

Adsum

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LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The clergy and seminarians of Mater Dei Seminary sincerely wish all of you a very Blessed Christmas and grace-filled New Year!

On the transferred feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, four of our seminarians received the last two minor orders. Enclosed in this seminary newsletter is an excerpt from a book on the image of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe; it is an interview of a renowned ophthalmologist who examined the eyes on the tilma. His statements about the Virgin's eyes are truly remarkable. More importantly are Our Lady's words to Juan Diego: "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?" May Our Lady's words be a comfort to all of us in these difficult times for the Catholic Church and for society at large.

With my prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



Caleb Armour (Scotland), Matias Chimenton (Argentina), Giles Pardue (Alabama), & Adam Craig (Michigan) receive the minor orders of Exorcist and Acolyte



Guadalupe, What Her Eyes Say by Francis Anson

A book that we have previously referred to entitled, *The Mystery of the Virgin of Guadalupe*, published at the end of 1982, is probably one of the most exhaustive ones published in Spanish. Its author, writer and journalist Juan Jose Benitez, gathers a series of interesting testimonies by personally interviewing the protagonists of the different discoveries. The truth is that these interviews are very interesting from beginning to end, but we will only reproduce the testimonies of two experts.

The first is the one of Dr. Graue. We chose Dr. Graue because he has been the most competent eye pathologist, if not one of the best, in America; he had repeatedly declared himself an unbeliever of “these strange stories of a bearded man in the eyes of the image.” He told Benitez himself that “around that time a movement to canonize the visionary of Tepeyac rose in Mexico... And although my friends kept on insisting. I rejected once and again the proposal to analyze the cloth. I felt sorry to disappoint them...”; and because Dr. Graue ended up talking to the image on the ayate.

Through the first questions of the interview, the distinguished ophthalmologist tells Benitez in great detail the precautions he took from the scientific, technical, and even practical points of view to guarantee the exactness of his investigation. His first study session was devoted to analyze the whole cloth, verifying its preservation and “after looking once and again at the ayate for an hour, I could not understand how a painter could have done such a painting on that coarse cloth. If you come close to the tilma as I did, you will notice that there is no sizing. Frankly, that amazed me.”

Benitez, perhaps wondering that an

ophthalmologist took time to study the ayate and “the painting,” interrupted, “Didn’t you feel the temptation to examine the eyes?”

“Yes. And I did it to check a point somebody had commented to me. I took the ophthalmoscope and flashed a beam of light inside the eye. And I got



shocked: that eye had and still has depth. It look like a living eye!”

“But that is unexplainable in a supposed painting...”

“Totally unexplainable.”

“Allow me to insist. Are you sure that a human bust appears in the eyes of the image?”

“Absolutely sure. I am not the only one who has seen it. In the right eye, occupying a space of about four millimeters, you can clearly see the figure of a bearded man. This reflection is in the anterior surface of the cornea. A little beyond that, the same human bust is reflected in the anterior and posterior faces of the crystalline, exactly



following the optical laws—more specifically, the so-called triple image of Samson-Purkinje. This phenomenon, I repeat is what gives depth to the eye.”

“How about the left eye?”

“I could see the same figure there, but with a slight deformation or focus. This detail is very meaningful, because, as I was telling you before, it fully conforms with the laws of optics. Undoubtedly, that person was a little farther away from the Virgin’s left eye.”

Next, Benitez asks him about the ophthalmoscope he used, and from the answer of Dr. Graue we find out that if one uses a high power gadget, or when the observer gets too close to the cloth, the colors disappear. After this answer, Benitez asks him again, “What was the thing that greatly called your attention in the different investigations of the original ayate?”

“I would tell you that even more than the presence of that figure reflected in the corneas of the eyes, what really encouraged me to go ahead was the luminosity that can be seen in the pupil.”

“In both eyes!”

“Yes, but everything can be seen with more precision in the right eye. I have tested countless paintings and I have never observed this phenomenon. I passed the beam of light in the eyes of the Virgin of Guadalupe and saw how the iris shone and the eye acquire a certain depth. It is something that moves me! They remind me of the eyes of a living person. In one of these explorations, when I was working with the ophthalmoscope, I unconsciously addressed the image in a loud voice, ‘Look up, please...’ As you may have seen, the Virgin has her eyes slightly turned downwards and toward the right and I was so absorbed with that luminosity and depth, that I forgot it was an image. I said that, thinking I was in front of a patient...”

“In short, would you say that they look like the eyes of a living being?”

“If I did not know that it was an image, yes.”

“And how do you explain all this?”

“I can’t.”

Outlines of Moral Theology

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

SOBRIETY AND DRUNKENNESS

Drunkenness, a sin against sobriety, is the inordinate and voluntary use of intoxicating liquor for the sake of pleasure. It is complete if the use of reason is taken away; it is incomplete if it does not go to this extent, but nevertheless lessens the control one has on himself. Ordinarily complete drunkenness is a mortal sin, incomplete drunkenness is a venial sin. The malice of drunkenness consists in the fact that, without a sufficient reason, a person in a violent way deprives himself of the use of the nobles of his faculties.

It is difficult to distinguish in practice between complete and incomplete drunkenness. It is not requisite for complete drunkenness that one be rendered utterly stupid and helpless. The essential factor seems to be that one does things that are inordinate which otherwise he would not do—e.g., blasphemy, wild driving, uncontrolled temper, etc. In other words, “he is not himself.” A person is guilty of imperfect drunkenness when his speech becomes somewhat thick, when he gets excessively humorous, when he repeats the same jokes over and over again, etc. It should be noted that a person may be guilty of grave scandal even by venially culpable drunkenness.

The basic malice in drunkenness is not that one deprives himself of the use of reason, but that he does so in a violent manner and merely for the sake of pleasure. Consequently, it is not a sin when a person deprives himself of the use of reason by the use of a drug when he has to undergo an operation. Indeed, if no other anesthetic were available, one could render himself insensible by alcoholic liquor to mitigate great physical pain or to undergo an operation.

The use of narcotics, such as opium, etc., is to be judged by the same norms as the use of alcoholic liquor. Such drugs should not be used when a person is dying, except in as far as is necessary to mitigate great pain, because the last hours should be spent in acquiring merit. However, if a person is in great agony, a drug could be given him to relieve him, even though he would die unconscious—provided he has been prepared spiritually for death.

A person who deliberately becomes intoxicated, foreseeing that in that condition he will commit certain sins—e.g., blasphemy, impurity—is guilty in cause of those sins. For this prevision certainty is not required. It suffices that one judge with good probability that this will occur. On the other hand, a merely remote probability that one will commit some serious sin will not add another sin to the sin of drunkenness.

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