

March 2010

Adsum

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



Ordination of Subdeacons in Guadalajara, Mexico

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

This issue of our seminary newsletter has been written in Mexico during my short visit to Guadalajara to give the Subdiaconate to two Carmelite religious — Fray Angel de Maria Madre O.M.Carm. and Fray Jose Luis del Corazon Inmaculado O.M.Carm. Please pray for another seminarian, Fray Gabriel, OFM, who was also to be ordained, but has been hospitalized with a rare fever, contracted by a mosquito bite, which causes severe hemorrhaging from the mouth, nose, and ears. This sickness could be fatal, so do remember him in your prayers. In the late summer, I plan to return to Mexico to confer the Diaconate and to give clerical tonsure to three other Carmelites.

Fr. Gerard McKee, CMRI, flew from Michigan to assist me as a translator during my conferences with the priests and religious. Although I have no problem in communicating on a basic level, there is a real need for accuracy especially when important matters are to be discussed.

With each trip to Guadalajara, I am truly amazed at the continuous development and construction of their Carmelite monastery. These religious have multiple talents — stone work, welding, plumbing, electricity, landscaping — to name a few. When one enters into the monastery, it is a step into another world. A twelve-foot fence provides security from the outside world. Inside, there are stone white walls, stone tile floors, simple wood tables and chairs. The style of the architecture is very Spanish. In the refec-



Our two new Subdeacons



The Carmelite community at the entrance of monastery

tory where the religious take their meals, the monks eat in silence with their cowls over their heads while they listen to the spiritual reading. A unique feature of the Carmelite spirituality is their total abstinence from meat. Their diet consists of fruit, vegetables, eggs, cheese, and fish.

As we enter the month of March, we are reminded how quickly our scholastic year here at the seminary in Omaha has gone by. In less than three months, our classes will conclude with several seminarians to receive clerical tonsure and Rev. Mr. Brendan Legg (New Zealand) to be ordained Deacon. We presently have ten seminarians and have several more applications to be processed. It is my hope that all in our seminary who are truly called to the priesthood become holy priests after the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

I have no doubt that everyone at the seminary has had enough with this winter. Snow and ice have been a regular nuisance and freezing temperatures have kept many inside for the greater part of this season. As we enter the month of March, the temperature has finally risen above freezing and the snow is finally starting to melt. I don't mind cold weather and snow and ice as long as the roads are clear for us to travel on our Mass circuits on the weekends. Fortunately, there have been only three occasions in which severe weather prevented our priests from traveling.

Another item of news is an update on our "cattle and dairy operation". As we daily feed nearly sixty priests, religious, seminarians, and boarder students, it behooves us to keep the cost of food down. This past December, our very first calf, Samson, went to the meat-processing plant and

now rests quietly in our freezers. His live weight was 1300 pounds and will feed us for a few months. The next steer to fulfill his purpose is Constantine who weighs approximately 700 pounds. Then there is Ferdinand, our newest calf, who is pushing 300 pounds. Both Isidora and Isabella are expecting calves. Isabella is due in late April. For not knowing what we were doing, we have learned a lot about cows and the fresh whole milk has spoiled us. It would be really hard to go back to store-bought milk (white water).

During the season of Lent, our Holy Mother the Church beautifully provides for us spiritually in the Liturgy with a proper Mass for each day. The Introit, the Orations, the Epistle, the Gospel, and the Offertory and Communion verses present to us a holy theme to motivate us to penance and contrition for our sins. How important it is for both religious and laity to follow the sacred Liturgy from their missals! What a tremendous source of inspiration! As our seminarians prepare for the holy Priesthood, daily Mass and the Divine Office are a very important part of their spiritual formation and education. There is always something new to contemplate (lex orandi — lex credendi; the law of praying is the law of believing).

Be assured of my prayers for all of you during this holy season and as always, thank you for your prayers and support!

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



A family photo after Confirmations in Guadaluajara

Saint Joseph — Model of Christian Youth

God from all eternity had called St. Joseph with a most high and sublime calling. He had endowed him with the graces commensurate with the dignity of that calling. Sacred tradition and the universal belief and teaching of the Church is that from his earliest youth, his life was a model of sanctity and holiness.

At the time when the human heart is most strongly drawn toward the world, and the evil tendencies of nature render the practice of virtue most difficult, he had already made great progress in the ways of God.

The one purpose of his life, following the strong impulse of the grace within him, was to know God and love Him. “Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with thy whole heart and thy whole soul,” said the first and greatest prophet of his race. The heart of St. Joseph was a well-spring of love, and that love found its expression in the exercise of all the virtues of his state. Meekness, mildness, charity, patience, benignity, and all the fruits and adornments of charity were found in him in the fulness of perfection.

It was thus that through the grace of God he was fitted for the exalted dignity of guardianship over the Divine Child and His Immaculate Mother.

Let us pay our homages of love and veneration to the life of fidelity that merited so glorious a reward. Let us felicitate him on the blessed privilege of being deemed worthy of becoming the spouse of Mary and the guardian of Jesus. Let us unite in honoring him, whom God has so much honored, and let us join

in spirit with all fervent souls who this day commence the same holy exercises.

Reflections. 1. The young should by reason of their very condition cherish a particular devotion to St. Joseph. Youth is the most dangerous period of life; it is beset with many snares. Many are the pitfalls before it unless God’s grace be strong in the heart. A virtuous youth gives assurance of a blessed old age, but a vicious youth will sow the seed of many sorrows. The young cannot do better than place their youth under the protection of him, who by reason of the surpassing sanctity of his own youth, merited to be made the protector of the virginal innocence of Mary. 2. Young men, here is a model upon which to form your youth; here is one who sympathizes with you in all your temptations. Here is a powerful advocate with Christ, who will obtain for you the graces of which you stand in need.

Young maidens, here is one who was deemed worthy to be made the guardian of the purity of Mary. Fear not, but put your purity under his protection. He will guard you, and guide and keep your hearts undefiled in the midst of a sinful and sensual world. 3. You have precious graces at hand that will enable you to sanctify your youth. You have the means of grace — prayer and the holy sacraments. Have recourse to these and be faithful to the graces they impart, as St. Joseph was to the graces he received from God.

Beg of St. Joseph to give you a love for the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist.

(Month of St. Joseph, by Rev. J.T. Roche)

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

The Way of the Cross

Question: In order to gain the rich indulgences attached to the Way of the Cross, is it necessary to add a *Pater*, *Ave*, and *Gloria* (Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be to the Father) for the intention of the Holy Father?

Answer: No. All that is required for making the Way of the Cross and gaining the indulgences attached to this devotion is that one pass from station to station, meditate on the Passion of Our Lord, and perform this devotion without too great interruption between the different stations. When a considerable number of persons are making the Way of the Cross together, it suffices that a priest go from station to station and say some prayers, while the others join with him from their places. It is even permitted to have the prayers said from the pulpit by another priest, if the one performing the devotion could not be heard. A similar “group method” of making the Way of the Cross is permissible in religious communities with one of the members (not necessarily a priest) going from station to station. But it would seem that the indulgences would not be gained if this method were followed by a group of lay persons. In any event, prayers for the Pope are not a necessary condition for the gaining of the indulgences of the Way of the Cross.

Immoral Actions of Children

Question: I am chaplain in an orphanage for boys between the ages of six and ten, most of whom come from broken homes and are consequently regarded as “emotionally disturbed” children. Many of these boys, without any attempt at concealment, perform actions with themselves in the course of the day that are manifestly indecent, though they are apparently quite unaware that what they are doing is wrong. Some persons, especially psychiatrists, say that we should not ascribe any moral imputability to these actions, but should try to correct the boys by arguments that have no relation to morality — by telling them that these actions are not polite, etc. From the Catholic standpoint, what should be the proper course to follow in such cases?

Answer: Very probably these boys acquire such bad habits without any subjective guilt. Nevertheless, in our effort to correct them, especially when they are in the care of a Catholic institution, there would seem to be no reason for concealing from them the fact that the actions in question are objectively sinful. It is the traditional practice of the Catholic Church to train the young in the principles of God’s law applicable to them; and in the present case, such instruction seems called for. There is a tendency on the part of some persons nowadays to eliminate, from the reasons for right living proposed to the young, motives based on the moral law. Boys and girls are supposed to be deterred from evil by arguments of a utilitarian or aesthetic nature — for example, that impure actions are not courteous or will lower the culture of the community. This is not the Catholic way. We should teach our children from the earliest dawn of reason that the law of God forbids certain actions, and that in obedience to God we must avoid such actions. This ruling would apply to the case presented by our questioner. The boys should be told that the actions described are violations of God’s law, and that if they are performed with the knowledge of this fact they must be told in confession.

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