



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,

This issue of the seminary newsletter is written during the Easter octave, after a very busy Holy Week, and in this month dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament.

How providential in many ways was the pontificate of Pope Pius XII! One very significant and providential decision of this Supreme Pontiff, called the Pastor Angelicus—the Angelic Pastor—was to mitigate the Eucharistic fast from midnight to 3 hours for solid foods and alcohol and 1 hour for other liquids with water no longer breaking one's fast. Over the years we have taken this for granted; however, how difficult it would be for us in these unique times were it not for this Papal mitigation.

For example, on an average Sunday, I offer 3 Masses and travel 6 hours—2 Masses in Omaha and a third Mass in Topeka, Kansas. It would be morally impossible to fast from midnight with the added restriction of no water and to carry out confessions, 3 Masses and lengthy travel.

Our other 3 priests in Omaha likewise travel great distances to provide the faithful with the Mass and the Sacraments on Sundays and holydays. Pope Pius XII's decision has been most helpful.

There is an interesting story about Fr. Ferdinand

Falque, from the St. Cloud diocese, who retired at Mount St. Michael's in 1978. Fr. Falque related that, in 1939, he accompanied his bishop, Bishop Joseph Bush, to meet Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII). During this encounter Father explained how he was very noticeably indisposed. He had officiated at a wedding on the previous Saturday, which was at a great distance from his rectory, and returned after midnight with a terrible headache. So as not to break his

Eucharistic fast from midnight, he refrained from taking an aspirin and water for relief. The following Sunday he had confessions, multiple Masses and sermons while still bearing with a splitting headache. When Cardinal Pacelli inquired why Fr. Falque was so indisposed, and was informed of the Father's difficulties, the Cardinal reassured him that if he was ever in a position to remedy the situation, he would. Thus, Fr. Falque took credit for Pope Pius XII's mitigation of the Eucharistic fast.

Speaking of the fast, the faithful often are confused as to the fast on Holy Saturday. Prior to Pope Pius XII, the fast ended at noon because the Easter vigil was held Saturday morning; however, when Pope Pius XII restored the

Easter Vigil to its original place, Holy Saturday evening as it was in the early Church for many centuries, he extended the fast to midnight.

The beautiful ceremonies of the Easter vigil clearly reflect that the ceremonies were performed



RAYS OF LIGHT SHINE THROUGH THE CHOIR LOFT STAINED GLASS WINDOW FROM THE SETTING SUN ONTO THE STATUE OF THE RISEN SAVIOR AND THE TABERNACLE

in the evening hours as the Exsultet and the Preface following chanted by the deacon repeatedly refer to “O beata nox”— “O blessed night!” How significant to perform these ceremonies in the darkness of the evening hours when, during the blessing of the paschal fire and the paschal candle, the darkness is dispelled by Christ the Light of the world!

Let us always keep in mind that the Church’s infallibility extends to the general discipline of the Church and that the Sacred Liturgy is part of the secondary object of this infallibility. Lex orandi—lex credendi (the law of prayer is the law of belief) is a special application of this infallibility. At Vatican Council I, in 1870, Pope Pius IX and the totality of bishops in this council taught:

“We declare that the judgment of the Apostolic See, whose authority is unsurpassed, is not subject to review by anyone; nor is anyone allowed to pass judgment on its decision.”

What a great consolation it was to see the large

number of faithful attend the Easter vigil! We began our Easter vigil at 10:30 p.m. and the ceremonies took us right up to midnight to celebrate the Easter vigil Mass. What a joy it was to see so many children present for these sacred ceremonies!

We were also blessed to have a number of priests from around the country fly into Omaha for the chanting of Tenebrae on Wednesday of Holy Week and for the Mass of Chrism on Holy Thursday morning. How impressive was the chant from 23 priests and seminarians.

Let us not forget that the month of April is dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament. Our Risen Savior is ever present on our altars to strengthen and console us poor exiles in this vale of tears. From His throne of love He reassures us, “Come to Me all you that labor and are burdened and I will refresh you!”

With my prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



Fr. Anaya blesses the deacons before the Chanting of the Passion on Wednesday in Holy Week



Twenty-three clergy and seminarians participated in the Chanting of Tenebrae



Blessing of the Holy Oils during the Mass of Chrism

Fr. Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

MILITARY ACTIVITIES CONTRARY TO THE LAW OF GOD

Question A: What course should be followed by a Catholic in the air corps if he is commanded to bomb a target which he knows is not a lawful military objective according to Catholic principles?

Question B: What advice should a Catholic chaplain give when such a case is submitted to him for judgment by the soldier in question?

Question A: Is it lawful for a young man to enter the air service if he realizes that he may be commanded to participate in activities forbidden by the law of God?

Answer A: If a soldier is commanded to do something he knows is forbidden by the law of God as interpreted by the Catholic Church, he must refuse to obey, no matter how grave the consequences. Even if he foresaw that he would be courtmartialled and perhaps punished by death, he would not be justified in violating the law of God—for example, by directly bombing a group of noncombatants. It is interesting to note that the Nuremberg tribunal upheld the principle that “the fact that the defendant acted pursuant to order of his government or of a superior shall not free him from responsibility” (cf. Kenny, *Moral Aspects of Nuremberg* [Washington, 1949], p. 55). It is to be hoped that as a correlative of this principle our government would judge a soldier deserving of praise if he disobeyed a command in war when he is convinced in conscience that what is commanded is against God’s law. However, if a soldier only doubts as to the lawfulness of what is commanded, he may and should obey, since it is a general principle that a subject is bound to submit to lawful authority unless he is sure that what is being required of him is sinful. Such would be the case of the airman who is told to bomb a military objective, but is not certain whether the advantages to his side will be sufficiently great to justify the concomitant destruction of a considerable number of noncombatants.

Answer B: If a soldier explicitly proposes to a chaplain a problem as to the morality of a mission assigned to him, the chaplain should give him a correct and definite answer, as far as this is possible, according to Catholic principles. Thus, if the young man asks about the morality of a direct attack on noncombatants, it is the duty of the chaplain to inform him that this is contrary to the divine law, and cannot be justified under any circumstances. However, when the chaplain is not consulted, he is ordinarily not bound to take the initiative in condemning a measure, even though he is certain that it is unlawful, since usually such a protest would be futile.

Answer C: Since not all the activities of our air force in war are opposed to the law of God, it is not forbidden to a young man to enter this branch of the service, as long as he is determined to take no part in any particular activities that are unlawful. However, it is most desirable that Catholics who enter the air corps (in which moral problems of warfare are most likely to arise) would receive from the priests assigned to their spiritual care adequate instructions as to the laws of God concerning the means and methods of waging war, and should be told that in the event of a conflict between the law of God and a military command, they must obey the law of God.

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