



# 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,

This issue of our seminary monthly newsletter begins with our photos from the ordinations in December.

The very title of our newsletter “Adsum” is the response given by those to be ordained, which means “I am here” and which manifests their intention to receive the particular order for the ordination.

We congratulate Rev. Lucas Costa (Brazil), Rev. Kyle St. Aubin (Canada), Rev. Anthony Alley (South Dakota), who received the Diaconate; Rev. Julio Perez (California), Rev. Jorge Diaz (California), Rev. Thomas Netzel (Washington), Rev. Richard Lauricella (Washington), who received the Subdiaconate; and Mateo Alzate-Salazar (Colombia) and Massimo Turri (Italy), who received the Minor Orders of Porter and Lector.

As we begin a new year we are reminded of the importance of using our time here on earth well. How we live here on earth determines our eternal destiny and we must never forget to form good resolutions to always put God first in our lives.

Our seminary schedule regulates the seminarians’ daily lives to provide for their spiritual growth and their academic progress while also making time for necessary manual labor and recreation. This schedule has been in place since 1989 when the seminary was moved from Mount St. Michael in Spokane, Washington to Omaha, Nebraska. This establishes an excellent foundation for our seminarians for their priesthood.

As always, we are grateful for your prayers and generosity in support of our future priests!

With my prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



*December ordinations to the Diaconate, Subdiaconate and Minor Orders*



*Ordinandi await their call into the sanctuary for ordination.*



*Reception of the Minor Order of Lector*



*The Ordinandi to the Major Orders prostrate for the Litany of the Saints.*



*Subdeacons are invested with the tunic and maniple after touching the chalice and paten.*



*Imposition of hands in the ordination of the Diaconate*



*In addition to our resident priests, we are grateful for the visiting priests who assisted during the ordination Mass.*

# Outlines of Moral Theology

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

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## THE NATURE OF VIRTUE

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A virtue is a species of habit. A habit is a mode or quality inhering in a being, with a certain measure of permanence or stability. If it inheres in the very substance of the being, it is called an *entitative* habit—for example, health in the body, sanctifying grace in the soul. If it inheres in a faculty it is called an *operative* habit. Some operative habits are morally indifferent, such as facility in writing, speaking a language, or playing the piano, or the habits of understanding and science (these are sometimes called intellectual virtues). Other habits are morally bad or good. Morally bad habits are called vices, e.g., the habit of intemperance. A morally good habit is called virtue—for example, the habit of acting justly, charitably, etc.

The most notable characteristic of a virtue in the natural order is that it imparts facility of action, and sometimes even makes the repetition of a certain type of action pleasant. Thus, a person who has acquired the habit of temperance finds it easy to refrain from excess of food and drink and even derives pleasure from this moderation.

A virtue resides in the will or in some faculty directly subordinate to the dominion of the will: the intellect and the sensitive appetites. A facility of operation residing in a faculty not subject directly to the will in its operations, such as the eye, would not be accounted a virtue.

## THE NATURAL VIRTUES

A natural virtue is a morally good operative habit directed toward good acts of the natural order. A virtue of this kind is acquired and strengthened by repeated acts. A natural virtue is in harmony with the natural law, and is directed toward God as the Author of nature, even though the person who possesses and practices it does not explicitly advert to this—e.g., the man who practices honesty because he realizes that it is demanded by rational nature.

The natural moral virtues are classified under the four general headings of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. Prudence is in the intellect, justice in the will, fortitude in the irascible appetite (that is, the appetite which inclines one to do things involving difficulty), and temperance in the concupiscible appetite (that is, the appetite inclining one to what is pleasurable to the senses).

These four are known as *cardinal* virtues (literally “hinge” virtues) because the moral life of man depends on their exercise as a door depends on the activity of its hinges. All the other moral virtues are subordinated to these in one way or other. Thus, the *integral* parts are certain dispositions or conditions that are required for the practice of a cardinal virtue, such as docility and circumspection in relation to prudence. The *subjective* parts of a virtue are those which are related to the cardinal virtue as species to genus. Thus, legal justice and commutative justice are subjective parts of the cardinal virtue of justice. The *potential* parts of a cardinal virtue are those which possess some of the characteristics of the cardinal virtue, but not all. Thus, humility and meekness are potential parts of temperance, and religion and gratitude are potential parts of justice.

A person can have one moral virtue in a *limited degree* without having the others. Thus, a person may be quite honest without being humble. But it is commonly taught by theologians that the moral virtues are so intimately related, and one so frequently demands the help of the others, that to have any virtue in a *perfect degree* a person must have all in a perfect degree.

There is an axiom *Virtus in medio stat*—“Virtue consists in the golden mean.” This does not mean that the proper thing is to practice only a limited measure of virtue. A person should strive for the highest perfection of every virtue. But it means that in determining the proper norm for each virtue we must avoid both excess and defect; otherwise, we do not practice the true virtue.

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