun to realize and to do on a natural level in order to achieve greater productivity, the Catholic Church for many centuries has practiced on a spiritual level. Silence, recollection, meditation, mental prayer, spiritual conferences, and spiritual reading are the necessary elements to rebuild our spiritual life and to produce a greater amendment of life.

Not only does the Church require priests and religious to make retreats, our seminarians must also make a retreat of three days prior to the ordination to the minor orders and six days before the ordination to major orders. This time of separation and seclusion from the world are an excellent means for them to prepare for the proper and worthy reception of orders.

Pope Pius IX, in his encyclical *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii*, warned priests of the danger of external works:

“It would be a grave error fraught with many dangers should the priest, carried away by false zeal, neglect his own sanctification, and become over immersed in the external works, however holy, of the priestly ministry. Thereby, he would run a double risk. In the first place he endangers his own eternal salvation, as the great Apostle of the Gentiles feared for himself: ‘But I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection: lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway.’ In the second place he might lose, if not divine grace, certainly that unction of the Holy Spirit which gives such a marvellous force and efficacy to the external apostolate... Indeed the priest’s relations with God are so intimate, so delicate and so frequent, that clearly they should ever be graced by the sweet odour of piety.”

Spiritual retreats and days of recollection are not only beneficial to the clergy and religious, but also are highly recommended to the laity. This is not always feasible; however, if the opportunity ever presents itself, it should not be passed over.

During the month of June, the CMRI priests will hold their chapter in Spokane, Washington, which occurs every six years. The purpose of this meeting is to elect the Superior General and the priest consultors who tend to the government of the congregation. A few weeks later, all of the priests—both religious and secular—will gather in Omaha, Nebraska, for our bi-annual priests’ meeting. The purpose of the priests’ meetings is to coordinate our schedules, to review moral theology and canon law, and to discuss various Church issues. How important is the aspect of unity amongst our priests! As Our Lord once said, “A house divided cannot stand.” This is especially true today during the present crisis in the Church.

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



Reception of a postulant



Reception of the Minor Order of Acolyte



First Vows ceremony on the Feast of Pentecost

Excerpts from the Fathers of the Church on Holy Orders

“And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” St. Matt. 28:18-20

“Do this for a commemoration of me.” St. Luke 22:19

“Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.” St. John 20:22,23

“And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the Apostles; and they praying, imposed hands upon them.” Acts 6:5,6

Origen (255 A.D.): “Dost thou think that they who exercise the ministry and glory in the order of the priesthood, walk according to their order and do all things which beseem that order? In like manner, deacons, do they walk according to the order of their ministry? Whence then is it that we often hear men blaspheme, and say, ‘See what a bishop,’ or, ‘What a presbyter,’ or, ‘What a deacon?’ Is not this said, when either a priest or a minister of God has dared to proceed in anywise contrary to the sacerdotal or Levitical order?”

Apostolic Constitutions (compiled about 400 A.D.): “The bishop gives a blessing and does not receive it; he imposes hands, ordains, and offers sacrifice, he receives a blessing from the bishops, but never from priests. The bishop deposes every cleric that deserves deposition, except a bishop, for this he cannot do alone. The presbyter (priest) gives a blessing, and does not receive it: he receives a blessing from the bishop and from a fellow-priest, in like manner he blesses his fellow-priest; he imposes hands, but does not ordain; he deposes no one, but excommunicates those under him, if they deserve

this punishment. The deacon does not give a blessing, but receives it from the bishop and the presbyter; he baptizes not, he offers not; but when the bishop or the presbyter offer, he distributes (communion) to the people, not indeed as priest, but as minister of the priest.”

St. Chrysostom (407 A.D.): “*And they praying imposed hands upon them.*” From this it is evident that they separated them from the multitude; and they bring them, the Apostles do not lead them. Observe how the writer avoids redundancy; for he does not say *how* they were ordained, but simply *that* they were *ordained by prayer*. Because *this* is the ordination. The hand is imposed upon a man, but God works all, and it is His hand that touches the head of him that is ordained, if he be ordained in a manner he ought to be.”

St. Augustine (430 A.D.): “When it is judged expedient for the Church, that such prelates on returning to the Catholic Fellowship, should not exercise therein their honors, the sacraments themselves of ordination are not taken away from them, but remain with them.”

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

The Obligation of the Sunday Sermon during the Summer

Question: What is to be said of the custom of entirely omitting sermons at Sunday Masses during the summer months?

Answer: The Code of Canon Law imposes on pastors the obligation of delivering a homily to their people on Sundays and holydays of obligation, especially in the Mass which is attended by the greatest number of people. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore prescribes that on all Sundays and feast days, *even in summer*, there shall be a sermon of at least five minutes duration, if time permits, all custom and pretext to the contrary notwithstanding. Surely, it seldom happens that there is no time for even a five-minute sermon on Sundays. According to Abbo-Hannan, authors hold that it is a mortal sin to omit Sunday sermons for a month.

"Best Sellers" and the Index

Question: Does the Church usually consign immoral or irreligious "best sellers" by name to the Index of Forbidden Books? When our parishioners ask us about these "best sellers," what should we answer?

Answer: We should tell these questioners that most immoral or irreligious "best sellers" are not consigned by name to the Index of Forbidden Books. Such books are usually not condemned in this formal manner, because the Church is not accustomed to put books on the Index by name when they are only works of ephemeral interest. However, we should add that by general Church legislation all those books are forbidden to Catholics that professedly treat of obscene or lascivious subjects, or that deride Catholic dogmas, defend errors condemned by the Holy See, or cast opprobrium on the hierarchy or clerical or religious state. Hence all such "best sellers" are forbidden to Catholics, except those who have permission to read them.

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