



# Adsum

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## LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear friends and benefactors,

One of our long-standing customs at the seminary has been to hold our annual priests' retreat during the week of the feast of Corpus Christi. This year's retreat has provided a much needed break for our priests from their busy schedules to spend time alone with Our Divine Lord. How easy it is for our priests to become like "Martha" in the Gospel of whom Our Lord said, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary." Then Jesus said about Martha's sister, Mary who sat at His feet and listened to His words, "Mary has chosen the better part which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:41-42)

With the great benefits a retreat offers, I wholeheartedly recommend that our readers can make the time during this year to attend a retreat or at least a day of recollection. How many of us are so taken up with temporal affairs to the detriment of our spiritual life. For this reason we need from time to time to recharge our "spiritual batteries" and refocus on the spiritual life.

How appropriate it is for us to make our retreat at this time of the liturgical year because Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament is the center of our lives as priests. The most important thing we do each day is to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and to receive Our Lord in Holy Communion. This is all the more significant in our times in which the true Mass has been destroyed and replaced by the Novus Ordo "Mass" which is nothing less than "the abomination of desolation" foretold in Sacred Scripture.

With this in mind, I would like to comment briefly on the "Motu Proprio" issued by Benedict XVI on the allowance of a more widespread use of the Latin Mass. This does not change the serious problems that had led to the destruction of the Faith after Vatican Council II. The Novus Ordo "Mass" continues to be the "ordinary expression" of the Modern Church's rite of the "Mass." And as we well know this Novus Ordo is a striking departure from the Mass as defined by the Council of Trent, to use the words of Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci in 1969. It is well for us to recall that there were six Protestant theologians who assisted on the special commission to change the Mass and that one of them expressed satisfaction that the Protestants could use this Novus Ordo without any theological problems. From beginning to end, this new "Mass" has been stripped of all reference to a propitiatory sacrifice, that is, a sacrifice to atone for sin and is simply a Protestant memorial of the Last Supper. To put this Novus Ordo side by side with the Latin Mass and claim they are merely two expressions of the same rite is utterly false.

Furthermore, we well know that after Vatican II, not



*Solemn High Mass on the Feast of Corpus Christi*

only was the Mass changed, but also the Rite of Consecration of Bishops in which the very form of consecration (as clearly determined by Pope Pius XII in His Apostolic Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* [1947]) was completely destroyed and replaced by an ambiguous prayer. By the same principles of sacramental theology taught by Pope Leo XIII in *Apostolicae Curae* in which the Pope declared Anglican orders invalid, these modern bishops of the Vatican II Church are not valid bishops. Invalid bishops equals invalid ordinations of priests! Invalid priests who use the Latin Mass will not offer a valid Mass! What a mess!

Besides these problems, the Vatican II errors of false ecumenism, religious indifferentism, and religious liberty continue to poison so many Catholics today. This "Motu Proprio" is nothing more than a token gesture to reach out to those who are sickened by the aftermath of Vatican II and it will create the facade that the traditional Faith is coming back. No, this "Motu Proprio" will not rectify any of the problems that permeate the Modern Church.

All this reminds me of the words of the late Paul VI who "approved" the documents of Vatican II and "authorized" the new "Mass" and "Sacraments" and who then later claimed "the smoke of Satan had entered the Church!" It is like an arsonist who starts a fire and then calls the fire department to complain.

For us, we certainly need to "watch and pray" as Our Lord exhorted in Gethsemane lest we "enter into temptation," for Satan will seek to deceive "even the elect."

With my prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI

# *Father Connell Answers Moral Questions*

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

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## **A Spiritual Director's Obligation of Secrecy**

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**Question:** If the spiritual director of a seminarian finds out from the young man's own admission (made extrasacramentally to the director in his capacity as such) that the youth is utterly unworthy of advancement to Holy Orders, but despite that fact intends to seek admission to the priesthood, is the director permitted, for the sake of the common good, to reveal the fact to the proper authorities?

**Answer:** The spiritual director is bound by a *secretum commissum*—the strictest type of secret—not to reveal what is communicated to him by the seminarians in his capacity as their director. There are occasions in which a person is allowed to manifest even a committed secret, excepting the sins manifested in the sacrament of Penance, especially when the common good is at stake. However, the case described is not one of these occasions, because far greater harm would be done to the common good if a director could reveal what has been committed to him confidentially than would be prevented if he revealed the secret information given him by the unworthy aspirant to Holy Orders. If this were permissible many clerics would hesitate to make a sincere manifestation of their spiritual difficulties to their director, with the result that their guidance would be greatly hampered, and many more unsuitable individuals might be admitted to the priesthood than would be admitted if the violation of the secret were forbidden.

Fr. Nicholas Gill, C.P., thus solves the problem in his doctoral dissertation:

It is true that an evil would be prevented by a word to the superior, but a revelation of such a matter is soon recognized or suspected by others, and sometimes the fact of disclosure becomes even generally known, with

the result that the Spiritual Prefect would bring down opprobrium upon himself and his office, and the succeeding classes of religious students for many years would choose to keep their problems to themselves. As a consequence many would not receive the direction and the solution of spiritual difficulties which otherwise they would have received (*The Spiritual Prefect in Clerical Religious Houses of Study* [Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1945], pp. 108-109).

Father Gill confirms his solution by a quotation from the Encyclical *Ad catholici sacerdotii* in which Pope Pius XI declares that confessors and spiritual directors of seminarians may not take any outward action to prevent an unworthy candidate from receiving Holy Orders "since that is severely forbidden them by their most delicate office itself, and often also by the inviolable sacramental seal."

It stands to reason that the spiritual director will do all in his power to persuade the young man to withdraw from the clerical state. A confessor, in the circumstances described, would be bound to refuse absolution. But such persuasion, in addition to fervent prayer, is the only means available, both to confessor and to director, to avert the harm that will probably come to the Church from the admission of an unworthy person to the ranks of the clergy.

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