



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,

After a very active and eventful summer, our seminary year has now begun and our seminarians are back in the routine of their schedule. Although our weather for the first week of classes had been very hot and humid, there has been an abrupt change with cooler temperatures making classes and studies much more bearable.

There is a topic, though, I would like to address "for the record" and "once and for all," especially in light of recent news articles and rumors. As most of you are well-aware, fifteen CMRI Sisters from Mount St. Michael left the Congregation to join the Modern Vatican II Church. For those of our readers who have access to the Internet, you are familiar with my letter addressed to the CMRI Sisters (posted on our web site CMRI.org) and also a sermon addressed to the parishioners at Mount St. Michael in June, which was also made available on the Internet.

During this past summer, the *Inland Register*, the official paper for the Spokane diocese, and the *National Catholic Register* have reported on this event at Mt. St. Michael.

As was to be expected, the picture that has been painted by the modern Church is one of doom and gloom for the traditionalist movement, and one of triumph for the modernists. In fact, a Sister from the modern Church (Missionaries of Charity) wrote to her relative, a traditional Catholic Sister in our convent in Omaha (Congregation of the Mother of God--CMD) that she attended a retreat conducted by a Vatican II "priest," "Fr." Barnett, from Spokane, Washington. Once again, the picture painted was one of "crisis" for CMRI and Mt. St. Michael.

For the record, I can clearly state that this issue has been totally exaggerated and is being "milked" by the modern Church for all they can get out of it. CMRI and Mt. St. Michael are not in a crisis state. Yes, the road was a little rocky in early June as these Sisters made their choice to embrace the Novus Ordo "Mass" and the heresies of Vatican II, but contrary to the many exaggerations of a "crisis," peace, tranquility and stability exist in the Congregation. The majority of the CMRI Sisters are living their religious life as usual. The enrollment in the K-12 grades at St. Michael's Academy in Spokane is high. Our laity have been very supportive and strong despite this departure of

the Sisters. One school, St. Joseph's Academy in Wayne, Michigan, is now taught by the CMD Sisters (it was not closed as stated by the National Catholic Register).

On the other hand, when we consider the situation in the modern Church, it will be very easy to see where the real crisis is. The Spokane Diocese has recently overcome bankruptcy from priests' abuse, and the Los Angeles Diocese is purported to have made a settlement of 660 million dollars for the victims of priests' abuse! Over the past 30 years, the number of teaching Sisters in the U.S. (1965-1995) has dropped by 100,000. And those Sisters who remain are for the most part elderly. There is a terrible shortage of modern priests in the Vatican II Church, and less than half of modern Catholics go to "Mass" on Sundays! Who is really in a crisis?

These statistics have been well documented from various sources and prove that the "fruits" of Vatican II have been apostasy and spiritual devastation. As Our Lord has told us "a good tree does not bear bad fruit." (*see page 2*)

And as for the departure of these Sisters, it has not been a surprise to me. Over twelve years ago, the late Fr. Denis Chicoine warned me that some of the Sisters were contemplating a separation from the CMRI clergy. Fr. Denis told them that it would be a disaster for them. So this element of independence has existed for some time and has expressed itself this past summer by these Sisters returning to the modern Church.

Lastly, I don't believe the Sisters' departure was based on any sound theological reasons. These Sisters could not defend the Novus Ordo nor the false ecumenism and religious liberty of Vatican II. One good example is when I asked one of the Sisters before she left, how John Paul II and "Cardinal" Ratzinger could have approved of Catholics attending a schismatic (the Assyrian Church of the East) "Mass" which did not even have a consecration. I asked her how it could be a valid Mass without a consecration. She said she didn't know but would find out. Later she returned with no explanation other than, "I will stick with the (Vatican II) Popes!" She couldn't defend it.

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary grant us the grace of perseverance!

With my prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI

From *USA TODAY*

April 5, 2005

Percentages saying the following are “never justifiable”

Catholic Population:	Abortion	Divorce	Homosexuality	Euthanasia
Worldwide	46%	26%	51%	43%
USA	37%	7%	20%	31%
Spain	27%	11%	13%	21%
Argentina	66%	24%	39%	48%
Venezuela	71%	29%	63%	55%
Philippines	51%	40%	26%	45%
Germany	37%	16%	18%	28%
Mexico	67%	38%	49%	56%
General Population:				
USA	30%	8%	32%	24%
Worldwide	44%	26%	56%	44%

Sermon of St. Bernard, Abbot

Whoever you are, when you find yourself tossed by storms and tempests upon this world's raging waters, rather than walking upon firm dry land, never take your eyes from the brightness of this star lest you be overwhelmed by the storm. When the winds of temptation blow, when you run upon the rocks of disaster, look to the star. Cry out to Mary! If you are cast away upon the waves of pride or ambition, of detraction or jealousy, look to the star. Cry out to Mary!! When anger, avarice, or the lusts of the flesh assail the ship of your mind, look up to Mary. When you are worried by the enormity of your sins, troubled by a confused conscience, or terrified by the horrors of the judgment to come, when you begin to drown in the bottomless pit of sorrow or sink in the abyss of despair, think of Mary.

In danger, in difficulties, in doubts, think of Mary. Call upon Mary! Never let her name be absent from your lips or absent from your heart. If you would obtain the help of her prayers, do not neglect to follow the example of her conduct. If you follow her, you will not stray; if you pray to her, you need not despair. If you think of her, you will not err; sustained by her, you will never fall; protected by her, you need not fear; guided by her, you will walk without weariness. If she smiles upon you, you will succeed. You will experience in your own heart with what justice it is said: And the Virgin's name was Mary.

Isidora, our new addition

One of the challenges that daily faces me during our scholastic year is the feeding of our priests, seminarians, Sisters, and boarder students (boys and girls). As our readers who are parents know, the young men in our seminary and the teen-age boys and girls in our boarding schools have ferocious appetites.

Thanks to regular donations from our agricultural parishioners, we receive beef, pork, and eggs. And as the CMD Sisters' mother house is just across the Missouri River from us, in Persia, a small town of Iowa, and rests on five acres, they, in addition to teaching, have raised chickens for butchering and for egg-laying.

However, one area of food supply that we had not ventured into is dairy products. When the idea came up, I was warned by a number of parishioners that cows were nothing but trouble. But with the rising cost of milk and the many mouths to feed, we boldly ventured into the dairy business, not heeding the many admonitions.

After much study, advice and preparation, one of our dairy parishioners donated a Jersey cow which was already giving milk. Brother Xavier transported our new addition one Saturday evening to the convent for a grand welcome. We had built a large shed for the milking process and put up an extensive electric fence around the area. Here is where the story changes. The only words that can explain what happened on that fateful evening are "if it can go wrong, it will" and "there's no limit to how bad things can get."

No sooner had the cow been released from the trailer than we turned on the electricity to the electric fence only to find that the electric power box was not functioning. During the month of August, we had experienced an unusual amount of rain and lightening storms. Apparently our electric box had shorted out to our great dismay!

Once our cow had thoroughly investigated her new surroundings, she decided it was time to take a long walk right through the electric fence (which was non-functioning). In an attempt to herd the cow back to her area, the Sisters surrounded the cow only to spook her over the fence and into a massive cornfield (the cornstalks being seven and eight feet high).

With the help of two parishioners, we began to track the cow with flashlights. Although we could follow her hoof prints, we soon realized how futile was our search and rescue efforts. I also feared that in this vast countryside, it would not be too far-fetched to lose a cow altogether.



As the next day was Sunday, I dreaded meeting those parishioners who had warned me that cows were nothing but trouble. I could hear them tell me, "What did we tell you!" Needless to say, my secondary intentions at my Sunday Masses were for the safe return of our cow. I know there are more important things to pray for; however, Our Lord tells us to ask and you shall receive. I also prayed to St. Anthony of Padua, the patron saint of lost things, and to St. Isidore, the patron saint of farmers.

As soon as possible after the last Mass, Brother Xavier and I went and searched for the cow, and by Divine Providence a farmer neighbor (a mile away) had managed to retrieve our cow and herd it into his barn. To make a long story short, our cow got out of the barn, joined up with his herd of cattle, and knocked down the farmer's fence to the dispersion of all his cows! As these events unfolded, we needed intervention from Heaven.

After a lot of frustrations and set backs, the farmer got his cows rounded up, and back into the pasture; and we got our cow back into the trailer. For the past three weeks, the Sisters have milked "Isidora" by hand, morning and evening at 5:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Now we not only have fresh milk but also fresh butter and home made ice cream from the three to four gallons of milk that are daily produced.

Although this adventure had been cross-filled in the beginning, it has now become relatively easy. Isidora, with her great personality, is very gentle and very much at home.

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

Co-operation in Hysterectomy

Question: A Catholic surgeon, making graduate studies in a non-Catholic hospital, is assigned to perform a Caesarean operation. It has been decided by the staff surgeons that on the same occasion the patient's womb shall be removed—not because of any pathological condition of the womb itself, but because the woman has a heart affliction which would render another pregnancy dangerous. The Catholic surgeon realizes that he cannot conscientiously perform this latter operation. However, he would like to perform the Caesarean operation for the sake of the experience. He wonders, therefore, if he could perform the Caesarean operation and then state that his religious principles will not allow him to perform the hysterectomy. In such an event the staff surgeon who is present as supervisor would excise the womb, but he would expect the Catholic doctor to assist him. Would this procedure be permissible?

Answer: If the assistance in the sterilizing operation expected of the Catholic surgeon involves formal co-operation—for example, making some of the incisions—he must absolutely refuse to participate. If only material co-operation is expected, such as handing the instruments to the staff surgeon, or giving the anaesthetic, he may assist, provided there is a very grave reason to justify such participation—for example, a real danger that he will be discharged from the hospital with a consequent frustration of his professional career. Certainly, the wish to have the

experience of performing a Caesarean operation would not be a sufficient reason. If there is no very grave reason for giving material co-operation to the hysterectomy, and the performance of the Caesarean section would necessitate such co-operation, he must refuse to perform this latter operation also. If in the particular hospital the Catholic nurses refuse to take part in illicit operations, the Catholic surgeon would have an additional obligation to abstain from all co-operation, in that there could very easily be scandal in his conduct.

The Absolution of a Recidivist

Question: On what grounds do some theologians base their teaching that a recidivist may not be absolved unless he manifests extraordinary contrition? Is not the minimum degree of contrition sufficient for the fruitful reception of the sacrament of Penance, as long as it extends to all the penitent's mortal sins and is based on a supernatural motive?

Answer: The questioner is perfectly correct in asserting that no extra-ordinary degree of contrition is required from even the most hardened and most habituated sinner, including the recidivist, the person who has returned to the same habit of sin after previous confessions without any apparent effort at amendment. But the questioner is wrong in saying that some theologians require extraordinary contrition from the (formal) recidivist before absolution may be imparted. What these theologians demand is extraordinary *signs* of contrition. For, since the recidivist has proved that his mere assertion that he is sorry and intends to amend does not give the confessor sufficient moral certainty to justify the conferring of absolution, a more convincing proof of his disposi-

tions is called for, and the signs by which this is manifested are called *extraordinary* signs by some theologians, *special* signs by others. Such signs would be the fact that the penitent is now making a mission or retreat, the fact that he has recently given up an occasion of sin, and above all the candid and sincere statement that he is now more aware than ever before of the necessity of amendment and is resolved to avoid sin in future (*verba cordialia*). It is difficult to see how a priest can continue to absolve a person month after month when this penitent has been committing some grave sins regularly without any apparent manifestation of amendment, unless the confessor obtains more convincing proof of contrition than the mere repetition of the act of contrition.

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:

MATER DEI SEMINARY
7745 Military Avenue
Omaha, NE 68134-3356