



# 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,

Among the many liturgical ceremonies at Mater Dei in which the seminarians assist, the public chanting of the Litany of the Saints on the feast of St. Mark the Evangelist and the three Rogation Days preceding the Ascension of Our Lord is a powerful reminder of the necessity of prayer. This necessity is reiterated by a novena in honor of the Holy Ghost in preparation for the feast of Pentecost.

Prayer is to the soul what breathing is to the body. Just as when we breathe clean fresh air, our minds are bright and our bodies are invigorated; so also, when we pray well God's grace enlightens our minds and strengthens our wills to know and to do the Will of God.

In his book *The Priest's Way to God*, Fr. Thomas Plassmann, OFM, writes on the importance of prayer for seminarians:

"The future priest needs strength of soul. It is well that he should acquire the indispensable art of prayer. 'Poeta nascitur, non fit' is the saying ('Poets

are born, not made'). But the case is very different here. The power of prayer is man's spiritual birthright; but it needs exercise. Prayer has been aptly called the sum total of perfection. Hence the youth who evinces no taste or love for this art, and whose prayer is but a perfunctory act, should not be encouraged to advance to the priestly state, which demands unlimited spiritual energy. All is well with the priest, no matter what his ability or success, as long as he is a man of prayer."

It is our custom to hold our annual priests and religious retreat during the week of the feast of Corpus Christi, and to conclude our retreat with a solemn high Mass and procession of the Blessed Sacrament. Retreats are an excellent means to renew spiritual fervor. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles are an example of nine days of preparation for the coming of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost.

Once again your prayers and support of the seminary are greatly appreciated. Be assured of our prayers for each and every one of you.

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



## Words of wisdom from *The Golden Rule or the Book for All* by a member of a religious order

---

It happened once that a young Carthusian Abbot had great trouble and difficulty with some of his subjects. In a letter which he wrote to St. Bernard, he says that “had each one done his duty, he would have found no difficulty in governing them or in being their Superior.” The young and inexperienced Abbot said nothing that was surprising; for, should every one do his duty, a statue might, as it were, be capable of being the general of an Order of fifty thousand religious, having need of eyes only, to behold the good done by them of their own accord. But, alas! ever since the beginning of the world, there have been two elements continually combating each other—the good and the bad. “There must be scandals,” said our Lord, a fatal though divine decree. St. Michael and Lucifer combat each other in heaven; Cain and Abel in the family of Adam; Isaac and Ismael in that of Abraham; Jacob and Esau in that of Isaac; Joseph and his brethren in that of Jacob; Solomon and Absalom in that of David; St. Peter and Judas in the company of Our Lord Jesus Christ; the Apostles and the Roman emperors in the Church of Christ; St. Francis of Assisi and Brother Elias in the Franciscan Order; St. Bernard and his uncle Andrew in the Cistercian Order; St. Alphonsus and Father Leggio in the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer; orthodox Faith and heresy and infidelity in the Kingdom of God on earth; the just and the wicked in all places; in fact, where is that country, that city, that village, that religious community, or that family howsoever small it may be, where these two elements are not found in opposition? The parable of the sower and the cockle is everywhere verified; even should you be quite alone, grace and nature combat one another. “And a man’s enemies shall be they of his own household.” (Matt. 10:36) Strange to say, not only the good and the wicked are found in perpetual conflict; but God, for wise ends, permits that even the holiest and best of men are sometimes diametrically

opposed, and even incite persecution each against the other, though each one may be led by the purest and holiest of motives.

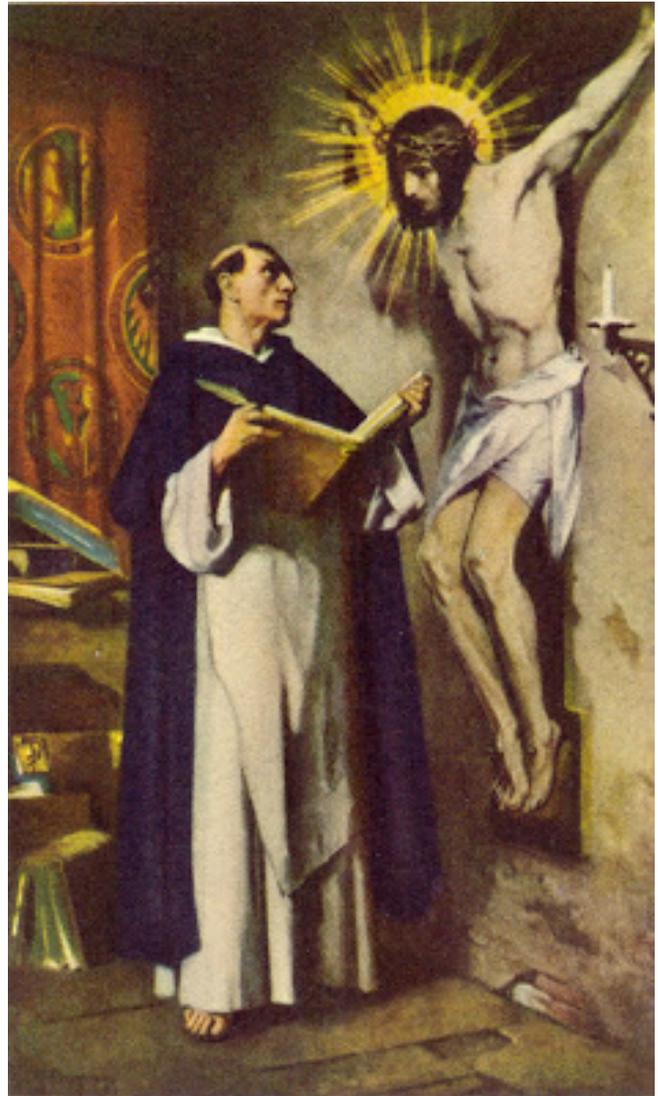
St. Epiphanius disputed with St. John Chrysostom, saying, that he never would tolerate the disciples of Origen. St. John Chrysostom, not so hasty in his conclusion, said that he would never confound the innocent with the guilty. St. Epiphanius replied that the heresy was so impious, the crime so enormous, that true love for the Faith should force him to expel this brood of vipers from the Church without delay. St. John Chrysostom answered: “A good judge condemns no one without a hearing.” St. Epiphanius exclaimed: “You are too punctilious in the matter.” In reply St. John Chrysostom complained that Epiphanius was too zealous, not having patience enough to listen to the truth. “Patience?” answered Epiphanius, “You mean sympathy with the cause and hypocrisy!” “Say rather violence and precipitation,” answered Chrysostom. “But,” said Epiphanius, “are you afraid to condemn heretics?” “And have you no fear of condemning the innocent as guilty?” asked St. Chrysostom. “I clearly see,” remarked Epiphanius, “that you favor Origen.” “And I,” rejoined St. John Chrysostom, “fear that you side with the enemies of truth.” “Be it so! But I say to you in the name of God,” replied St. Epiphanius, “that you will not die in Constantinople; you will be banished and will end your life upon a distant shore.” “And I also tell you, on the part of God,” answered St. John Chrysostom, “that you will not reach your diocese, and that you will die at sea.” Both were saints, both prophesied truly, both were right; and yet there seemed to be sufficient cause for dispute and opposition between them. Similar contests and differences of opinion occurred between St. Peter and St. Paul, the Princes of the Apostles; between St. Augustine and St. Jerome, and many others great and

## St. Thomas Aquinas on the Feast of Corpus Christi

The immense blessings bestowed by the divine mercy upon the Christian people give it an inestimable dignity. There is not, nor ever was, a nation so great that has gods so nigh as our God is present to us. For the only-begotten Son of God, wishing to make us partakers of His divinity, took upon Himself our nature, that being made man He might make men gods. And this body that He took from us He gave wholly for our salvation. For He offered His own Body to God the Father upon the altar of the cross as a victim for our reconciliation, and He shed His own Blood both to redeem and cleanse us, that we, being bought back from a wretched slavery, might be washed from all our sins. And then, that the memory of such a great benefit might abide in us, He left His Body to be our food and His Blood to be our drink, that the faithful might receive them under the species of bread and wine.

O precious and wonderful banquet, health-giving and full of all sweetness! What could be more precious than this banquet, in which no longer as under the law the flesh of calves and goats is eaten, but Christ the true God is set before us that we may receive Him? What could be more wonderful than this sacrament in which bread and wine are substantially changed into the Body and Blood of Christ? And therefore Christ, perfect God and man is contained under the appearance of a little bread and wine. He is eaten by the faithful but not torn asunder; indeed when the Sacrament is divided He remains entire in each particle. The accidents subsist without a subject, that there may be room for faith, when we receive visibly that which is invisible and hidden under an appearance not its own. Thus the senses are kept free from deception, for they judge of accidents known to them.

Of all the sacraments none is more health-giving, for by it sins are washed away, virtues are increased, and the soul is fed with an abundance of all spiritual



gifts. It is offered in the Church for the living and the dead, that all may profit by that which was instituted for the salvation of all. Finally, no words suffice to describe the sweetness of this sacrament, in which spiritual delights are tasted at their very source and the exceeding charity of Christ in His Passion is called to mind. It was in order to impress more deeply upon the minds of the faithful the boundless extent of His charity that, when He had kept the Pasch with His disciples and was about to depart out of this world to His Father, Christ instituted this sacrament as a perpetual memorial of His Passion, the fulfilment of the ancient figures, the greatest of all His miracles. To those who grieved at His absence it was to be a special consolation.

# *Outlines of Moral Theology*

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

---

---

## PIETY

---

Piety is the virtue whereby we give honor and service to those to whom we owe our being—our parents and, more remotely, our country. In this second sense piety would correspond to our idea of patriotism.

Children are bound to give their parents love, honor, obedience, and assistance. For example, ordinarily a son or daughter would sin grievously by striking a parent, even though only lightly. (We say *ordinarily* because there could be an exception in the case of a drunken parent, or one who is out of his mind and is misbehaving.) The obedience due to parents, strictly speaking, ends with the attainment of majority (twenty-one years) or emancipation (e.g., by marriage), but even then, if a son or daughter lives at home, obedience must be given in matters relating to domestic order (e.g., they must be in the house at a reasonable time, they may not have rowdy friends visiting them). But such older children are not bound to the same detailed obedience as younger children—e.g., they could not be kept at home regularly every night, they would not have to render an account of all their correspondence and social doings.

Children, even minors are not obliged to obey their parents as regards a state of life. Hence, a girl has the right to choose the religious life even against the will of her parents. Often, however, it is not prudent for her to execute her plan until she comes of age. Similarly, there is no obligation to follow the directions of their parents regarding marriage itself, or marriage with a particular person, though young folks should ordinarily consult their parents on these matters. The Church decrees that a pastor shall not assist at the marriage of minors, when the parents do not know about it or are reasonably unwilling, until he has first consulted the bishop.

Children, even after majority, are bound to assist their parents in grave or extreme necessity. Indeed, a child would not be allowed to enter religion if his parents were in grave necessity and could not otherwise be helped; and one already professed as a religious would be obliged to leave the convent or monastery to help

---

*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](http://www.materdeiseminary.org)