



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,

On September 24th, it will be the 30th anniversary of my episcopal consecration by the late Bishop Moises Carmona. In January of 1991, Bishop Carmona visited Mount St. Michael and wrote a letter to all of the CMRI priests in which he expressed his desire to consecrate a bishop from among our ranks. After three months of prayer and reflection, a special meeting was held to discuss 1) whether it was in the best interests of the congregation to accept Bishop Carmona's offer; 2) how a bishop would work within the constitutions of the congregation; 3) who would be the candidate elected by the priests to be consecrated bishop. And as they say, the rest is history. When it came to choose a coat of arms and motto, I chose the words of Christ that the Good Shepherd lays down his



A visit with Bishop Carmona in April of 1991, in Hermosillo, Mexico



Episcopal Consecration, September 24, 1991, Feast of Our Lady of Ransom

life for the sheep. Since the Second Vatican Council, 1962-1965, with its erroneous teachings on false ecumenism, religious indifferentism, and religious liberty, and the promulgation of the Novus Ordo Mass (1969), Christ's warning to His Apostles has once again been realized—they will strike the shepherd and scatter the sheep. In these confusing times for the Catholic faithful, now, more than ever, do we need true Catholic bishops and priests to guide and feed the flock of Christ. In order to provide for Christ's faithful, I have consecrated two bishops: Bishop Daniel Dolan (1993) and Bishop Martin Davila (1999), and have ordained over 40 priests. In addition to the clergy, there are several religious congregations under my spiritual care, comprising about 120 consecrated souls of Sisters and Brothers. And I am most grateful that the priests and religious under my care are so zealous to provide Mass, sacraments, and spiritual instruction

to so many sheep of Christ's fold. I frequently remind myself that "unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain that build it, and unless the Lord keeps the city, he watches in vain that keeps it." It is only by the mercy of God and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, that we succeed in any of our apostolic endeavors.

In the previous issue of the seminary newsletter, there were photographs of my recent pastoral visit to Mexico, assisted by Fr. Gerard McKee, CMRI (my Spanish translator). Upon my return from Mexico, Fr. Carlos Borja accompanied me on an eight day marathon to France, Germany, and Italy to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. We were very fortunate to have the assistance of Don Josef Weissensteiner, who was just ordained this past December and who drove us extensively between each of the countries. In France we met with Fr. Le Gal and Fr. Machiset and administered Confirmation to the souls in their care. From there we traveled to Germany where we met Fr. Rissling and Fr. Heyne for two days. Our last two days were spent in Italy in order to visit Don Floriano Abrahamowicz and his spiritual flock. With 3 hours to spare before the Mass and Confirmation ceremonies, Fr. Borja and I made a quick visit to the Basilica of St. Mark in Venice and to the church of St. Lucy; Don Floriano's chapel in Treviso is only half an hour from Venice, so it was a special grace to visit my patron saint's relics. In my previous visit nearly 5 years



Confirmations in Bolzano, Italy

ago, I had the honor to visit St. Anthony of Padua. Providentially my mother was born in Salcedo, Italy, a small town very close to both Venice and Padua, and perhaps this was a factor in my parents naming me Mark Anthony.

This month our seminary classes resume for the secular seminarians; this year there will be 15 young men. Fr. Gregory Drahman, CMRI will have 4 religious seminarians in Colorado. By the grace of God and the intercession of Our Lady, we pray for a spiritually successful 32nd year of Mater Dei Seminary.

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



Fr. Le Gal and Fr. Machiset with some of their faithful in France



After Mass and confirmations in Germany with Fr. Rissling and Fr. Heyne



In Treviso, Italy, with Don Floriano Abrahamowicz and Don Josef Weissensteiner and some of their faithful

Outlines of Moral Theology

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

RELIGION IN GENERAL AND PRAYER

Religion can be understood either objectively or subjectively. Objectively, religion is the system of truths and duties by which man is *bound (re-ligare)* to God. In this sense we speak of the Mosaic religion, the Catholic religion. Subjectively, religion is the virtue whereby man believes the truths and fulfills the obligations by which he is bound to God, and thus gives God worship of cult. Religion is a moral, not a theological, virtue, because its immediate object is not God, but the *cult* due to God.

Prayer is one of the chief acts of religion. Prayer, in a broad sense, is any movement of the soul toward God, e.g., an act of faith. In a stricter sense, it is an act proceeding from the virtue of religion and directed to any or several of four ends—adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation, petition. But in the strictest sense, prayer is an act of petition. It is this type to which our Lord has affixed the promise of infallible efficacy. This promise refers only to prayer for oneself; moreover, it is to be understood of prayer with the proper dispositions (humility, perseverance, etc.) and directed to an object that will be advantageous to our eternal salvation. For adults, prayer is necessary as a means to salvation in the sense that ordinarily only those who pray will obtain the graces they need for the attainment of eternal life.

We can pray to God directly or to our Lady or the saints asking that they present our prayers to God. It is a disputed point whether the souls in purgatory can pray for us or for themselves. St. Thomas denies that they can pray. The Church never prays *to* the suffering souls in her liturgy, though we are not forbidden to do this privately. Of course, we can pray *for* the souls in purgatory, as the Church does in public acts of cult.

To pray in such wise that a law of the Church commanding prayer is fulfilled (e.g., the recitation of the Divine Office, assistance at Mass) one must have the intention of praying, and also at least external attention. This is present if one merely avoids actions which by their nature are incompatible with internal attention. Whether one must also have some internal attention (for the fulfillment of the ecclesiastical precept) is a disputed point, but the negative is sufficiently probable to be accepted. Needless to say, one who would limit himself to external attention in the act of prayer and would voluntarily admit distractions would be guilty of sin; but ordinarily it would be a venial, not a mortal, sin.

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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