



# 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,

At the beginning of this month of March, our Austrian seminarian, Josef Weissensteiner, who studies under Fr. Abrahamovicz in Treviso, Italy, traveled to Omaha in order for me to review his work, to join our seminarians for their classes, and to make a three day retreat before he receives the minor orders of Porter and Lector. Around the same time of Josef's arrival, a young man from Germany also arrived to visit the seminary. With seminarians from Mexico, Canada, and Australia at Mater Dei, there is provided in a small way a real experience of the universality of the Catholic Church.

As far as our missions in the Philippines, Fr. Nino Molina, Fr. Brendan Hughes CMRI, and Fr. Gerard McKee CMRI rotate on a regular basis their travels there in order to provide the Mass and the Sacraments to our faithful. These parishioners are very appreciative of your support from the United States which assists with the airfare of the priests. They



### *Seminarians praying the Divine Office*

support our priests as much as they can and the rest comes from our St. Francis Xavier Missionary Fund. Our priests remain in the Philippines for two weeks during which they cover three Sundays. And when they are in the Philippines, our other priests here in the States have to cover for their parishes in their absence. This cooperation between our religious and secular priests is a major factor for us to provide spiritually for so many churches, chapels, and Mass centers here and abroad. Please continue to support our St. Francis Xavier Missionary Fund.

On the feast of St. Joseph, which this year is transferred to March 20, the seminarians will assist me at the blessing of our new church, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, in Harmony, Minnesota (located in the southeast part of the state). This church is situated halfway between our church in St. Cloud, Minnesota (Immaculate Conception), and our church in Seneca, Wisconsin (Our Lady of Grace). This new church was once a Lutheran church and has a reception hall underneath that has all the potential to be used for a future Catholic school. When our seminarians are ordained priests, some of them may be assigned to St. Joseph's in Harmony and remember the day that they assisted at its blessing.

As we honor St. Joseph during this month, let us pray for his powerful intercession that Our Lord provide many more laborers into His harvest.

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



*Fr. Gerard McKee, CMRI offers Mass in the Philippines*

*What does Canon 1239 n. 2 mean when it legislates: “Catechumens who, through no fault of their own, die without Baptism are to be treated as baptized”?*

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This section of the Code of Canon Law pertains to ecclesiastical burial. The meaning of the Canon is that if Catechumens, who through no fault of their own, die before Baptism, they are to be given ecclesiastical burial just like those who are actually baptized. This means that their bodies are to be taken to the church, where the Requiem Mass is offered for the repose of their soul and that they are to be buried in the consecrated grounds of a Catholic cemetery.

Why does the Catholic Church legislate this procedure for Catechumens? What is the theological foundation for this Canon?

The answer to these questions can be found from the Fathers of the Church, the Doctors of the Church, the Popes, the Council of Trent, the Catechism of the Council of Trent, the Catechism of St. Pius X, as well as the Roman Ritual.

In the early Church, St. Ambrose (d. 397) declared: “I hear you express grief because he [Valentinian] did not receive the Sacrament of Baptism. Tell me, what else is there in us except the will and petition? **But he had long desired to be initiated . . . and expressed his intention to be baptized . . . Surely, he received [it] because he asked [for it].**”

Following St. Ambrose in this matter, St. Augustine taught: “Baptism is administered invisibly to one whom not contempt of religion but death excludes.” (Denzinger 388)

In the late 1100’s, we find in the teachings of Pope Innocent III (*Apostolicam*) references to both St. Ambrose and St. Augustine on this matter:

“To your inquiry we respond thus: We assert without hesitation (on the authority of the holy Fathers Augustine and Ambrose) that **the priest whom you indicated (in your letter) had died without the water of baptism**, because he persevered in the faith of Holy Mother the Church and in the confession of the name of Christ, was **freed from original sin and attained the joy of the heavenly fatherland**. Read (brother) in the eighth book of Augustine’s City of God where among other things it is written, ‘**Baptism**

**is ministered invisibly to one whom not contempt of religion but death excludes.**’ Read again the book also of the blessed Ambrose concerning the death of Valentinian where he says the same thing. **Therefore, to questions concerning the dead, you should hold the opinions of the learned Fathers, and in your church you should join in prayers and you should have sacrifices offered to God for the priest mentioned.**” (Denzinger 388)

In another papal teaching the same Pope taught (*Debitum pastoralis officii*, August 28, 1206):

“You have, to be sure, intimated that a certain Jew, when at the point of death, since he lived only among Jews, immersed himself in water while saying: ‘I baptize myself in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.’

“We respond that, since there should be a distinction between the one baptizing and the one baptized, as is clearly gathered from the words of the Lord, when He says to the Apostles: ‘Go baptize all nations in the name etc.’ (cf. Matt. 28:19), the Jew mentioned must be baptized again by another, that it may be shown that he who is baptized is one person, and he who baptizes another . . . **If, however, such a one had died immediately, he would have rushed to his heavenly home without delay because of the faith of the sacrament, although not because of the sacrament of faith.**” (Denzinger 413)

In the 1200’s, the great Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, in his *Summa* expounded: “Secondly, the sacrament of Baptism may be wanting to anyone in reality but not in desire: for instance, **when a man wishes to be baptized, but by some ill-chance he is forestalled by death before receiving Baptism. And such a man can obtain salvation without being actually baptized, on account of his desire for Baptism**, which desire is the outcome of *faith that worketh by charity*, whereby God, Whose power is not tied to visible sacraments, sanctifies man inwardly. **Hence Ambrose says of Valentinian, who died**

**while yet a catechumen: ‘I lost him whom I was to regenerate: but he did not lose the grace he prayed for.’ ”**

Another Doctor of the Church, St. Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621) in his *Opera (Liber II, Caput XXX)* reiterated: “Boni Cathecumeni sunt de Ecclesia, interna unione tantum, non autem externa.” (Good catechumens are of the Church, by internal union only, not however, by external union.)

From the Council of Trent (1545-1563) there are two clear references to Baptism of Desire:

*Canons on the Sacraments in General*: - (Canon 4):

“If anyone shall say that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary for salvation, but are superfluous, and that although all are not necessary for every individual, without them **or without the desire of them** (*sine eis aut eorum voto*), through faith alone men obtain from God the grace of justification; let him be anathema.”

*Decree on Justification*: - (Session 6, Chapter 4):

“In these words a description of the justification of a sinner is given as being a translation from that state in which man is born a child of the first Adam to the state of grace and of the ‘adoption of the sons’ (Rom. 8:15) of God through the second Adam, Jesus Christ, our Savior and this translation after the promulgation of the Gospel cannot be effected **except through the laver of regeneration or a desire for it**, (*sine lavacro regenerationis aut eius voto*) as it is written: “Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter in the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).

And this teaching of the Council of Trent was reiterated and expounded in *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*: “But the faithful are earnestly to be exhorted, to take care that their children be brought to the church, as soon as it can be done without danger, and solemnly baptized; for as no other means of salvation remains for infant children except baptism, it is not difficult to comprehend the enormity of their guilt, who suffer them to be deprived of the grace of the sacrament, longer than necessity may require; particularly at an age so tender as to be exposed to numberless dangers of death. With regard to adults

who enjoy the perfect use of reason, namely persons born of infidel parents, the practice of the ancient Church points out a different manner of proceeding... On this class of persons, however, the Church was not accustomed to confer this sacrament immediately, but ordained that it should be deferred to a certain time, **nor is the delay attended with the danger already noticed in the case of infants, for, should any unforeseen accident render it impossible for adults to be baptised, their intention of receiving it, and their repentance for past sins, will avail them to grace and righteousness.**”

After the Council of Trent and the Catechism issued by order of the Council, St. Alphonsus Liguori (1691-1787), the great Doctor of the Church, firmly held: “**Now it is de fide that men are also saved by Baptism of desire, by virtue of the Canon “Apostolicam De Presbytero Non Baptizato” and the Council of Trent, Session 6, Chapter 4 where it is said that no one can be saved “without the laver of regeneration or the desire for it.”**”

Lastly, Pope Pius XII on October 29, 1951, addressed the urgent necessity of Baptism of infants and indirectly referred to what the Catholic Church has consistently taught about the desire for Baptism in adults:

“If what We have said up to now deals with the protection and the care of natural life, it should hold all the more in regard to the supernatural life which the newly born infant receives with Baptism. In the present economy there is no other way of communicating this life to the child who has not yet the use of reason. But, nevertheless, the state of grace at the moment of death is absolutely necessary for salvation. Without it, it is not possible to attain supernatural happiness, the beatific vision of God. **An act of love can suffice for an adult to obtain sanctifying grace and supply for the absence of Baptism;** for the unborn child or for the newly born this way is not open. . . . It is, therefore, easy to understand the importance of giving Baptism to the infant completely without the use of reason when it is in serious danger of facing certain death.”

# *Outlines of Moral Theology*

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

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## THE VIRTUE OF ABSTINENCE

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Abstinence is that virtue which moderates man's use of food and drink. A person would fail against this virtue by excess if he would not take enough nourishment to support his health and strength; he would fail by defect if he took so much as to injure or inconvenience himself. Ordinarily a person is guilty of only a venial sin if he eats too much; but it would be a mortal sin if he rendered himself seriously ill or unable to fulfill his grave obligations.

That fasting is a virtuous act is evident both from the example of Christ and from the traditional teaching of the Church. It is an effective means of strengthening the will against temptation and of doing penance for past sins. The Church has made laws prescribing certain forms of fasting at certain times. These are classified under two headings, known respectively as fast and abstinence. (It should be noted that in this connection the words "fast" and "abstinence" are taken in a restricted and technical sense, differing from the sense used above).

The essential feature of a fast day of the Church is that only one full meal is allowed. The essential feature of a day of abstinence is that one must abstain from flesh meat. Some days are days of both fast and abstinence, others are days of fast alone, others days of abstinence alone. There can also be days of partial abstinence, on which a person may eat meat only once.

Outside of Lent, if a Sunday or a holyday of obligation coincides with a day of fast or abstinence or both, the fast or abstinence or both cease. A vigil is not anticipated, as far as fast and abstinence are concerned. Thus, when the feast of the Immaculate Conception falls on Monday, the previous Saturday is not a day of fast or abstinence. A bishop may impose days of fast and abstinence for his diocese in particular instances. The obligations of fast and abstinence imposed by religious rules bind under sin or not, as the rule lays down.

The single full meal allowed on a day of fast is supposed to be taken either at noon or in the evening; nevertheless, it would seem that it would not be a grave violation of the law to take it any time in the course of the day. At any rate, 11 a.m. is considered to be morally noon, as far as this law is concerned. As far as the law of the Church is concerned, there is no limitation to the quantity of food that may be taken at the meal, but the natural law of temperance would have to be observed. The meal is not supposed to be protracted more than two hours; however, a slight interruption would not break the unity, as in the event that a person had finished his meal, and shortly afterward a box of candy was produced.

The Church fast is not broken by liquids, however copious, as long as they are not too nourishing. For example, water, ginger ale, tea, and coffee (even prepared with milk and sugar), milk, fruit juices, wine, and beer are all allowed between meals as well as at meals. On the other hand, soup, cream, etc., are forbidden between meals.

The law of the Church abstinence forbids flesh meat. In general, flesh meat is that which comes from warm-blooded animals. On the other hand, the flesh of snails, frogs, or snakes is allowed because they are cold blooded though they live on land. Custom in some places permits the use of what is actually flesh meat—e.g., wild duck in Louisiana. Custom also seems to justify the eating of warm-blooded animal that lives in the water, such as whale.

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