



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,

As the numbers of our religious and secular priests increase over the years, it has been difficult to hold combined meetings each year. Thus, our CMRI religious priests meet at Mt. St. Michael in Spokane, Washington, during the month of January, and our secular priests meet during the month of July at Mary Immaculate Catholic Church here in Omaha, Nebraska. This past July, nineteen of our secular priests (as well as Fray Leon, OFM) gathered for conferences and discussions on various topics in Canon Law, Moral Theology, and Dogmatic Theology. These annual meetings are a wonderful means to maintain unity among our priests and also coordinate our priestly work in the most effective

way possible for the benefit of all the souls committed to our pastoral care. We were joined via Skype by Bishop Pio Espina (Argentina), Fr. Rissling and Fr. Heyne (Germany), Fr. Casas-Silva (Argentina), and Fr. Saunders (Canada).

For many of our priests, these annual meetings are the only opportunity to address their fellow priests collectively and to share their work of the apostolate with them. On occasion, our priests cover for their brother priests when duty calls them away from churches or chapels. The substitute priest then is familiar with the various Mass centers and can fill in without any issues.

Even though this July meeting was attended only by the secular priests, it was still a challenge to accommodate all the Masses offered each morning. There were six altars available—the main altar and



Our secular priests at their annual meeting at the end of July



From 6 am to 9 am, Masses were continuously offered before each day of our annual meeting with our secular priests here in Omaha, Nebraska

two side altars in the church, the choir loft altar, the altar in the rectory chapel, and the portable altar set up in one of the classrooms.

As each priest offered the Sacrifice of the Mass one after the other each morning it was a reminder of the Old Testament prophecy of Malachias: “For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice and there is offered to my name a clean oblation.” (Malachias 1:11) This prophecy could not have referred to the Old Testament sacrifices, for they were not “in every place,” but only in Jerusalem. This prophecy of the continual sacrifice could only refer to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered throughout the world “from the rising of the sun to the going down”—a prophecy that has been fulfilled only in the Catholic Church. Furthermore, how do the Protestants interpret this passage, since there have been no sacrifices in their churches?

Whenever our priests approach the altar, we should recall to mind the beautiful words of King David in Psalm 109 that foretold the future Messiah would be a “priest according to the order of Melchisedech.” Now this Old Testament king and priest Melchisedech offered bread and wine in sacrifice. Whenever we assist at Holy Mass, we witness the fulfillment of prophecy.

What a precious gift is ours to be able to offer

and to assist at this “continual sacrifice” each time we attend Mass. How important it is for us to realize this great treasure and to benefit from it by the frequent attendance at Mass.

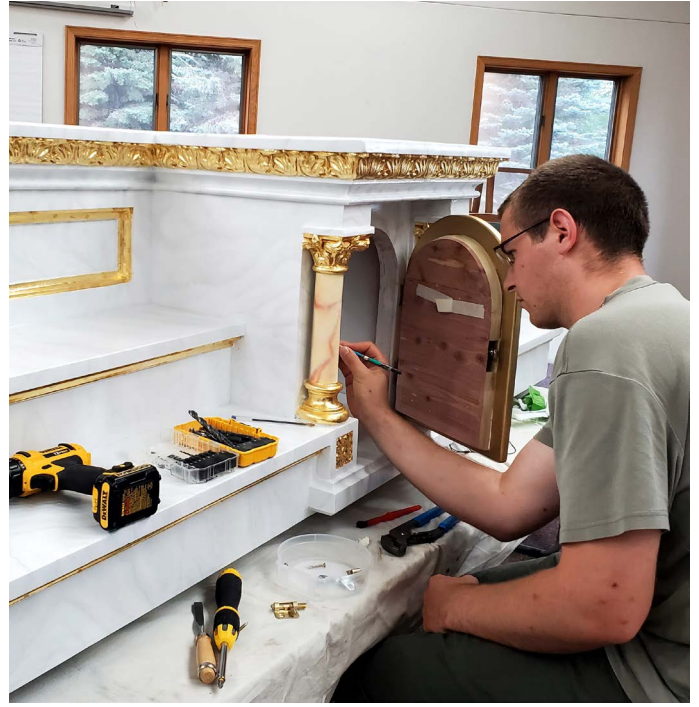
During this summer, some of our seminarians have been busy with restoration projects in other locations. Franz and Leopold Trauner have done remarkable work on our new church in Sartell, Minnesota. They refurbished two side altars and built and painted backdrops to complete the sanctuary of Immaculate Conception Church, and have been a tremendous help to Fr. Molina these past few months. It takes a lot of dedication to sand down and repair old altars, paint them, marbleize them, and finally gold leaf them.

In a few weeks, our seminarians will return to the seminary to begin their classes. This fall there will be seventeen secular seminarians at Mater Dei and eleven religious seminarians and brothers in formation between Idaho at St. Louis de Montfort Seminary and Colorado at St. Joseph’s Novitiate. For six of our seminarians, this year will be most important as it is their final year before ordination to the priesthood in May.

Once again, thank you for your prayers and support!

With my prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



Our seminarians at work this past summer to restore the two side altars at our new church in Sartell, Minnesota



Outlines of Moral Theology

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

THE NATURE AND VARIOUS KINDS OF CONSCIENCE

Conscience, as we are considering it here, is *moral* conscience, different from *psychological* conscience, the perception of one's own existence and actions, which is better called in English *consciousness*. Moral conscience is either consequent or antecedent. Consequent conscience concerns past actions, and is a judgment as to their moral goodness or wickedness. It is in this sense that we speak of examining our conscience. Antecedent conscience is concerned with an action the performance of which one is considering for the future. It has reference only to acts as to be performed by *oneself*. It is an act of the intellect, judging that an action must be performed as obligatory, or must be omitted as sinful, or may be performed as lawful, or is advisable as the better course of action. Thus, we have four types of conscience—commanding, forbidding, permitting and counseling.

Although the word *conscience* strictly refers to an *act*, it is sometimes used to designate an habitual attitude toward moral problems. In this sense we can say that a person has a *lax* conscience or that he has a *scrupulous* conscience. The former is the attitude of a person who is too ready to judge that he is free from obligations—that is, when objectively he has not sufficient reason for such judgments. Such is the condition of a person who justifies the missing of Mass on Sunday because “he is tired.” Nowadays, some Catholics have a lax conscience regarding the vice of contraception. The best remedy for a lax conscience is prayer and meditation on the eternal truths. A person is said to have a scrupulous conscience when without sufficient reason he judges his actions to be sinful, or sees grave sin when objectively there is only venial sin. The best remedy for a scrupulous conscience is meditation on the goodness of God and complete and literal obedience to one's confessor.

Finally, theologians sometimes speak of a *perplexed* conscience. This is the state of a person who hesitates as to which of two opposing precepts should be observed, and fears that he will commit sin whichever side he chooses. Such, for example, is the mental state of a mother taking care of a sick child on Sunday and fearing that she will sin against the Church's law if she stays home to take care of the child, and that she will fail against her maternal duty if she goes to Mass. Generally speaking, when there is such a conflict of obligations one should prefer to obey a divine law rather than a human law. Thus, a priest who has inadvertently broken his fast on Sunday might give scandal if he sent the people away without Mass, and in that event it would be better for him to say the Mass. A person who acts with a completely perplexed conscience commits no sin whichever side he chooses, even though he may think he is sinning.

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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