



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 month will have a very full schedule of activities for our priests and seminarians. Our bi-annual priests' meeting will be held the first week of July. Although our seminarians will not attend the conferences, there will be over 20 Masses offered each morning for them to set up and serve. Among our priest attendees, Fr. Alexander Kryssov, from Moscow, Russia, has just arrived after an entire day of travel and multiple layovers; he greatly appreciates the opportunity to have comradery with his fellow priests.

Some of our priests who will not be able to attend but, nevertheless, are in close contact with me are Fr. Julian Gilchrist in Australia, Fr. Brendan Legg in New Zealand, and Fr. Nino Molina in the Philippines. In a recent telephone conversation with Fr. Molina, he related that his growing flock in the Philippines pray that his U.S. Visa is not renewed so that he can remain there; Fr. Molina said humorously, "We will see whose prayers are more powerful—the faithful in the Philippines or the faithful in the U.S."

Fr. Gilchrist was able to come to Spokane this past May for a few weeks. This provided us an opportunity

to discuss his priestly work in Australia.

Fr. Brendan Legg frequently consults with me by telephone about his missions in New Zealand. He travels great distances primarily by bus on a weekly basis—it saves on expenses and provides him with extra time for the recitation of his breviary, rosary and sermon preparation.

Following the priests' meeting, our religious seminarians will drive to Mt. St. Michael in Spokane, Washington, to work on maintenance for one month; while our secular seminarians will remain in Omaha to assist with driving our priests for Sunday Mass circuits and to lend a helping hand for the up-coming boys' camp. At this time, all the seminarians are putting in overtime to finish laying tile in the seminary classroom to replace the old carpet there, and they are also re-tiling the seminary kitchen and basement. Needless to say, all the desks, kitchen appliances and furniture are everywhere and there are two short days left before our priests arrive.

On a different note, it is certainly a sign of the times that our Supreme Court has ruled in favor of same-sex "marriages." Needless to say, this decision of the Supreme Court will open the door to future problems for so-called discrimination and "hate crimes" against gays and lesbians. On the contrary, Catholics hate no one; we certainly do not want anyone to go to Hell. Holy Scripture is very clear that those given to the sin of homosexuality will go to



Hell. We pray for their conversion.

As horrific as the Supreme Court decision was, the greater scandal comes from the modern Conciliar Church itself. As I have mentioned in the past, Francis I and the modern hierarchy have, by their words and actions, shown their acceptance of this unnatural sin. Francis I commented: "If a person is gay and seeks the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge that person?" "Cardinal" Timothy Dolan reiterated the same in regard to a football player who "came out of the closet." He said no one should judge him and that he would tell him "God bless ya!" At the Synod on the Family this past fall, the majority of Vatican II "bishops" and "cardinals" attending, voted in favor of communion reception for those living in adultery and also voted in favor of a statement that homosexuality has positive elements for the Christian community. Furthermore, Francis I received in a private audience a Ms. Neria-Lejaraga, a transgender, with her girl friend so-called fiance. Also in Rome, he gave special recognition to "Father" Luigi Ciotti, a notorious pro-homosexual activist. The great tragedy is that these apostate clergy continue to use the name of Catholicism and thus bring great discredit to the Catholic Church.



Father Alexander Kryssov from Moscow arrives early for our priests' meetings



Frater Philip cuts tile to proper size

As for the erroneous claim that gays and lesbians cannot help it and have been born that way; our response is very simple: God has established an order and commands us to keep that order. God established marriage and the family when He created Adam and Eve and commanded them to increase and multiply. Once the order established by God has been denied, there will be no end to the evils that will follow. What will stop our government from legalizing polygamy, incest, or bestiality?

Because of original sin, everyone has inclinations to sin. By God's grace, we can and must obey God's Commandments. A thief or a murderer cannot say, "I can't help myself. I was born this way."

Every year it seems that our society cannot possibly descend any lower into immorality, but when man turns his back on God, there is no limit to how evil men can become. Let us pray and sacrifice for the conversion of poor sinners as Our Lady requested at Fatima so the Precious Blood of Jesus may not be shed in vain for any soul.

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

Constantine's Gift of the Lateran Palace to the Pope

excerpts from *A Pilgrim Walks in Rome* by P. J. Chandlery, S.J.

The palace belonged originally to a rich patrician family named Laterani, and the place still preserves their name. Plautius Lateranus, head of the family, was put to death by Nero, in A.D. 67, for alleged complicity in the conspiracy of Piso, but in reality that the emperor might confiscate his estate. It then became an imperial residence. At the beginning of the fourth century it was the property of Fausta, daughter of the Emperor Maximian and wife of Constantine.

In A.D. 312, Constantine won his celebrated victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge. While advancing into Italy against his rival, Constantine and his whole army had seen the vision of a luminous cross, just over the sun, with the inscription, "In this conquer." The cross was the sign or symbol that was to marshal his hosts to victory. He caused a representation of it to be made and carried as a standard, known as the Labarum, before the army, and under this standard he inflicted a crushing defeat on Maxentius and his forces on October 12, Maxentius perishing in the fray. Entering Rome in triumph Constantine chose the Lateran palace for his royal dwelling, and proceeded to annul the penal laws against the Christians; he also openly professed his faith in Christianity, though he was not baptized till a little before his death.

The Church, after a persecution of some 300 years, was now free to emerge from the catacombs, and one of the first acts of Constantine, in gratitude for his success, was to present the Lateran Palace to Pope St. Melchiades, to be used as a Papal residence. On October 2, 313, the Pope here presided at the first council assembled against the Donatists. On the death of St. Melchiades, the Emperor confirmed his gift to St. Sylvester.

Some years later, the Emperor was persuaded by the Senate to tolerate the pagan worship. Thereupon, profiting by his absence in the East, on a campaign against Licinus, the senators and other pagans in the city assumed a threatening attitude, and there was good reason to fear that a massacre of the Christians was preparing. Pope St. Sylvester fled to Mount Soracte for safety. The legend has it, that the Emperor, in punishment for this toleration of paganism was stricken with leprosy, and his court physicians

(pagans) prescribed a barbarous and inhuman remedy; but one night, as he lay asleep, he was warned by Ss. Peter and Paul, to send for Pope Sylvester, hiding on Mount Soracte, and to seek baptism at his hands as the only cure for his distemper.

These events, which are said to have happened in 323, are represented in the frescoes of the transept of the basilica.

Twelve years after his conversion, Constantine called together the senators and patricians of Rome in the Basilica Ulpia (a portion of the ruins of which may still be seen in the Forum of Trajan), and after explaining his reasons for embracing Christianity, exhorted them to follow his example. Henceforth Christians were to be free to open churches and practice their religion publicly, and their priests were to enjoy the privileges previously granted to the pagan priests. This announcement was listened to by the senators in sullen silence, but the Christians present greeted his words with shouts of acclamation, which were taken up by the people outside, and Constantine was accompanied to his palace by immense crowds bearing lighted torches.

The year 324 marks the downfall of idolatry in Rome and the triumph of Christianity, though paganism was revived for a time by Julian the Apostate, and efforts were made by Vettius Proetextatus and others to keep it alive up to A.D. 390.

Constantine began at once to erect a Christian basilica in one part of the Lateran palace, assisting in the work, it is said, with his own hands. It was consecrated by Pope St. Sylvester on November 9, 324. Tradition asserts that on the day of consecration God signified His acceptance of this, the first publicly consecrated church in Rome, by a miraculous event. In the vault of the apse there suddenly appeared an image of the Divine Countenance of the Redeemer, and the words of salutation were heard, *Pax vobis!*

St. Sylvester dedicated the church in honour of Our Blessed Saviour, whence it is known as Basilica Salvatoris. Its other titles are: Lateran Basilica, Basilica of Constantine, St. John Lateran (from its being also dedicated to St. John the Baptist by Sergius III). Later still, St. John the Evangelist was made tutelary patron along with St. John the Baptist.

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

Marriage at Mass Prescribed

Question: May a pastor make a ruling for his parish, or a bishop for his diocese, that, whenever two Catholics are married, the ceremony must take place at Mass?

Answer: A pastor may not make such a ruling. For, there is no law of the Church requiring the marriage of Catholics to take place at mass; and the pastor has the obligation of assisting at a marriage when he is reasonably asked to do so by his parishioners (or at least, by the bride residing within his parish) provided they have fulfilled all the conditions demanded by the Church. However, the pastor should urge Catholic couples to have their marriage sanctified by a Mass. Indeed, the Code prescribes that the pastor shall see to it (*curet*) that the couple receive the special marriage blessing; and this can be given only at mass (Can. 1101, § 1). *Per se*, a bishop could make such a ruling for his diocese if he believed that the public order required it; but it is difficult to see how the public order would require such a universal law. Indeed, it would seem to be almost like a general impediment, which a bishop is not empowered to establish (Can. 1039).

In any event, if a bishop should deem it suitable to make such a law for his diocese, he should be prepared to grant frequent exceptions, since there are undoubtedly many occasions on which two Catholics are justified in seeking a quiet marriage without Mass—for example, when they are elderly, when they are having a marriage validated after many years of invalid union, or when the woman is far advanced in pregnancy.

Interference in a Proposed Marriage

Question: To what extent may a pastor attempt to prevent a proposed marriage, which he fears would soon break up? This case occurs most frequently when a couple in their teens wish to be married—perhaps because the girl is pregnant. The priest knows that the two are incompatible, and fears that after the birth of the child they will separate and then perhaps attempt marriage outside the Church with new partners. May he refuse to assist at the marriage?

Answer : If the priest has some positive reason for believing that the couple do not intend to contract a permanent marriage, he may and even must refuse to assist at the marriage. This would be the case when the young folks themselves are known from reliable witnesses to have said or implied that they are entering the union as a temporary affair, intended only “to give the child a name.” Such information would surely permit and even oblige any priest to refuse to assist at the marriage.

Usually, however, the pastor will have only a suspicion of their instability, without any real proof that they would not intend to enter a permanent union. Consequently, after talking over the matter seriously with the young couple and their parents and explaining the divinely ordained indissolubility of the married state, he must *per se* assist at the marriage (all other conditions being fulfilled), if they protest that they intend to contract a true and permanent union. I say that this is his obligation *per se*; for if he still has doubts about the endurance of the proposed marriage, he can have recourse to Canon 1039, § 1, which states that the local ordinary “can forbid marriage to all actually residing in his territory and to subjects even outside, in a particular case, for a time and for a just cause, as long as this cause perdures.” I believe that in the case described the bishop could lawfully forbid marriage to the couple for several months.

It is opportune to add that many Catholic parents, especially the parents of the girl, take an unreasonable attitude when a case such as is described by the questioner occurs. They think only of the disgrace that will ensue if their daughter gives birth to a child out of wedlock, and they will force the young folks into marriage, even when they have no love for each other.

The priest must not be moved by the threats of the young couple that if he does not assist at their marriage, they will go to a minister or a justice of the peace. He could not give any positive approval to this procedure, but at times he could tolerate it as the lesser of two evils, the greater being the danger of a future divorce and a “remarriage.”

Adsum, a publication by the seminarians of **MATER DEI SEMINARY** for the reading enjoyment of friends and benefactors, is sent free of charge to all who request it. If you are interested, please provide your name and mailing address to:

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