



# Adsum

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

## LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

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Dear Friends and Benefactors,

We begin this month's newsletter with the joyful announcement of upcoming ordinations this May 3, the feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross. In addition to our seminarians advancing to First Tonsure and the minor orders, Frater Philip Davis, CMRI (Colorado) will be ordained to the holy priesthood; and Rev. Mr. Stephen Sandquist (Nebraska), Rev. Mr. Tien Le (California), and Rev. Mr. Jeremy Saunders (Canada) will be ordained to the diaconate. Our seminarians will be joined by a Carmelite, Fray Juan Alberto del Sagrado Corazon (Mexico), and Josef Weissensteiner (Austria) who will receive two of the minor orders. Please remember them in your prayers!

This year many of our seminarians traveled to various Mass centers around the country to assist our priests with the beautiful ceremonies of Holy Week; what better way for them to learn the sacred liturgy

than to be master of ceremonies and to direct the other altar servers.

Each year, the months of April and May seem like a marathon as the solemn ceremonies of Holy Week are followed by the Greater Litanies (April 25, feast of St. Mark), the Minor Litanies (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday before the feast of the Ascension), the conclusion of our seminary classes together with the required retreat before ordinations, and our high school and grade school graduations with First Holy Communion and Confirmations. It is a joyful business that gives God greater honor and glory and leads souls closer to God.

This month of April is dedicated to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament where day and night Jesus calls us from His throne in the tabernacle: "Come to Me all you that labor and are burdened and I will refresh you." Let us frequently have recourse to Our Risen Savior in the Sacrament of His Love.

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



*Tenebrae—the chanting of Matins and Lauds for Holy Thursday*



*Chanting of the Passion  
(Fr. Borja, Fr. Geckle, and Fr. Anaya)  
during the Mass offered by Fr. Molina on  
Wednesday of Holy Week*



*Blessing of Holy Oils  
during the Mass of the Chrism on  
Holy Thursday morning*



*Blessing of the Paschal Fire and Candle*



*Blessing of the Easter and Baptismal Water*



## Instruments of the Passion at Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, Italy



*Large portions of the true Cross*



*Inscription of Pontius Pilate:  
"Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews"*



*One of the nails that pierced Our Lord and  
two thorns from His crown*

Santa Croce in Gerusalemme (Basilica of the Holy Cross) was founded by St. Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great. The saint built the church to receive the large relic of the True Cross brought by her from Jerusalem. Pope St. Sylvester consecrated it on March 20, 330, and Galla Placidia and Valentinian III adorned it with rich decorations in the fifth century. It was restored by St. Gregory II (720), by Benedict VII, who erected the adjoining monastery (975), by Cardinal di Mendoza (1492), and was finally reduced to its present form by Benedict XIV.

# *Father Connell Answers Moral Questions*

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

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## **PRIESTS ENGAGED IN SECULAR WORK**

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**Question:** Is it true that many of our priests are so busy with work that could be done by laymen that they have not sufficient time for distinctively priestly labors? I am referring to priests who are occupied with secular activities that contribute toward the benefit of the parish.

**Answer:** I would give a wholehearted affirmative answer to this question. To take one example, I believe that the work of seeking prospective converts from among the non-Catholics of the United States—more than 100,000,000 at present—would be much more successful if our priests devoted more time and effort to this truly apostolic task. And one reason why some priests do not have more time for convert-making is that they are busy with such projects as arranging bazaars and bridge-parties, planning drives for funds, training baseball teams, organizing Boy Scouts, etc. Now, all these works are good in themselves and help toward the progress of Catholic life and parish loyalty. But they are works that could be done by lay persons—at least, in their details, with a general supervision on the part of the priest. It is possible for a priest to become so absorbed in these tasks that he will neglect his more important priestly duties, without realizing that he is not measuring out his time properly. Occasionally all priests engaged in parish work should check on their various activities and ask themselves honestly if they are following the important principle: first things first.

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## **PREMARITAL INSTRUCTION OF A NON-CATHOLIC**

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**Question:** If a priest is giving premarital instructions to a non-Catholic planning to marry a Catholic, should he content himself with only instructing him or should he try to convince the person of the truth of the Catholic faith?

**Answer:** A priest should desire to convert to the Catholic Church every non-Catholic with whom he comes in contact, because he wishes all men to share in the happiness and the security of the one true faith. This is particularly true when he is imparting to this person instructions in Catholic doctrine, which are so intimately connected with arguments in support of the Catholic faith. At the same time, prudence may suggest that in giving premarital instructions the priest will sometimes abstain from any direct efforts to convince the recipient of the truth of Catholic doctrine. It must be remembered that the chief purpose of the premarital instruction of a non-Catholic about to marry a Catholic (prescribed by some bishops) is to enlighten the non-Catholic about the teachings of the Catholic Church, so that he will understand the beliefs and the practices of his future spouse and thus they will enjoy a more harmonious home life. I would, generally speaking, suggest that unless the non-Catholic manifest a positive (even though only probable) inclination to join the Catholic Church, the priest will do better if he merely explains Catholic teachings without any attempt to lead the person to conversion. Otherwise, he may stir up in the non-Catholic a defense attitude against what he regards as unjustifiable proselytizing and render him antagonistic to the Church. If the priest succeeds in showing the non-Catholic how eminently logical is the Catholic position, he will have gone a great way. The seeds of conversion will have been sown, and divine grace may produce the fruits at a considerably later time.

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