

October, 2008

# Adsum

*Adsum* is published by the seminarians of **Mater Dei Seminary** for the enjoyment of our families, friends and benefactors.



*Sixteen CMRI and Secular Priests assisted Bishop Pivarunas in the Priestly Ordinations of  
Father Bernard Welp, CMRI (Spokane, Washington) and Father Alexander Kryssov (Moscow, Russia)  
October 7, Feast of the Holy Rosary*



# Pope Pius XII, 50th Anniversary of Death



Eugenio Pacelli was born in Rome on March 2, 1876. On this same day, 63 years later, he was elected Pope, the Supreme Head of the Catholic Church, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth. Eugenio Pacelli's journey to the Papal Office began at the age of eighteen when he entered the seminary in November of 1894. Five years later, he was ordained to the Holy Priesthood and assigned to his home parish "Chiesa Nuova." Amid his numerous duties as curate, Fr. Pacelli attended the College of Apollinaris where he received his doctorate *summa cum laude* in both Canon and Civil Laws. During the pontificate of Pope Leo XIII, he was introduced into the affairs of the Vatican. There, he worked under Cardinal Gasparri in the codification of Canon Law and later advanced to the Office of Secretary of the Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs. On May 13, 1917, Monsignor Eugenio Pacelli was consecrated a bishop by Pope Benedict XV in the Sistine Chapel. It is indeed remarkable that the Pope who was so renowned for his promotion of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima was providentially consecrated on the same day as the first apparition at Fatima. As bishop, he was appointed Papal Nuncio of Bavaria and spent his time primarily in assisting Pope Benedict XV in procuring a lasting peace throughout

the war-torn nations of Europe. On December 19, 1929, Archbishop Pacelli was raised to the dignity of Cardinal, and nine short years later, was elected Pope.

Almighty God indeed blessed His Church with a great and saintly Pastor, whose reign was a most glorious one, even though it had its moments of darkness, such as the Nazi occupation of Rome. In those times of trial and danger, Pope Pius XII, always the good Shepherd, remained with his flock. He was also instrumental in protecting the Jews of Rome, even to the point of gathering 100 pounds of gold to provide ransom money to save them from imprisonment. In the lifetime of Pope Pius XII, the chief rabbi of Rome, Israel Zolli was converted to Catholicism and chose for his baptismal name, Eugenio, after the highly-esteemed Pontiff.

During his reign, the Catholic Church flourished to great heights with large numbers of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, with extensive missionary activities throughout the world, and with a powerful influence of Catholicism everywhere.

One of the great highlights of his Pontificate was the proclamation of the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On November 1, 1950, from his throne in front of the facade of St. Peter's, Pope Pius XII solemnly defined the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and declared it to be a divinely revealed article of Catholic Faith.

Some 36 cardinals, 600 archbishops and bishops, and thousands of priests and religious were present for the ceremony. The crowd of 700,000 filled the piazza and the streets nearby. Those who could not be present heard the Pope over the radio as he made the declaration. After the Holy Father had finished, all the church bells of Rome rang and he proceeded to offer a Solemn Pontifical Mass in honor of the Assumption.

Prior to this definition, the Pope sent a letter, *Deiparae Virginis Mariae*, to all the bishops in which he asked these two questions: "*Do you, Venerable Brethren, in your outstanding wisdom and prudence, judge that the bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin can be proposed and defined as a dogma of faith? Do you, with your clergy and people, desire it?*" The almost unanimous answer was "yes."

In his Apostolic Constitution, *Munificentissimus Deus*, Pope Pius XII eloquently presented the sources of divine revelation which demonstrated this dogma to have been revealed by God. These sources included historical evi-

dence of universal belief, the testimony found in liturgical books, the testimony of the early Fathers of the Church, and the necessary connection of this doctrine with the dignity of the Divine Motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary in accord with Scripture.

Among the many important teachings of Pope Pius XII, is the Apostolic Constitution, *Sacramentum Ordinis*, of November 30, 1947. The Pope presented the clear and infallible judgment as to the matter and form of the sacrament of Holy Orders. This is particularly important today for it is the theological basis for the rejection of the new rite of the consecration of bishops in the modern Church.

In the time of Pope Pius XII, a certain controversy arose among theologians as to the exact matter and form for ordination to the holy priesthood. It all began when some theologians considered the teachings of Pope Eugene IV and the Council of Florence which taught that the “*traditio instrumentorum*,” “the handing over of the instruments” (the chalice and paten with the host and wine) with the accompanying words, was the matter and the form of the sacrament of Orders. Although this ceremony was certainly and universally a part of the rite of Ordination in the Latin Rite, it was not found as a rite in the early Church, nor in the ordination ceremonies of the Eastern Catholic Rites. This difference gave rise to lively theological debates over the matter and the form of the Sacrament.

Pope Pius XII most carefully examined this matter and definitively settled it. The following is an excerpt from his Apostolic Constitution:

*“In the course of centuries the Church did not and could not substitute other sacraments in place of those instituted by Christ Our Lord. The reason is that the seven sacraments of the New Law were all instituted by Jesus Christ Our Lord, as the Council of Trent teaches, and the Church has no authority over the ‘substance of the sacraments,’ that is, over the elements that Christ Our Lord Himself, according to the testimony of the sources of divine revelation, determined should be kept in the sacramental sign....”*

After referring to the ceremonies used in ordinations and recalling the Roman Church’s acknowledgment of the validity of the Greek ordination rite, the Pontiff taught:

*“The conclusion from this is that for the substance and validity of this sacrament the handing over of the instruments [traditio instrumentorum] is not required by the will of Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, even according to the mind of the Council of Florence. Nevertheless, if at any time the handing over of instruments was an added requirement for validity because of the will and prescription of the Church, everyone is aware*



*that what the Church itself has established, it also has the power to change and abrogate.*

*“Therefore, after praying for heavenly light, We, with Our supreme apostolic authority and with certain knowledge, declare and, as far as it is necessary, decree and make provision: the matter of the holy orders of diaconate, priesthood, and episcopate, is the imposition of hands and that alone; and the form (likewise the only form) is the words determining the application of this matter, which words signify in a univocal sense the sacramental effects -- the power of order and the grace of the Holy Spirit -- and which are understood and used by the Church in this sense.”*

Once again, this is so important today since the modern Church has altered the rite of the sacrament of Orders. How often traditional Catholics focus on the change of the words of consecration (in the new Mass) and do not realize that the modernists had gone so far as to tamper with the essential form (words) in the consecration of bishops.

The happy memory of Pope Pius XII also affords the opportunity to reflect on the lasting benefits of his reign. During the 19 years of his Papacy, the Church enjoyed unparalleled success and prosperity. This was due largely in part to his ability to make necessary reforms in areas of ecclesiastical law and the liturgy.



In the area of the liturgy, Pope Pius XII had given to the Catholic world a clearer and more accurate translation of the Old Testament psalms (the New Psalter) for priests and religious in the recitation of the Divine Office. He wisely undertook the restoration of the Holy Week liturgy. The Pope restored especially the hour of the Easter Vigil to its original celebration in the evening of Holy Saturday, so that these ceremonies would be appropriately conducted at night. The paschal fire and the paschal candle are symbols of Christ, the Light of the world, dispelling the darkness of ignorance and of sin. He shortened the number of Lessons during the Vigil from twelve to four in order to facilitate the faithful's attendance at the liturgy. He extended the observance of the Holy Saturday Vigil from noon all the way to midnight. Together with this restoration of the Easter Vigil, he added the renewal of Baptismal Promises as a powerful reminder to the faithful "to be risen with Christ and to seek the things that are above." The Easter Alleluia is now sung

aloud at midnight to announce the arrival of the feast of the Resurrection -- the greatest of all the feasts of the Church.

Pope Pius XII instituted the solemn feast of Saint Joseph the Worker, in 1955, and assigned its observance to May 1<sup>st</sup> each year -- to directly counter the communistic "May Day" celebrations. He reiterated the importance of Saint Joseph in the struggle against Communism.

This same Pontiff also relaxed the Eucharistic Fast from midnight to three hours before the reception of Holy Communion. This he did in order to facilitate the reception of this wonderful Sacrament.

His encyclical, *Mediator Dei*, provides a wonderful explanation of Catholic teaching on the Liturgy. In it, he encourages more active participation at Church ceremonies and offers a beautiful explanation of the Liturgical Year. *Mediator Dei* also provided liturgical guidelines which explicitly condemned the modernistic errors that are now so prevalent in the New Mass.

---

## *Father Connell Answers Moral Questions*

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

---

### *Frequent Communion of the Sick*

---

**Question:** Is a parish priest bound to satisfy the request of a sick person who desires to receive Holy Communion in his home several times a week?

**Answer:** It is a general principle that a pastor is bound to satisfy the request of his parishioners for the sacraments when that request is reasonable. If the request is unreasonable — for example, if the sacrament is not obligatory for the petitioner and compliance with the request would prevent the priest from fulfilling more important parish duties — he would not be bound to accede to the request. A definite answer to the particular problem proposed by the questioner is impossible because circumstances might vary considerably. Thus, if the sick person lived fifteen miles from the church and icy roads made driving very dangerous, a priest would not be obliged to make the journey several times a week to give the patient Holy Communion of devotion. Moreover, if there were many sick persons in a parish, all desirous of

receiving the Holy Eucharist frequently, so that it would require two or three hours every day to comply with their request, a priest would ordinarily not be bound to undertake so great a burden, since his other work would suffer. But if a sick person lives near the church and the parish duties are not very onerous, the request for Holy Communion several times a week (perhaps, even, every day) would not be unreasonable. Surely, a zealous priest will strive to satisfy the commendable desire of a sick parishioner in such circumstances, especially if there is danger of death, when the repetition of the Viaticum is advisable. It betokens a sad lack of zeal when a pastor lets it be known that those who are confined to the house by illness will be given Holy Communion no more frequently than once a month.

---

**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