



Adsum

Adsum is published by **Mater Dei Seminary** for the enjoyment of our families, friends, and benefactors.

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

By the grace of God and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mater Dei Seminary begins its 34th year of scholastic studies. Like the grain of mustard seed spoken of in the Gospel by Our Lord, the seminary had a very humble beginning and now has grown to a great tree. Every year young men, not only from the United States but also from other countries, come to the seminary to prepare to become other Christs.

A very important part of their spiritual formation is that they foster a great love and devotion to their Patroness, the Mother of God, after the example of Jesus Christ the Eternal High Priest. The Son of God spent the majority of His earthly life in company

with the Blessed Virgin Mary in their humble abode at Nazareth. It is our sincere desire that our seminarians be formed by our spiritual Mother, as St. Augustine says that the faithful during their earthly life are “in this world hidden in the womb of the most holy Virgin, where they are guarded, nourished, brought up and made to grow by that good Mother until she has brought them forth...”

It has been our long time tradition to begin classes at the seminary on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, September 8th. This feast of Our Lady is closely followed by several other very special feasts: September 12th, the feast of the Holy Name of Mary (celebrating the victory of the Christian army against the Turks in the Battle of Vienna); September 15th, the Seven Sorrows of Mary; and finally



Mater Dei Seminary class of 2023-2024

September 24th, the feast of Our Lady of Ransom (my anniversary of episcopal consecration in 1991). As we honor Our Lady especially on her feasts, the clergy and seminarians are ever reminded that we actually fulfill the prophecy made by the Blessed Virgin herself in her beautiful *Magnificat*: “Henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.”

Every morning after teaching the first two periods of class to the high school at Mater Dei Academy, I drive out to the new seminary property in Iowa. How providential was the acquisition of this property so situated in the country to create a spirit of retreat and recollection. The ten acre property provides plenty of area for our seminarians to go for rosary walks or to meditate next to the large pond and to appreciate God’s wonderful creation.

Throughout this month, we have had a number of visits from some of our priests around the country. Fr. Gerard McKee, CMRI traveled to Omaha in order to give me an update on our mission in the Philippines, from which he recently returned; furthermore, Father has a unique gift to track down Roman breviaries for the recitation of the Divine Office by the priests and religious. These are indeed treasures, because they are no longer in print; they will be certainly put to good use by our priests, seminarians and religious Sisters.

Also visiting the seminary was Fr. Joseph Appelhanz, who brought a new seminarian to the seminary from his parish Most Holy Rosary in Middleville, Michigan; Father greatly appreciated the



Seminary Chapel

THE PRIESTHOOD

by Lacordaire

To live in the midst of the world without wishing its pleasures; to be a member of each family, yet belonging to none; to share all sufferings; to penetrate all secrets; to heal all wounds; to go from men to God and offer Him their prayers; to return from God to men to bring pardon and hope; to have a heart of fire for charity and a heart of bronze for chastity; to teach and to pardon, console and bless always—what a glorious life! And it is yours, O Priest of Jesus Christ!

comradery of the priests and seminarians during his short visit.

Another priest visitor this month was Fr. Carlos Zepeda, who drove in from Denver, Colorado, in order to discuss various projects he’d like to initiate and also to give an update on his work in Our Lady of the Snow Parish in Denver. As many of you know, Fr. Zepeda hosts a regular podcast *The Catholic Wire* for the Catholic education and inspiration of the faithful.

The fall time is always extraordinarily busy with food preparation for the priests, seminarians, religious Sisters, and boarder boys and girls. As we feed over 60 people a day, God in His providence provides an abundance of food from various sources: the CMD Sisters’ dairy cows supply us with fresh milk and butter and cheese; two truckloads of potatoes from Inman, Nebraska; 100 boxes of peaches from our parishioners in Clifton, Colorado; apples from orchards outside the Omaha area, plus all the parishioners’ large donations of vegetables from their personal gardens. As we say in the Preface of the Mass: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God, it is fitting and just!

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

“Take up Thy Cross and Follow Me”

(The North American Martyrs)

by a seminarian

There are certain feasts in the United States that are unique to our beloved country and that are not found on the Universal Calendar of the Church. Among these we find celebrated on September 26th the feast of the North American Martyrs.

These zealous martyrs were French Jesuit priests who abandoned the comfortable living they enjoyed in Europe to preach the Catholic Faith to some of the Indians of North America—the Hurons, the Algonquins, and the Iroquois, who lived in Canada and in the northeastern part of the United States. What sacrifices these men had to endure among these uncivilized people! These good priests had to row in canoes all day long to get from one place to another. They had to sleep with the Indians in smoke-filled tents or outside under the stars. Their food was quite ill-prepared. It consisted of whatever the Indians threw into the pot, whatever that might be. And the leftovers which were not consumed were used as the basis for the next meal. This made most of their meals quite ripe! Sanitation was next to nothing.

Yet, in spite of all these sacrifices, these priests had the one burning desire to bring to the Indians the knowledge of God and of the Catholic Faith. When one reads of the tremendous sacrifices they had to endure as missionaries, it makes the small sacrifices we endure in the seminary seem like nothing. As

seminarians, we are called upon occasionally to accompany our priests as they travel to distant locations to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and to administer the Sacraments. We drive in a comfortable car on smooth roads for many hours—we don’t have to row

a canoe all day long. Living in common at the seminary provides opportunities for adjustment and sacrifice, but this is pale in comparison with living among savages.

St. Isaac Jogues was captured by the Iroquois and made to run the gauntlet many times. During one of these occasions, an Indian chewed off his thumb. After his escape, he was given special permission by the Pope to offer Mass with his first and middle fingers for the Consecration. The Pope said that it was only right that a martyr for Christ be permitted to drink the Blood of Christ. Upon his return to the mission area, St. Isaac Jogues was captured again and put to death by decapitation with a knife. St. Rene Goupil was

martyred by being struck in the head with a tomahawk. Some of the other Jesuit martyrs were John de Brebeuf, Charles Garnier, Anthony Daniel, Noel Chabanel, John de Lalande and Gabriel Lallemand. The story of their lives among the Indians is both fascinating and incredible.

Let each of us in our own way look to these North American Martyrs for inspiration. As seminarians, we look to these missionary priests as wonderful examples of the virtue of zeal for the salvation of souls.



THE JESUIT MARTYR-SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA

Outlines of Moral Theology

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

NATURE OF LAW

Law is defined as an ordinance of reason, promulgated for the common good by one who has authority over a society. It is called an ordinance of *reason* because it is the product of the practical reason of the legislator. Hence, a law that would be unreasonable would be no law. A law is directed to the common good of the society in which it prevails, not to the good of only a few individuals.

A law differs from a precept inasmuch as the latter is intended for the benefit of an individual or a few persons. Thus, a bishop might impose on one of his dioceses the precept of abstaining from reading certain books, even though these might not be forbidden by general law. Moreover, a law by its nature is permanent, whereas a precept ordinarily ceases to bind with the death or passing from office of the one who imposed it. Furthermore, a law binds the subjects of the lawgiver only within the territory of the lawgiver, unless the opposite is stated. In other words, a law is territorial, not personal, unless the lawgiver positively asserts it is personal. But a precept is personal, binding the person wherever he is. A law can be passed only by a person or body possessing jurisdictional power, but a precept can be imposed by virtue of dominative power, such as a parent possesses over his children.

A law must be promulgated before it possesses the power to bind. This means that a notice of its existence must be communicated to those whom it is intended to bind. A law is sufficiently promulgated when measures have been taken which of themselves are sufficient to notify all the subjects, even though accidentally some of them do not become aware of the law.

A law is affirmative if it commands that something be done (e.g., the law that we must assist at Mass on Sunday); it is negative if it forbids something (e.g., the law of Friday abstinence). Some laws are both affirmative and negative, although they may be expressed in only one of these forms. For example, the seventh commandment: "Thou shalt not steal," forbids theft, and commands the payment of debts.

Theologians refer to some laws as *purely penal*. This means that the legislator does not intend to bind the subjects *in conscience* to the thing commanded (as in the case of a preceptive law) but merely requires that they submit to a certain penalty if they transgress the law and are convicted of the transgression. A good example of such a ruling is the keeping of a book from a library over the stipulated time. It is no sin, as long as the person who does so is willing to pay the fine.

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