

# 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,

It seems hard to believe that next year will be 30 years since the seminary was moved from Mount St. Michael in Spokane, Washington, to Omaha, Nebraska! The rationale behind this decision was that the Mount was such a large facility with many maintenance needs and our seminarians were too available to keep up with the never ending list of repairs. This had caused on occasions slight interruptions in the study of the seminarians, and it was deemed expedient to have a change of environment to a facility which would be much smaller and free from excessive maintenance. There is, however, in the exchange the disadvantage of student capacity; here in Omaha at Mater Dei, the rooms are much smaller and the facilities are older. Nevertheless, we are happy with what God has

provided and gladly make the sacrifice of smaller accommodations. What is important is that we have created a Catholic atmosphere on the campus which helps the seminarians in their clerical formation. This year we have 15 seminarians in residence and 4 younger religious with Fr. Bernard Welp, CMRI in western Colorado at our novitiate.

On September 8, the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Frater Aloysius Hartman, CMRI renewed his religious vows for 3 years and Christian Pawlowski (Canada) was received as a novice, taking the name of Brother Mary Alexius. Mark Vincent (Idaho) and Clayton Wright (Ohio) also on the same day entered the CMRI Congregation as postulants.

As for our boarding school, we have 28 boarder girls, who reside with the CMD Sisters across the river in Iowa, and 17 boarder boys, who share with the seminarians their lodging here on church property.



*Mater Dei Seminary Scholastic Year 2018*

Although our facilities are humble but sufficient, we are never in want for food here in the heartland. With the priests, seminarians, religious Sisters, and boarder students combined, there are nearly 80 people to feed every day. Our Blessed Mother has lovingly provided for our temporal needs this past week with the donation of 2200 pounds of potatoes from a local company and with 100 boxes of delicious Colorado peaches donated by very kind parishioners from Clifton, Colorado, and delivered by Fr. Bernard Welp, CMRI on his last visit to the seminary. This coming week one of our local orchards will allow our boarder students to pick two truckloads of apples; this is an annual event. Needless to say, after school and on weekends everyone is busy processing and canning the fruit. In addition to these donations, every year one of our parishioners kindly donates two truckloads of sweet corn, which we put up for the entire year. All of this gives us the renewed confidence when we pray in the Our Father, "Give us this day our daily bread...!"

As Mater Dei Seminary begins it's 29th scholastic year, please pray that all of our semiarians truly become priests patterned after Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd. With my prayers and blessing,  
Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



*Brother Alexis, CMRI receives the habit*



*Frater Aloysius Hartman, CMRI  
renews his religious vows*



*Clayton Wright and Mark Vincent  
become postulants*

# A Priest's Hands

by Fr. Oswald Baker (1973)

In the early evening of Thursday, May 6, 1971, on the highway from Omaha, Nebraska, to Colorado Springs, Colorado, half a mile west of a town named Flagler (it is, you will find, on the map, just east of Colorado Springs), a 1968 Chrysler car driven by a Jesuit, Fr. Julian Fraser, was in collision with a 20-ton lorry. The road was wet. The lorry skidded and landed squarely with tremendous impact on top of the car, afterwards reported to have looked as if a massive steamroller had gone over it. The body was hardly discernable as a body.

The most valuable part of that lorry's load was a consignment of narcotics from Phoenix, Arizona, destined for Colorado Springs, where consequently it never arrived, and where a Catholic teenager commented, "I guess Father gave his life so's that stuff'd nivver git here."

Fr. Fraser would have been 72 on September 25, when he would have received a card from me and from many other priests in and outside the U.S.A. who had never met him, but knew of him.

Fr. Fraser had retained the True Mass, Benediction, the Sacraments, in their full traditional form. He had retained also his congregation. He was a vigorous and vociferous opponent of peoples' Communion in the hand.

Police, bread-down crew, ambulance men, early on the scene, reported that in the wreckage they found the hands, severed, together palm to palm, fingers extended, untouched, unscratched, spotless. One police patrol testified, "—like they were—shining."

Those hands, like every priest's hands, had been hallowed, sanctified, and consecrated, by the ordaining bishop, with holy oil. When a priest is ordained, he extends his hands, palms upward, and the bishop places a liberal line of oil from the base of each thumb to the forefinger of the opposite hand. The priest's hands, the hands of the priest-to-be, are then placed together and they are bound.

The priest may be reminded—I was—that he may one day be led away, bound, to suffer like his Divine Master.

At the end of the Ordination Mass, the binding is removed and the oil has by that time spread to the whole surface of the priest's hands, which are then cleansed by the bishop with lemon juice. Those hands are then consecrated, with one of those simple but intensely beautiful prayers in our liturgy: "Deign, O Lord, to sanctify and consecrate these hands by this anointing, that whatsoever they shall bless shall indeed be blessed, and whatsoever they shall consecrate shall indeed be consecrated in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our Lord Jesus Christ, like His Blessed Mother, worked with His Hands—Hands roughened by carpentry, or housework. He placed His Hands upon the sick, healing them. He took them by the hand, bidding them rise. He stretched out His Hand to Peter who was sinking. His Hands were nailed. At the end, at the Ascension, returning to Heaven, lifting up His Hands, He blessed them. "On the night before He suffered, taking bread into His Holy and Venerable Hands, and lifting His eyes to the Father, and giving thanks, He blessed and broke and said: "Take ye, eat ye all of this. This is My Body. In like manner, also taking the Chalice into His Holy and Venerable Hands—At the end, "Do this in commemoration of me."

It is in order to carry out that commandment that, at his ordination, a priest has his hands blessed, anointed, with a solemn, everlasting consecration.

At Mass, a priest's hands have a prominent part. They are to be washed beforehand. It is an integral part of the Liturgy that they be washed, during Mass.

The priest extends his hands over the bread and wine. With his hand he traces the sign of the Cross over the elements. Intoning the Gloria, he lifts his hands and rejoins them. He prays "Dominus vobiscum" with an open-handed gesture. At the Offertory, as he raises the Chalice, his eyes must at that moment be fixed on the Crucifix. Replacing and covering the Chalice, he lifts his open hands. At this stage he must direct his eyes to Heaven. He joins them and brings them down together, as if, literally, bringing down God the Holy Ghost on the altar.

He lifts his hand to bless you. Facing the altar, he prays with his hands uplifted in the ancient manner. Facing you, he opens his hands as if to let fall some gift for you.

The supreme, heavenly gift that his hands are consecrated to convey to you is the Body of Our Lord. When a priest leaves the sacristy for the altar, he proceeds, in clothes not his, with words not his, to embrace God the Son made man, now at the right hand of His Eternal Father, to bear Him back into time, to give Him to you.

Nothing less than that is the meaning of Holy Communion and the work of a priest's hands.

And the whole corpus of minute and strict regulations concerning a priest's hands at Mass is not the outcome of arbitrary decisions. It is the codification of traditions that go back to the very earliest centuries. It includes the regulation that the Body of Our Lord shall be touched only by consecrated hands of a priest, or deacon—and none other.

# *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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## **THE MORALITY OF THE OUIJA BOARD**

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**Question:** What should priests tell Catholics about the use of the ouija board, a practice that is now becoming quite common?

**Answer:** In times of danger and uncertainty, like the present, when people are anxious and fearful about the safety and the whereabouts of service men who are dear to them, there is a tendency to seek information that is unobtainable through ordinary channels from such sources as fortune-tellers, crystal gazers, etc. Recourse to the ouija board—a device that spells out answers under the pressure of the fingers—is one form of this tendency.

Regarding the use of the ouija board two facts can safely be asserted. First, many of the answers obtained by this means are merely manifestations of the unconscious thoughts and desires of the operator. Sometimes it happens, by an extraordinary coincidence, that answers procured in this fashion convey information that seems to be entirely beyond the scope of the natural. Yet, in fact, they are governed by the natural laws of human intellection and volition.

Secondly, it can also be unhesitatingly asserted that the powers of darkness, ever alert to ensnare the souls of men, sometimes intervene in the use of the ouija board and provide knowledge that could not be obtained by any human means. And since there is always a probability that this will take place, one who uses the ouija board for the purpose of getting information not available in the ordinary way is guilty of the grave sin of divination. For, he is invoking, at least implicitly and conditionally, the assistance of the devil.

Accordingly, a priest need have no hesitation in telling the faithful that the use of the ouija board, like recourse to fortune tellers, is objectively a mortal sin. There is no reason for mitigating this statement so far as to say the frequent use of the ouija board is gravely sinful. For, even a single experiment with this dangerous toy may invite the co-operation of the evil spirit; hence, it constitutes a grave violation of the first commandment of God. It might be alleged that the sin of divination would not be committed by one who would expressly reject all communication with the devil and protest that his only purpose is to utilize natural, though latent, human powers. Whatever may be said of the value of this defense theory, it has very little weight in practice. For it would rarely happen that a person, eagerly using the board to acquire knowledge which he cannot obtain in ordinary ways, would intend efficaciously to exclude information which might be available through diabolical intervention, even though he would make an express statement to the contrary.

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