



# 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 issue of the *Adsum* has been written on Ash Wednesday as we begin the Holy Season of Lent. In the next 40 days (except Sundays) we will fast and abstain and perform other penances in reparation for our sins and to mortify our fallen human nature in preparation for the feast of Our Lord's glorious Resurrection.

How significant is the number '40' in Sacred Scripture! Both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament this number frequently appears. When God punished the world with the Great Flood in the time of Noah, it rained upon the earth *40 days and 40 nights*. When Moses ascended Mt. Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments, he fasted 40 days. As the Israelites traveled on their way to the Promised Land, they wandered in the desert for 40 years. Our Lord Himself fasted for 40 days and 40 nights. How appropriate then it is for us to spend these 40 days in the spirit of penance!

In past issues of our newsletter, we have frequently considered the Old Testament which foretold and prefigured the promised Messiah and how perfectly these prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus Christ, the God-Man. In addition to this, it should be noted that the wonderful doctrine of the Blessed Trinity is also found throughout the Old Testament. Although it is not in the explicit manner taught by Our Lord as we read in the New Testament (*Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* - Matt. 28:19; *I and the Father are one* - John 10:30), nevertheless, the Old Testament contains passages which express this supernatural mystery.

Let us begin this consideration with the Hebrew word for God "ELOHIM," which is found throughout the Old Testament together with the word "JEHOVA." What is unique about this word "ELOHIM" is that it is a *plural* word but it is always used with the singular verb. It is not to be supposed that the sacred writers who firmly believed in one God would have repeatedly made such a grammatical mistake, especially when the Israelites were surrounded by their pagan neighbors who were polytheists (those who falsely believe in many gods).

Furthermore, in the book of Genesis, we read of the creation of the world by God, "In the beginning, God created heaven and earth." And then, when we get to the passage of the creation of man, we find, "And God said, 'Let *Us* make man to Our image and likeness.'" (Gen. 1:26) Let us note that God here speaks of Himself in the plural.

This occurs again after the fall of Adam where we read in the book of Genesis that God speaks thus: "Behold Adam has become like one of *Us*." (Gen. 3:22) This is also repeated in the account of the Tower of Babel, "Behold, it is one people . . . come ye, therefore, let *Us* confuse their tongues." (Gen. 11:6-7)

Again, in Isaias, we read, "And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? Who shall go for *Us*?' And I said, 'Lo, here am I, send me.'" (Isa. 6:8)

Another wonderful Old Testament reference is found in the very well-known passage from Deuteronomy which has been frequently repeated by the Jews, past and present: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is one." (Deut. 6:4) In the Latin Vulgate, it is, "Audi Israel, Dominus, Deus Noster, Dominus unus est;" however, the original Hebrew language omits the word "is." So the passage reads: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord, Our God, the Lord, one."

And if we put the Hebrew words for God in place of our English translation, it reads, "Hear, O Israel, Jehova, Elohim, Jehova, one." Is it not remarkable that God's Name is repeated three times, yet emphatically ends with the word "one"?

In close accord with this passage from Deuteronomy, we find the prophet Isaias describes his vision of the Lord with the two attending seraphim who cried: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; all the earth is filled with Thy glory." Sacred Scripture often uses adjectives for nouns or names. Likewise in olden times individuals were often designated by adjectives indicative of striking characteristics for which they were noted. God Himself is often designated by adjectives such as the Almighty, the Omnipotent, the Eternal, the All-Wise. Once again it is remarkable that the seraphim cried out three times, "Holy, Holy, Holy, the Lord God of Sabaoth!"

*continued next page*



#### LETTER continued

In Psalm 109 of the Old Testament, there is a beautiful reference to the Holy Trinity recited at Sunday's Vespers. "The Lord said to My Lord, sit Thou at My right hand." In the Hebrew, it reads "Jehova said to My Lord . . ." Now modern Rabbis have claimed that the reference "My Lord" refers to Abraham. However, it is well known in the East that to "sit at the right hand" means equality. How could anyone claim that Abraham is equal to Jehova? It was this very Psalm on which Our Lord questioned the Jews and they could give no response. For they knew well it could not pertain to anyone but One equal to God.

Another beautiful Old Testament reference to the Holy Trinity is the Lord's visit to Abraham. Let us carefully look at an extract of this text of the 18th chapter of Genesis:

"And *the Lord* (Jehova) appeared to him . . . There appeared to him *three men* . . . And as soon as he saw *them* he ran to meet *them*... and adored down to the ground. And he said, 'Lord, if I have found favor in *thy* sight, pass not away from *thy* servant: but I will fetch a little water and wash *ye* your feet and rest *ye* under the tree . . . Strengthen *ye* your heart, afterwards *you* shall pass on: for therefore are *you* come aside to *your* servant,' and *they* said: 'Do as thou hast spoken' . . . And when *they* had eaten, *they* said to him: 'Where is Sara, thy wife?' He answered, 'Lo, she is in the tent:' and *he* said to him, 'I will return... And the *Lord* said to Abraham... is there anything hard to *God*? According to appointment *I* will return' . . . And the *men* rose up from there... And Abraham walked with *them* . . . And the *Lord* said, 'Can *I* hide from Abraham what *I* am about to do' . . ."

St. Augustine held the opinion that this passage referred to the Holy Trinity. "Behold," he says, "how, suddenly, the Incorporeal Majesty descends on earth under the corporeal figure of three men. Abraham runs eagerly to meet them, he extends to them his suppliant hands, kisses their knees and says: 'Lord, if I have found grace before thee pass not away from thy servant.' Observe Abraham runs to meet three and adores one: unity in three, Trinity in One... Behold how the Celestial Majesty sits at the table of a mortal, accepts a repast and establishes a familiar conversation between God and man."

Although it is not possible to expand extensively in this newsletter all Old Testament passages on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, what has been considered should suffice to all the more appreciate Divine Revelation.

Please keep in your prayers, Mary Anne Evans from Arkansas, who coordinates our Mass center there and has a chapel on her property with the Blessed Sacrament. Just yesterday, Fr. Gregory Drahman received a phone call that a tornado destroyed her house. She and other family members took refuge in the chapel which was unharmed.

As always, I would like to assure all of our friends and benefactors of their remembrance in our prayers. May all of you have a grace-filled season of Lent and live in union with our crucified Savior and His Sorrowful Mother.

With my prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



# A Contemporary Miracle

*By Fr. Gregory Drahman, CMRI*

As wonderful as the many miracles wrought at the shrine of Lourdes are, there is another stupendous phenomenon which is just as miraculous in the city of Nevers, France. It is the incorrupt body of St. Bernadette Soubirous, to whom Our Lady appeared at Lourdes. It is truly remarkable that, after a short life of 35 years (which ended in 1879), her frail body would remain incorrupt to our present day—a favor given to few saints.

In the long history of Christianity, we find that God has preserved over a hundred saints from the ravishes of the grave, some for a great number of centuries. King David testifies that the death of each saint is very precious in the sight of the Lord. Some, despite very adverse circumstances, remain incorrupt and fresh, with an inexplicable aroma surrounding them. How wonderful it is to be able to visit in our own times the tombs of these incorruptibles and to personally witness this supernatural phenomenon!

As we honor St. Bernadette this month, let us not forget that her prerogative of incorruption is shared by other notable saints:

St. Cecilia (Died 177)  
St. Agatha (Died 251)  
St. Edward the Confessor (Died 1066)  
St. Isidore the Farmer (Died 1172)  
St. Albert the Great (Died 1280)



St. Margaret of Cortona (Died 1297)  
St. Frances of Rome (Died 1440)  
St. Stanislaus Kostka (Died 1568)  
St. Teresa of Avila (Died 1582)  
St. Charles Borromeo (Died 1584)  
St. Philip Neri (Died 1595)  
St. Germaine Cousin (Died 1601)  
St. Rose of Lima (Died 1617)  
St. Jane Frances de Chantal (Died 1641)  
St. Vincent de Paul (Died 1662)  
St. Francis de Sales (Died 1662)  
St. John Vianney (Died 1859)  
St. Catherine Laboure (Died 1876)



*Distribution of Candles on February 2*



*Caleb Short and Chris Jeffries receive the cassock*

# Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

---

## Contributing to a Protestant Church

---

**Question A:** Some Catholic parents in this town recently allowed their children to sing at a concert, the purpose of which was to raise funds for the building of a new Protestant church. Could this be justified?

**Answer A:** The participation of Catholic children in a concert to procure funds for a Protestant church is equivalent to the contributing of money by them for this purpose. Now, to contribute money toward the erection of a Protestant church is material co-operation toward false worship, which can be justified only for grave reasons. In 1822 a decree of the Sacred Penitentiary allowed Catholics to contribute funds toward the erection of a non-Catholic church in a particular locality where Protestants were permitted by civil law to use the Catholic church for their services (Cf. Aertnys-Damen, *Theologia Moralis*, 16th. ed. [1950], I, n. 407). The grave reason justifying contributions in this instance was the liberation of Catholics from the obnoxious condition of having their church available to heretics. Some theologians teach that even the avoidance of a very grave personal inconvenience would justify such contributing—for example, if a Catholic storekeeper in a predominantly non-Catholic town would be boycotted and financially ruined in the event that he would not give something toward the

building of a Protestant church (Cf. Noldin, *Summa Theologiae Moralis*, II, n. 122). But, apart from such extraordinary circumstances it would be forbidden to Catholics to contribute money or its equivalent (e.g. participation in the aforesaid entertainment) toward the erection of a non-Catholic house of worship. It could hardly ever happen that conditions would be realized which would permit children to take part in a concert for this purpose. Certainly, the mere fact that the parents wish to remain on good terms with their non-Catholic neighbors would not be a sufficient reason. Furthermore, the children might be placed in circumstances that would endanger their Catholic faith, such as attempts at proselytizing on the part of zealous non-Catholics whom they would meet at rehearsals. Above all, they might become imbued with the principle, so widespread in our land today, that all religions are equally good. All things considered, it seems safe to say that practically always the participation of children in a concert such as that described by the questioner would be sinful cooperation toward false worship.

---

**Question B:** What should be said to a Catholic girl who brings her non-Catholic fiance to Mass every Sunday, and then attends Protestant services with him?

---

**Question B:** The Catholic girl in question should be told that she may not continue her practice of regularly attending non-Catholic services on Sundays, even though she first assists at Mass, and even though her refusal may mean the breaking off of her engagement with the non-Catholic young man. The conditions for allowing passive attendance at a non-Catholic public service, as they are interpreted by theologians and canonists (Canon 1258, sec. 2), certainly do not extend to the case of a private

individual who seems to put the true religion on an equal basis with a false religion and whose regular attendance at false worship is directed merely to personal benefit. Moreover, in this case the danger of perversion and of scandal can hardly be absent. The most practical course for the young woman would seem to be to request a release from her present engagement and to wait for a proposal for marriage from a good Catholic boy.

---

*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