



Adsum

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

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

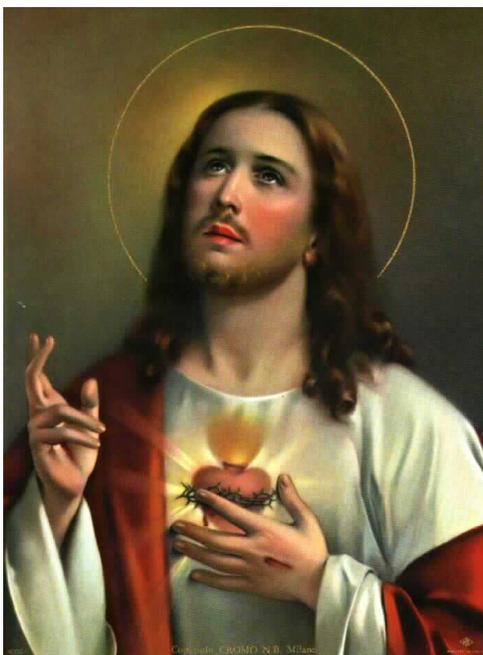
Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Our annual retreat for the priests and for the religious is always scheduled to coincide with the feast of Corpus Christi. The reason for this is two-fold: by this time classes for the seminary and for our various academies across the country are finished for the year and, secondly, this feast provides the priests and religious with a wonderful conclusion to the retreat with a Solemn High Mass and procession of the Blessed Sacrament.

The feast of Corpus Christi is a wonderful reminder to us that Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament must be the center of our lives. The most important part of the day for a priest or a religious must be the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the reception of Holy Communion and the recitation of the Divine Office, the Rosary, and meditation before Our Divine Savior in the Sacrament of His love. With the seminary located just 4 miles from the convent, my travel between both locations was greatly facilitated as we gave separate conferences to the priests and to the religious.

Another benefit of the proximity between the seminary and the convent is the care for our livestock. We now have 14 cows, which regularly provide milk,

cheese, and beef to feed the priests, religious, and boarder students throughout the year. Our convent sits on five acres of property, and the seminary on 10 acres. In order to avoid over-grazing, our milking cows and their calves stay at the convent where the Sisters can regularly milk them every morning and evening. The beef cows graze at the seminary where they require less care and attention. Nevertheless, the



beef cows at the seminary can be trouble-makers on occasion. This past week they managed to break through the fence of the pasture and disappear over the rolling hills of Iowa's countryside. An attempt was made to follow their tracks through the cornfields around the seminary, but it was to no avail. As the search for them dragged on to 25 hours, the "circle of rescue" expanded to a couple of miles. Finally the escapees were found by a local farmer 3 miles away, across a major highway.

This kind farmer and his wife believed it was not by accident that the cows got out because this episode provided the opportunity for them to meet the Sisters about whom they heard much.

This coming week our secular priests will gather here in Omaha for their annual priests' meeting. This year there will be 15 priests in attendance. Our priests look forward to this opportunity to discuss matters of dogmatic and moral theology as well as practical

pastoral questions and to continue to develop a unity amongst them as Sacred Scripture tells us, “Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum, habitare fratres in unum.” (How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity.)

During the past few weeks the sacred liturgy has been particularly rich in the celebration of feasts of our precious Catholic Faith: Pentecost with its octave, the Holy Trinity, Corpus Christi, and now the Sacred Heart of Jesus. How wonderfully our Holy Mother the Catholic Church presents to us these sacred mysteries of our Faith! Throughout the entire year, each Sunday focuses on the various aspects in the life of Our Lord and each day we have the heroic lives of the saints to inspire us. Where would we be without the Sacred Liturgy? How would we keep the sacred truths of our faith always before our minds? How easy it would be without the Sacred Liturgical seasons and feasts



Our Lord blessed us with excellent weather for our procession in His honor



The setting sun radiated its rays on our outdoor altar and on Our Lord in the monstrance

throughout the year to become worldly and focused on only the here and now of this world! The feast and this month of June dedicated to the Sacred Heart inspire us with confidence and love for Our Lord as He beckons us, “Come to Me all you that labor and are burdened and I will refresh you!”

Although it seems like only yesterday that seminary classes concluded, it is hard to believe how quickly the summer is passing. We hope and pray that all of you have a safe summer! Let us never forget the importance of practicing the virtue of modesty in dress. Our Lady of Fatima’s words that “certain styles and fashions would be introduced that would gravely offend her Divine Son” are more relevant today than ever.

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

St. Anthony of Padua

Most of us know St. Anthony of Padua as the Patron Saint who helps us find lost items, but we should not forget that he was given the titles of Doctor of the Church and Hammer of Heretics because he persistently and successfully combated the heresies of his time.

What was the cause of this Saint's success in the conversion of heretics? Was it his great learning? To some degree, yes. St. Anthony was a brilliant theologian and was well versed in dogmatic theology and Sacred Scripture. But the primary cause of his success was his deep spiritual life. By his prayers and sacrifices, he drew down the grace of God which is the most necessary ingredient in the recipe of any conversion to the Faith.

On one occasion, this great Saint began to preach in the town square, in a village near a seaport, but his words fell on deaf ears. Undaunted in his desire to reach these people, he announced that, as they would not listen to him, he would preach to the fish on the sea coast. This announcement was met with a roar of laughter. When St. Anthony reached the coast, he calmed the sea, and called up a great multitude of fish to the top of the water (all the fish were in straight rows, smaller fish in front and successively larger fish toward the deeper water). At this spectacular event, the people begged to hear the Word of God from His servant and were converted to the true Faith.



On another occasion, St. Anthony was preaching on the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist when a heretic began to challenge this doctrine. The heretic wanted some external proof for the Doctrine of the Real Presence. The man declared that he would not feed his donkey for three days, and that on the third day his donkey would be led into the town square. On one side of the square would be placed an abundance of hay and oats and at the other side would stand St. Anthony holding the Blessed Sacrament. If his animal would adore Christ in the Eucharist, he would believe.

For the next three days, St. Anthony prayed for Divine intervention. On the third day, the man very confidently brought his hungry donkey to the public square, only to be stupefied when his donkey went straight to St. Anthony with Our Eucharistic King. The donkey bent its front legs and bowed its head and remained there for some time. The donkey was then joined by its master, for the heretic fell on his knees and crawled next to his beast in adoration.

Many of us desire the conversion to the true Faith of members of our families and relatives. Let us never forget to support our explanations of the Faith with our prayers and sacrifices to draw down the necessary graces that our potential converts need.

St. Anthony of Padua, Doctor of the Church and Hammer of Heretics, pray for us.

Fr. Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

COMMON-LAW MARRIAGE

Question: Some twelve years ago a Protestant man and woman (both baptized) began to live together with the intention of contracting a common-law marriage. After a time they separated and were planning to get a divorce, when they discovered that the state in which they had been living did not recognize common-law marriages, so that they were not actually married before the civil law. Now the woman has become a Catholic and wishes to marry a Catholic. Is she free to contract such a marriage?

Answer: When two baptized non-Catholics wish to marry, nothing more is required for the validity of the marriage than the mutual exchange of marital consent, which may take place informally, even without the presence of witnesses. This holds good even in a place where the civil law does not recognize common-law marriages. For the conditions governing the marriages of baptized persons are determined by the canonical form (Canon 1099) the Church requires for a valid marriage, as conjugal consent. Therefore, the solution of this question goes back to the other question, whether or not this couple exchanged true marital consent when they began to live together or at some subsequent occasion. If their primary intention, in some way expressed to each other, was to take each other as husband and wife, then they were married, even though they were in error when they thought that their mode of cohabitation was recognized as a marriage in their particular state. And if they did marry in this way, and the marriage was subsequently consummated, the woman will never be free to marry, even after her conversion to Catholicism, as long as her husband is living. However, if the primary purpose of the couple was to make their union legal before the civil law, and the intention to marry was dependent on the belief that a common-law marriage was legally recognized, they were not married, because there was a substantial error in their agreement. Doubtless in practice it would be very difficult to determine the precise nature of the intention the couple had when they entered on their union. A priest who encounters such a case should refer it to the diocesan officials.

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
www.materdeiseminary.org