



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 November marks the 30th anniversary of the death of Bishop Moises Carmona, and in this issue of the seminary newsletter, there is included a brief synopsis of his life and priestly work in Mexico. He was raised in the Catholic faith at a time when the Church in Mexico was under a bitter persecution from a Freemasonic government which confiscated Church property and put to death the clergy and laity who formed the Catholic resistance—the Cristeros Movement. (On page 3 of the newsletter, there is included pictures of the famous Jesuit martyr, Fr. Miguel Pro, S.J.) Bishop Carmona's upbringing in such a situation helped prepare him for his battle with the Freemasonic infiltration in the Catholic Church during and after Vatican II.

One amazing consideration about Bishop Carmona is that when his body was transferred from the cemetery to



the crypt in his church (Divine Providence Church) some years after his death, it was found to be incorrupt. I clearly remember his appearance at the time of his death and when I viewed pictures of his body during its transference to the crypt, there was no remarkable change in appearance.

On a different note, since the beginning of the seminary year, our seminarians have had several opportunities to sing and to serve at several funerals for our parishioners. This experience is a great learning lesson for them as they prepare for the priesthood.

Also your prayers will be especially appreciated in the next couple of weeks as our seminarians prepare for advancement to the priesthood with the reception of minor orders on December 13th, the transferred feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Lastly, as we pray for the Holy Souls in Purgatory during this month of November, let us also be mindful of our need to make reparation for our own sins by voluntary penance and by the patient bearing of our crosses in life. With my prayers and blessing,
Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI

In Memoriam: Bishop Moises Carmona Rivera (1912-1991)

Bishop Moises Carmona Rivera was born on October 31, 1912, in the town of Quechultenango, in the state of Guerrero, Mexico. His parents were Nicolas Carmona Sanchez and Maria Rivera Campos. He was so named in Spanish for Moses, because at his birth there was a great flood in their town. He was baptized in the same place as his birth on April 24, 1913, having his siblings as Godparents—Adolfino and Teodosia.

In April of 1914, his father, Nicolas Carmona, died prematurely as a result of abuses that he received during the revolution; he left behind his wife, little Moises, 2 girls, and another son on the way. To help the family, Moises' paternal aunt, Natividad Carmona Sanchez, a humble rural teacher, took care of little Moises whom she loved as a son and he loved as a mother. It was from her that he learned his first letters. In 1925 he enrolled in the College of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the city of Chilapa. In these times of the Calles' persecution of the Catholic Church, the churches were closed and priests had to go into hiding. Moises would rise at 4 a.m. to attend Holy Mass that was celebrated secretly in a private house. These experiences contributed to the formation of his character.

After completing his schooling, he was invited to enter the seminary by Fr. Ojeda, his parish priest. In 1929 he entered the seminary where he confessed that he studied very hard, although he was not the first nor the last in his class. He briefly interrupted his studies in the seminary in order to verify his vocation, and for one year he worked with the laity of Catholic Action. Having returned to the seminary he continued his studies, and in 1936 received Clerical Tonsure, followed by the Minor Orders in 1937, the Subdiaconate in 1938, and finally the Diaconate and Holy Priesthood in 1939, by Bishop Leopoldo Diaz Escudero.

Fr. Carmona was first assigned as an assistant vicar in the parish of La Soledad in Acapulco with the old priest Don Florentino Diaz (the uncle of the bishop who ordained him). He was further appointed professor of

Latin at the seminary of the diocese which position he held for 4 years. As a young priest he gave great importance to the catechism, both in his parish and in surrounding towns, often times traveling by cart or by foot. This was met with great success. After several appointments between 1944 and 1962, Fr. Carmona was appointed the first parish priest of La Divina Providencia.



The next phase of Fr. Carmona's priestly life was marked by the struggle to preserve the true Mass, valid Sacraments, and true faith in the midst of the Great apostasy caused by the false council of Vatican II. It was during these turbulent times for the Catholic Church that Fr. Carmona established contact with Father Joaquin Saenz y Arriaga, who had the Catholic sense to recognize and to denounce the heresies which emanated from the modern Church and the heretics who promulgated them. In 1974 Fr. Saenz y Arriaga founded the newspaper *Trento* and invited Fr. Carmona to act as its director. Two years later, Fr. Carmona established the "Union Catolica Trento," an association to

promote the true Mass and Sacraments, to spread the true Catholic Faith, and to combat the modernism and false ecumenism of the Vatican II Church.

In October of 1981, Fr. Carmona, together with Fr. Zamora, was consecrated bishop by Archbishop Peter Martin Ngo Diem Thuc, who had been appointed apostolic delegate to Vietnam by Pope Pius XI. As a Catholic bishop, Bishop Carmona spread the Faith far and wide throughout Mexico administering the Sacrament of Confirmation and ordaining seminarians to the priesthood. After consecrating Bishop Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI on September 24, 1991, Bishop Carmona was involved in a tragic car accident on his return to his church La Divina Providencia in Acapulco from visiting Bishop Martinez in Guadalajara. His Catholic Union of Trent continues his work under Bishop Martin Davila and the Trento priests. Viva Cristo Rey! May he rest in peace!

On November 23, 1927, when Fr. Michael Pro, SJ was executed, his final words were “Viva Cristo Rey!” (Long live Christ the King!)



Outlines of Moral Theology

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

SUPERSTITION

Superstition literally signifies a sin of excess. With respect to religion it means the sin whereby a person gives cult to the true God, but in a manner that is excessive, or gives to another the cult that is due only to God.

A person could sin mortally in giving cult even to the true God—for example, if the excess lay in the fact that the cult was based on a serious falsehood. Thus, one who would worship God with the ceremonies of the Old Law, which imply that the Redeemer has not yet come, would sin mortally. On the other hand, one would sin venially by giving God cult which is excessive only in its manner—for example, if a priest would add genuflections and bows in the sacred rites over and above those prescribed by the Church.

Superstition of the other type—cult due to God alone but given to another—can be either idolatry, divination, or vain observance. Idolatry is the worship of an image of a false god, and it is a most grave sin. Under this would come also worship of the sun or an animal, etc.

Divination is undue quest for knowledge of secret things by the aid of the devil. If it involves an express petition to the devil, it is, of course, a most wicked insult to God. But, it may be tacit; and actually this takes place when a person tries to “read” the cards or tea leaves or a crystal ball. He is implicitly calling on the devil, for these things of themselves cannot furnish the information; God or good spirits will not use these means of communicating knowledge, and so the only source remaining is the evil spirits. Hence, divination is a mortal sin *from its whole nature*, admitting no lightness of matter. However, it frequently happens that those who practice it are excused from grave sin through ignorance or thoughtlessness, or because they engage in it merely in jest. But often, even in such circumstances, there is danger that scandal will be given and that the participants will be led to more serious occult practices.

The Ouija board is a form of divination. Spiritism particularly is a grave form of this sin, and for this reason the Church explicitly forbids Catholics to take any part in spiritistic séances, even merely passive assistance. Much of the spiritism practiced today is fraud; but since the danger of diabolical intervention is always present, it is a serious sin of superstition.

Astrology, as it exists with us, is largely chicanery. But if one strives to obtain from the stars knowledge of the future, in as far as this is dependent on men’s free acts, this too is superstition. At most one could hold that the heavenly bodies exert an influence on the sensitive factors of human nature, and thus indirectly and fallibly influence men’s conduct. Such a doctrine has little to support it scientifically, but it would be free from the sin of superstition.

To believe that one can obtain knowledge of occult things through dreams is usually a sin of superstition. God at times makes us of dreams to communicate knowledge, but in this event He also gives the recipient assurance that it is He who has spoken. To go to a fortuneteller on one occasion as a joke, without ascribing to her any occult powers, might be only a venial sin; but it would be dangerous, and those who do this habitually are guilty of mortal sin.

The sin of vain observance consists in the attempt to obtain through the use of some creature an effect which is above its nature—e.g., a rabbit’s foot or a lucky coin to secure protection from harm. This too is an implicit seeking of help from the devil, in as far as any special power which the creature may possess cannot come from God or a good spirit, and hence must have its source in the devil. But, as in the case of divination, often those who perform acts of vain observance give no heed to any diabolical intervention and are in good faith—hence, can be excused from mortal sin. Hence, it is better to treat such customs as knocking on wood or avoiding thirteen at table as foolish rather than sinful.

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:

MATER DEI SEMINARY
7745 Military Avenue
Omaha NE 68134-3356
www.materdeiseminary.org