



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 Mater Dei Seminary concludes another scholastic year, four of our seminarians have begun their three day retreat in preparation for clerical tonsure. By this rite, they will become clerics and be dedicated to the service of the Church.

For the benefit of our readers, I would like to provide an informative explanation of tonsure given by Fr. Alphonsus Biskupek, S.V.D.:

“Tonsure, from the Latin *tonsura*, signifies the cutting of the hair as well as the shaven crown worn by clerics as a distinctive mark of their state.

“The custom of cutting one’s hair, as a sign of renouncing the world and dedicating oneself to the service of God, is very old. During the early centuries of the Christian era the monks were the first to wear the tonsure. About the fifth century the custom began to be adopted by the clerics, but it was only during the Middle Ages that the tonsure became obligatory for clerics throughout the Church. In our days the tonsure is not worn by clerics in some countries, where Catholics form a minority amidst a non-Catholic population, for instance, in the United States.

“Tonsure is not an order, since no office and no spiritual power is conferred by it; it is a sacred rite by which a layman is received into the clerical state.

“The word cleric is derived from the Greek *kleros*,



The clergy and seminarians chant Tenebrae, the Divine Office of Matins and Lauds for Holy Thursday

which means portion or inheritance. In the Old Testament the whole tribe of Levi, by which the clergy of the Catholic Church was typified, was chosen by God Himself to continue the work of Moses, in particular, to take care of the public forms of divine worship among the Israelites. Therefore they received no land as their property but were supported by the rest of the people by the payment of tithes, first fruits and a definite share of all sacrifices.

“In the Book of Numbers, 18, 20, the Lord says to Aaron: ‘You shall possess nothing in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them. I am your portion and inheritance in the midst of the children of Israel.’ St. Jerome, referring to this passage, thus explains the word cleric: ‘They are called clerics, both because they are the portion of the Lord, and because the Lord is their portion’ (*Epist. ad Nepot.*). Clerics are the portion of the Lord because God has chosen them for the clerical state. The Lord is the portion of the clerics because they have accepted the call of God and dedicated themselves to His service. It is for this reason that they renounce the world, that is, the pursuit of secular vocations; but in like manner as the Levites of old, priests are supported by the faithful, the chosen people of the New Testament.”



*Good Friday unveiling of the Cross:
“Behold the wood of the Cross on which
hung the Savior of the world.”*



*Blessing of the Paschal Fire:
“O truly blessed night which alone deserved
to know the time and hour when Christ
rose again from the dead.”*

This ceremony begins with the call of the assistant priest, “Let all those to be ordained to the first clerical tonsure come forward,” after which he announces the names of each candidate. The seminarians respond with the Latin word, “Adsum,” that is, “I am present,” and advance into the sanctuary to show that it is of their own free will that they receive tonsure. In the future reception of the minor and major orders, they will be again called by the assistant priest and will in like manner respond, “Adsum.”

After a brief oration, the bishop cuts a little hair from the head of the seminarians in five places in the form of a cross during which the seminarians repeat after the bishop, “The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my chalice: it is Thou that will restore my inheritance to me.” (Psalm 15:5)

The bishop then clothes them with a white surplice with the words, “May the Lord clothe thee with the new man, who is created according to God in justice and holiness of truth.” The seminarians’ black cassock signifies death to the world and the white surplice a life of grace. Please remember our new clerics in your prayers for their perseverance in their holy vocations. With my prayers and blessing,

Most Rev. Mark A. Pivarunas, CMRI



Rosary Procession in honor of Our Lady of Fatima on May 13



Graduating Class of 2014 of Mater Dei Academy



Mater Dei Academy Archery Team won the State Tournament for the fifth consecutive time and set a new state record. This month of May, they competed at the National Tournament in Louisville, KY, and out of 164 high schools, Mater Dei Academy ranked 20th in the country.

Father Connell Answers Moral Questions

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

Conditional Baptism of Dying Non-Catholics

Question A: In a Catholic hospital could a general policy be adopted of baptizing conditionally all non-Catholics who are dying unconscious?

Question B: In the event that such a policy can be adopted, should all the Catholic nurses be instructed to confer baptism in the situation visualized or should this function be entrusted to only a few nurses or Sisters?

Question C: When conditional baptism has been administered in these circumstances, may a priest also give the dying person Extreme Unction? If so, should he use the complete ceremony prescribed by the Ritual or the short form?

Answer A: It seems sufficiently probable that the Sacrament of Baptism can be conferred conditionally on every non-Catholic dying unconscious, unless there is positive evidence that an individual is definitely opposed to the reception of the sacrament. The condition should be “*Si capax es,*” to cover the uncertainty about a previous valid baptism and about the person’s present intention to be baptized. This opinion is based on the undeniable fact that there are many persons living in our land who have never been baptized, and yet have a sufficient intention to receive this sacrament contained in their general wish to fulfill whatever conditions God has established as requisites for salvation. From this it would seem to follow that by the law of averages there is some probability that every non-Catholic is an unbaptized person who either explicitly or implicitly desires baptism, unless it is certain that his will is opposed to it.

Answer B: There would ordinarily be no reason to restrict the information just presented to only a few nurses or sisters. Since every nurse or sister is likely to be in a situation where she is the only one present with a dying person, the knowledge of what should be done in this situation should be given to all the sisters and Catholic nurses of a hospital.

Answer C: When conditional baptism is permissible for a person dying unconscious, Extreme Unction may also be given conditionally if the person has reached the age of reason. *Per se* this sacrament should be given with all the ceremonies prescribed by the Ritual even in such circumstances, instead of in the abbreviated form allowed by Canon 947, 1, for a case of necessity. However, in the situation which we are considering there will usually be sufficient reason for the priest to make use of the short form.

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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