

Adsum

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LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Throughout the United States, St. Patrick's Day has been an occasion of major celebration where people of all ethnic backgrounds will don green, eat corn beef and cabbage and indulge in alcoholic beverages. As widespread as this celebration is, how many have little or no knowledge of this great saint and missionary of Ireland. Furthermore, among those who call themselves Catholic, how many fail to realize the burning zeal that motivated St. Patrick to labor tirelessly for the conversion of the Irish people who were at that time steeped in the superstitions and false beliefs of Druidism.

Who was St. Patrick? He was a Catholic bishop commissioned by Pope Celestine I in the year 432 to spread the Catholic faith in Ireland. Armed with the two edged sword of the word of God, St. Patrick struck down the false religion of Druidism which had enslaved and blinded the people of that island and also built up the one true Faith of the Triune God. Well known is his use of the three-leafed shamrock to beautifully illustrate the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity.

And why is this so important to consider in these times? It is because the Conciliar Church (the post-Vatican II modern "Catholic Church") has redefined the mission of the Church. No longer is it necessary, according to the spirit and teachings of Vatican II, to work actively for the conversion of people of other religions to the one true religion revealed by God. Now in the spirit of Vatican II, the new mission of the Conciliar Church is limited only to

the promotion of the "good" supposedly found in these false religions.

One good example of this is the Catechesis of the late John Paul II, delivered on September 9, 1998:

"In *Nostra Aetate*, the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, the Second Vatican Council teaches that 'the

Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from her own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men.' "

Further on in this same address, John Paul II goes so far as to attribute the Holy Ghost's assistance in the foundation of other religions:

"The various religions arose precisely from this primordial human openness to God. At their origins we often find founders who, with the

help of God's Spirit, achieved a deeper religious experience. Handed on to others, this experience took form in the doctrines, rites and precepts of the various religions... 'The Spirit's presence and activity,' as I wrote in the encyclical letter *Redemptoris Missio*, 'affect not only individuals but also society and history, peoples, cultures and religions.' "

How contradictory and absurd are these false teachings in light of the true Catholic missionary spirit of St. Patrick who actively worked to convert from Druidism to Catholicism the people of Ireland! Would St. Patrick have



gone to Ireland to tell the people that “the Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy” in Druidism? Would he have reassured them of “the Spirit’s presence and activity” in their religion? Did St. Patrick go to Ireland (in the spirit of Vatican II) to “acknowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral goods” in Druidism? Would Ireland have ever been converted to Catholicism if this great saint had come to that country in the spirit of Vatican II? No, Pope St. Celestine I commissioned St. Patrick to Ireland in order to abolish their false beliefs and practices and to combat directly the diabolical incantations of Druid priests.

Another example of how contrary to the mission of the Church are the teachings of the Conciliar Church is the joint statement issued on August 12, 2002, by the U.S. bishops’ Committee for Ecumenical and interreligious Affairs and the National Council of Synagogues, representing Conservative and Reformed Judaism:

“A deepening Catholic appreciation of the eternal covenant between God and the Jewish people, together with a recognition of a divinely-given mission to Jews to witness to God’s faithful love, lead to the conclusion that campaigns that target Jews for conversion to Christianity are no longer theologically acceptable in the Catholic Church.”

When even some modern Catholics took issue with this statement as a denial of the Church’s mission, Cardinal Walter Kasper, head of the Vatican’s Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, said that Christians should recognize that Jews need not be converted to Christianity to be saved.

And one final example among many that could be given is the Assisi III meeting organized by Benedict XVI this past October to celebrate the first ecumenical prayer meeting of John Paul II in 1986. In a full color booklet titled “Assisi 2011,” the public address of Nigerian Professor Wande Abimbola, representative of the African Yoruba religion, to the religious leaders present was printed:

“We must always remember that our own religion, along with the religions practiced by other people, are valid and precious in the eyes of the Almighty, who created all of us with such plural and different ways of life and belief systems.”

Once again in contrast, would St. Patrick have invited the Druid priests into the Catholic churches in Ireland and in a spirit of false ecumenism encouraged them

to practice their false worship? Certainly not! St. Patrick was firmly rooted in the true Faith and in his belief in the First Commandment of God—“I am the Lord Thy God, thou shalt not have strange gods before me.”

How diametrically opposed to the teachings of Vatican II on ecumenism are the teachings of Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Mortalium Animos*, 1928:

“Evidently, therefore, no religion can be true save that which rests upon the revelation of God, a revelation begun from the very first, continued under the Old Law, and brought to completion by Jesus Christ Himself under the New.

“Shall we commit the iniquity of suffering the truth, the truth revealed by God, to be made a subject for compromise? For it is indeed a question of defending revealed truth. Jesus Christ sent His Apostles into the whole world to declare the Faith of the Gospel to every nation, and to save them from error. He willed that the Holy Ghost should first teach them all truth. Has this become obscured in the Church of which God Himself is the ruler and Guardian?

“Our Redeemer plainly said that His Gospel was intended not only for the apostolic age but for all time. Can the object of faith, then, have become in the process of time so dim and uncertain that today we must tolerate contradictory opinions? If this were so, then we should have to admit that the coming of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, the perpetual indwelling of the same Spirit in the Church, nay the very preaching of Jesus Christ, have centuries ago lost their efficacy and value. To affirm this would be blasphemy.”

Ever convinced of the true mission of the Catholic Church to “teach all nations, all things whatsoever Christ commanded” (Matt. 28:19) and that “he who believes and is baptized shall be saved and he who does not believe shall be condemned” (Mark 16:16), St. Patrick spent himself by prayer, sacrifice and preaching in the work of converting Ireland.

May the great patron saint of Ireland inspire us and intercede for us to spread the Faith in these times of apostasy!

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

Brother Xavier's trip to Rome and Portugal

In February, Brother was invited to join a small group on pilgrimage



St. Peter's Basilica



The Crib of Our Lord in St. Mary Major's



Michaelangelo's Pieta



Fatima

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

Friday Dinner with Non-Catholics

Question: If a Catholic dines in the home of a non-Catholic friend on a Friday and meat is served, may he partake of it on the score that the embarrassment he would cause his friend by a refusal would constitute a sufficient *incommodum* to excuse him from the law of abstinence?

Answer: This case is a frequent occurrence nowadays in the United States, and it would seem that some priests are too ready to give a lenient decision. Now, it is true, there are theologians who state that a Catholic may eat meat which he unexpectedly finds prepared for dinner at a friend's house on a day of abstinence. Such is the opinion of Damen (*Theologia moralis* [Turin, 1946], I, N. 1065) and Merkelbach (*Summa theologiae moralis* [Paris, 1938], II, n. 967). However, these theologians add that an excusing cause is present only when some *grave* inconvenience would ensue if the Catholic abstained from the meat or departed without waiting for dinner. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that if the meat were set before the Catholic in contempt of religion, or if it is foreseen that his partaking of it would be the occasion of grave scandal, he must abstain. Now in our country there would rarely be grave inconvenience to anyone if a Catholic in the circumstances described courteously declined the meat portion of the dinner. The host might be slightly embarrassed, but he could not reasonably be offended at the guest's adherence to the dictates of his conscience. Moreover, there would usually be no difficulty in providing the Catholic guest with an adequate meal of abstinence food. Furthermore, if a Catholic eats meat in this situation there will frequently be scandal. The other guests may not comment on his conduct in his presence, but will observe it, and to the Catholics it may be an incentive to be more lax in interpreting the law themselves; to the non-Catholics it may furnish the occasion to denounce Catholics in general as inconsistent people and even hypocrites. Accordingly, a priest who is consulted in a case of this kind should ordinarily answer that the Catholic guest is obliged to refuse the meat. If there are added circumstances in a particular case which point to a grave inconvenience in the event of a refusal, and there is no danger of scandal or contempt of religion, a lenient decision may be given; but this must be regarded as an exceptional case.

Whale on Friday

Question: May whale meat be allowed on Friday?

Answer : The whale is a warm-blooded animal and hence, according to the norm laid down by some theologians, would be forbidden as food on a day of abstinence. However, others lay down norms that would allow the use of whale flesh. Thus, Bouscaren says: "The general rule is that animals which live on land and have warm blood are considered meat; others, not" (*Canon Law*, Milwaukee, 1946, p. 630). Since the whale lives in the ocean, it would not be considered forbidden meat, according to this standard, even though it has warm blood. Merkelbach states that by common estimation throughout the whole world mammals are considered lawful abstinence fare if they live at all times in the water such as whales (*Summa theologiae moralis*, Paris, 1938, II, n. 961). Such authorities would seem to make an affirmative answer to the questioner safely probable.

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