



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,

What a great privilege our seminarians are given throughout the year to actively assist our priests in baptisms, funerals, weddings, religious vows, litany processions, and confirmations. These occasions provide first-hand experience to many of the priestly functions that they will one day fulfill themselves. Of all these ceremonies, it is, however, a most unique privilege to serve at the sacred ceremonies of Holy Week from Palm Sunday, to the chanting of the Passion, to Tenebrae, to the Mass of Chrism, to the Mass of the Last Supper, to Good Friday and finally to the Easter Vigil. Our seminarians will learn not only how to perform the sacred functions, but more importantly they

will grasp the tremendous meaning these ceremonies signify as we celebrate Our Lord's Passion, Death, and glorious Resurrection. Our seminarians have already received their particular assignments as to which of our priests they will be accompanying to our various churches throughout the Midwest. For some of them, this will be the first time that they will have had such an opportunity, and hopefully they will not have the "deer in the headlights" moments. For others, this will

be their second or third Holy Week as a seminarian; yet, the more often they serve at these ceremonies the more familiar they will become with the rubrics. By the time their ordinations come, they will become very proficient in the Sacred Liturgy. It is one thing to study in class or read from books; it is quite another thing to be actively involved with the priest.



In our February issue of the *Adsum*, we reflected on the importance of carrying our crosses in life and how God sends us unique opportunities to suffer for Him. One good example of this occurred a few weeks ago when one of our seminarians was driving Fr. Sandquist to Minnesota to cover Masses at Immaculate Conception in Sartell. Nearly three hours out, the seminarian encountered a deer on the highway which nearly totaled

Fr. Sandquist's car. This not only made for a long night for them but also for Bro. Mary Xavier, CMRI, who had to come to the rescue with another vehicle from Omaha to get them to their destination, needless to say, very late that night. This was a particular cross for Bro. Xavier, who is our maintenance Brother with an endless list of things to be repaired, from vehicles to electrical to plumbing and carpentry. Fortunately no one was hurt in the accident.

Besides their classes and studies, the seminarians do have manual labor. Among their chores they occasionally assist the religious Sisters with the care of our dairy cows. In order to avoid over-grazing at the convent pasture, our extra cows occupy the upper acreage above the seminary. This past month four of our cows gave birth to calves and now our herd is up to fourteen cows. Of our four new calves, three are heifers that will be saved for future breeding and milking and one steer that will be raised for beef. These cows are part Angus part Jersey; Angus are noted for beef and Jerseys are noted for their milk. One of the difficulties we are going to encounter in the near future is the processing of the steer. Because of the Covid situation in our country, meat processing plants are backed up over a year to butcher cattle. For this reason we will plan to set up our own processing operation to butcher our cattle ourselves. As we have mentioned in the past, we daily feed over sixty people including the priests,

seminarians, Sisters and boarding students. Having the cows has been a great investment for us over the past fourteen years.

The month of March is dedicated to St. Joseph who is the patron of the universal Church and the special patron of vocations. He was specially chosen by God to be the faithful spouse of the Virgin Mother of God and foster father of the Son of God. How important it is that we invoke this powerful saint not only for an increase of priestly and religious vocations but also that he protect our priests and religious from all spiritual and physical harm. As Our Lord has told us, "The harvest is indeed great but the laborers are few." May St. Joseph intercede for us—the members of the Mystical Body of Christ—and intercede for our priests and religious as they labor in the vineyard of the Lord.

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



The blessing of ashes on Ash Wednesday



Six new postulants for the Sisters of the Congregation of the Mother of God

March 17th — feast of St. Patrick

from the Roman Breviary

Patrick, called the Apostle of Ireland, whose father was Calphurnius, and whose mother was Conchessa, a relative, it is said, of St. Martin, Bishop of Tours, was born in greater Britain, and as a boy several times fell into captivity with the barbarians. When in that condition, being put in charge of their grazing flocks, he already gave signs of future holiness; for, filled with faith and the fear of God and the spirit of love, he would diligently rise before dawn, in snow and frost and rain, to pour forth prayers to God. It was his custom to pray to God a hundred times during the day, and a hundred during the night. After his third deliverance from slavery, he entered the clerical state, and applied himself, for a considerable time, to the study of sacred works. Having made several most fatiguing journeys through Gaul, Italy, and the islands of the Tyrrhenian Sea, at last he was called by a divine intimation to the salvation of the Irish; and having power from the blessed Pope Celestine to preach the Gospel, and being consecrated bishop, he proceeded to Ireland.

It is a marvel how much this apostolic man had to endure in this mission; how many evils, how many hardships and labors, how many enemies. But, favored by the mercy of God, that land, which heretofore had worshiped idols, soon brought forth such fruit from Patrick's preaching that it was afterwards called the Island of the Saints. Very many people were regenerated in the holy font by him; bishops and many clerics were ordained; rules were drawn up for virgins

and widows living in continency. By the authority of the Roman Pontiff he appointed Armagh as the chief metropolitan see of the whole island, and enriched it with relics of Saints, brought from the City. Moreover, Patrick so shone forth, adorned by God with heavenly visions, with the gift of prophecy, and great signs and wonders, that his fame became more and more celebrated and spread itself far and wide.



Besides his daily care of the churches, his invincible spirit never slackened in prayer. For it is said that he was wont to recite every day the whole Psalter, together with the Canticles and Hymns, and two hundred prayers; that he every day knelt down three hundred times to adore God; and that at each canonical Hour of the day, he signed himself a hundred times with the sign of the cross. He divided the night into three parts: first, he repeated the first hundred Psalms, and genuflected two hundred times; the

second was spent in reciting the remaining fifty Psalms, standing in cold water, with his heart, eyes and hands lifted up to heaven; the third he gave to a little sleep, stretched upon a bare stone. Remarkable for his practice of humility, like the Apostles, he did not abstain from manual labor. At length, worn out by his incessant cares for the Church, glorious in word and work, in extreme old age, he fell asleep in the Lord, after being refreshed with the divine mysteries. He was buried at Down, in Ulster, in the fifth century of the Christian era.

Outlines of Moral Theology

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

MORTAL & VENIAL SIN

The essential objective difference between mortal and venial sin consists in the fact that the former is a transgression that involves an aversion from God, and the latter includes only an inordinate conversion to a created good, but no aversion from God. Venial sins, however numerous, can never coalesce into a mortal sin; but the matter of several sins, each of which taken by itself would be a venial sin, can coalesce into grave matter and thus constitute a grave sin—e.g., thirty acts of theft, each of two dollars, in the course of a day.

For a mortal sin three conditions must be verified: (1) There must be grave matter (or at least matter considered grave by the agent). (2) There must be full advertence of the intellect, which means that the agent must know or suspect that the matter is gravely sinful. (3) There must be full consent of the will to the act visualized as gravely sinful. If the first condition is lacking, but the other two present, the sin is deliberately venial. If the second and third conditions are not fulfilled, in the sense that the advertence and the consent are only partially present, the sin is a semi-deliberate venial sin. Such can be the case of one who does something wrong when he is only partially awake, or when he is taken off his guard by a sudden burst of passion. According to the Council of Trent no one can long avoid venial sins without a special privilege; and it is commonly held that this refers to slight semi-deliberate venial sins. It is also a common teaching of theologians that the Blessed Virgin alone received this privilege.

We distinguish mortal sins into those that are mortal *by their whole nature* (*ex toto genere suo*) and those that are mortal *by their nature* (*ex genere suo*). The former admit no lightness of matter (parvity of matter), so that every sin of this kind that is fully deliberate is a mortal sin—e.g., blasphemy, impurity. The latter admit lightness of matter, so that even when it is deliberate a violation of the virtue to a small degree is only a venial sin, such as theft, sacrilege. A sin is *venial by its nature* when it is never of itself mortal, not only because of circumstances, such as a sin of lying, ingratitude, curiosity.

Venial sins, however numerous, do not diminish a person's degree of sanctifying grace or the merit previously gained. The chief evil of venial sins, when they are fully deliberate, is that they dispose to mortal sin. Venial sins are remitted by acts of perfect contrition (as long as the act extends to them), and also probably by acts of attrition (even without the sacrament of Penance) and perhaps even by acts of the opposite virtue, in as far as these contain implicitly a detestation of the venial sins.

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