



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,

The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, 2018, was a most joyful occasion with the ordinations of our seminarians. I am extremely grateful to Bishop Martin Davila (whom I consecrated Bishop in 1999 for Mexico) who performed the ordination ceremonies as I convalesce from my recent heart attack; this was a big sacrifice for Bishop Davila as the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is a holy day and a national holiday for Mexico.

As I addressed in the sermon for the ordination Mass, it has become a tradition for us to schedule ordinations on this feast of Our Lady. Besides the miraculous features of the image of the Mother of God on this rough cactus material (which has not

deteriorated in over 487 years) the message of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Juan Diego and to all of us is full of maternal love and confidence:

“Hear and let it penetrate into your heart, my dear little son: Let nothing discourage you, nothing depress you. Let nothing alter your heart or countenance. Also do not fear any illness and vexation, anxiety or pain. Am I not here who am your mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Am I not your fountain of life? Are you not in the folds of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms? Is there anything else that you need?”

As our newly ordained priests embark on their work as “fishers of men,” may they find consolation in these words of their spiritual Mother, Mary the Mother of God. May all of you have a grace-filled Christmas and blessed New Year!

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



Priestly Ordination of Fr. Jeremy Saunders, Fr. Tien Le, and Fr. Stephen Sandquist



*Frater Aloysius Hartman, CMRI (Arizona)
& Joseph Pham (Vietnam) receive the
Minor Orders of Porter & Lector*



*Denis McGuire (Connecticut) receives the
Minor Orders of Exorcist & Acolyte*



The chanting of the Litany of the Saints for those receiving Major Orders



Rev. Mr. Joseph Appelhanz (Colorado) & Rev. Mr. Michael Sellner (Minnesota) are ordained to the Subdiaconate



Fr. Jeremy Saunders (Canada) receives the matter of the Sacrament of the Priesthood



Fr. Tien Le (California) is vested with the priestly chasuble



The anointing of the hands of Fr. Stephen Sandquist (Nebraska)

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

THE STATE'S RIGHTS OVER PRIVATE PROPERTY

Question: Theologians tell us that if a person has damaged another's property without any formal guilt—and consequently without any obligation to make restitution, as far as the natural law is concerned—he will nevertheless be bound in strict justice to compensation if the civil authority commands him to do so (*post sententiam judicis*). Now, by what authority may the civil authority command a person to renounce a portion of his private property when he is not obliged to do so by the law of God?

Answer: It is an accepted principle of Catholic theology that in certain circumstances, for the sake of the common good, the State possesses the authority to dispose of the property of the citizens. This authoritative disposition of the State then binds the citizen in conscience, even though the natural law of itself imposes no such obligation. A concrete example would be this: Without any subjective guilt a man drives his car through his neighbor's hedge, causing considerable damage. By the natural law he is bound to no restitution because formal guilt was not present. However, if the neighbor takes the case to court—as he is perfectly entitled to do—and is accorded a certain amount of compensation, he obtains a right to this in commutative justice. Certainly, the common good demands that the State possess such a right; for, if a person whose property has been damaged could collect compensation only when the offender acknowledged subjective guilt, many acts of injustice would be perpetrated, and widespread indifference toward the property of others would prevail. It is to be noted that the principle here invoked by no means implies that the State possesses arbitrary power over the property of the citizens. It is only in certain specified cases, when otherwise the welfare of society would certainly be gravely impaired, that the civil authority is empowered to supersede the individual's right to retain his private property.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY IN RESTITUTION

Question: A small boy, playing baseball, breaks a window in the rectory. May the priest in justice demand that the boy's father pay the bill for the repair of the damage?

Answer: Several distinctions are necessary for the solution of this problem. If the boy has not reached the age of reason and his father, through neglect of supervision, was responsible for the destructive activity of his son, the father is bound in conscience to make good the damage. Such would be the case if the father knew that the boy was playing too close to the rectory and did nothing about it. If, however, the damage was done without any culpable neglect on the part of the father, there is no obligation on this latter (at least prior to the court sentence) to pay for the window. In that event the occurrence is to be considered a mere accident, like the breaking of a window by a hail-storm.

If the son has attained the use of reason, he himself is a responsible, and hence, if the damage was due to his own deliberate carelessness, he is bound to make up for it. If he has no funds at present, he is bound to earn some money for this purpose. Even if the father was guilty of the failure to admonish his son about his indifference to the rights and the property of others, the father would not per se be bound to make restitution. As Merkelbach states: "Parents are not bound to make restitution of the damage done by their children who have sufficient use of reason, because they are not bound by a duty of justice to safeguard the property of others, unless their silence would be equivalent to approval or protection."

However, if the civil law obliges a careless parent to make reparation for the damage done by his son, the father is bound in conscience to pay the debt. Hence, a person who is the victim of the destructive actions of a small boy is perfectly within his rights if he brings suit against the child's father.

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:

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