



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 new year, 2025, marks the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD. Under the papacy of Pope St. Sylvester, the Council condemned the heretic Arius, who denied the Divinity of Christ; it also decreed that the celebration of Easter be universally observed as it had been in Rome on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox. At this Council, St. Athanasius was present to defend this sacred dogma vigorously.

During the Council of Nicaea, a more detailed creed was formulated to reiterate the Divinity of Christ: "...and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten of the Son of God. Born of the Father before all ages. God



*Solemn chanting of the Gospel
by Rev. Leopold Trauner*



*Fr. Carlos Borja, assisted by Rev. Leopold Trauner and
Rev. Lucas Costa, offers a Solemn High Mass
in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes*

of God; Light of Light; true God of true God. Begotten not made; of one substance with the Father. "Every Sunday during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, this Nicene Creed is recited as it has been for 1700 years!

In the same creed, we also pray "I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church." Long before the Greek Schism had occurred in 1054, the Church of Christ was identified as the Catholic Church. When the Greek Church separated from the Catholic Church, it assumed the new name of "Orthodox." Long before the term "Protestantism" or "Lutheranism" appeared with Martin Luther's break from the Church in 1517, the one true Church of Christ was identified as the Catholic Church.

History clearly shows us that there is only one Church that can be traced back to Christ—the Catholic

Church. There is an interesting excerpt from *Webster's New Explorer Dictionary of Word Origins* (a secular dictionary) on the definition of the word "Catholic": In Greek, the words *kata* 'concerning' and *holou*, a form of *holos* 'whole,' were compounded to form *katholou* 'in general'; which gave rise to *katholikos* 'universal.' This Greek adjective was usually translated as *universalis* in Latin, but early Christian writers began using *catholicus*, the Latin form of the Greek word, for 'universal.' For example, the epistles of James, Peter, Jude, and John that were addressed to the Church at large and not to particular local communities were called the 'Catholic Epistles.' Around the year 110, St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, used the term *katholike ekklesia* 'Catholic Church.' In 325 the Council of Nicaea included this term in its formulation of the Nicene Creed. In its struggle against various heresies, the Church emphasized its universality, and its epithet *Catholic* took on the connotation of 'one and true' or 'orthodox.'"

It is very interesting to find the proofs from history in a secular book! And let us never forget that Christ promised to be with His Church "all days, even

to the consummation of the world." (Matthew 28:19) The presence of Christ and the presence of the Holy Ghost with the Church have protected the Church from any error. That is the reason that we find complete consistency and harmony down through the centuries in the teachings of the Popes and the Ecumenical Councils. And it is for this very reason that we must reject the false teachings of religious indifferentism, false ecumenism, and religious liberty which were promulgated by the Vatican II and which has ushered in the Great Apostasy (II Thess. 2:3). These errors were previously condemned by Pope Pius IX in the *Syllabus of Error* (1864); Pope Pius XI in *Mortalium Animos* (1928); and Pope Pius XII in *Mystici Corporis* (1943).

In these times of moral decadence and spiritual confusion and darkness, let us heed the words of St. Peter in his first epistle: "Be sober, be watchful! For your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goes about seeking someone to devour. Resist him steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same suffering befalls your brethren all over the world." (I Peter 5:8)

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



Candlelight Rosary in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes

The Incorruptibles

Among the many saints whose bodies God has miraculously preserved, St. Catherine Laboure and St. Bernadette are unique examples.

Prior to the proclamation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 by Pope Pius IX, Our Lady appeared to St. Catherine Laboure in 1830, in Paris, France, and requested that a medal be cast in honor of her Immaculate Conception. Surrounding this image of Our Lady on the medal are inscribed the words: O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee. So multiple were the miracles wrought by the use of this medal that it is now known as the Miraculous Medal.



Four years after the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed a dogma, Our Lady appeared in Lourdes, France, to the humble girl, St. Bernadette Soubirous. When St. Bernadette inquired of the beautiful Lady in the grotto, “What is your name?” The Virgin Mary then lifted her eyes solemnly to heaven, lowered her eyes, crossed her arms on her breast, and proclaimed, “I am the Immaculate Conception.” As a tribute to these two special souls to whom Our Lady appeared, God has miraculously preserved their bodies from corruption.

Outlines of Moral Theology

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

SACRILEGE

Sacrilege is the abusive treatment of a sacred person, place, or thing. It is a mortal sin from *its nature*, not from its whole nature, and hence can be a venial sin—namely, when the matter involved is slight, such as the careless use of a blessed medal. There are three species of sacrilege—personal, local and real.

A *personal* sacrilege is committed when a sacred person is involved. For example, when one physically mistreats a sacred person (a cleric or a religious, even a novice) it is a sacrilege, punished by censure if it is grave. It is also a personal sacrilege to bring a cleric to court or to force him into military service. A personal sacrilege is also committed when a sacred person (professed religious or cleric in major orders) either commits or is the object of a sin of impurity, even merely internal. It is disputed whether it is a sacrilege to make as the object of such a sin a person with a private vow of chastity, but one who has made such a vow sins against religion if he violates it.

A *local* sacrilege is committed when something is done in a sacred place that is degrading to its sacred character. A sacred place is a church, public or semipublic oratory, or a consecrated cemetery. For example, an external sin of impurity committed in such a place is a sin of local sacrilege. Certain actions committed in a church or a cemetery bring about the violation of the sacred place, so that it needs reconciliation before it may again be used for sacred purposes. These acts are homicide, the unjust and grave shedding of blood, impious or sordid uses (e.g., if a church is used as a stable), and the burial therein of an infidel or of one excommunicated by declaratory or condemnatory sentence. These acts must be notorious and certain in order that canonical violation be incurred. It is disputed whether or not a theft is a sacrilege from the fact that it is committed in a church.

A *real* sacrilege is the abusive treatment of a sacred thing. It is also committed by irreverence toward the sacramentals, Sacred Scripture, chalices, relics, etc. It is to be noted that a blessed object loses its blessing when it is substantially modified—e.g., if a blessed candle is burned, the remaining wax is not blessed; if a chalice is melted, the metal is not consecrated. Similarly, a vestment loses its blessing if it is cut up. But even in that event, it should not be used for a sordid purpose (e.g., as a dust rag), though it can be used for a profane purpose (e.g., as a drapery).

The most grievous of unworthy receptions of the sacraments is the unworthy reception of Holy Communion. However, it must not be thought or said that this is the greatest of all possible sins. A sin of blasphemy is more grievous *per se*. Furthermore, there is a great difference in gravity between an unworthy reception of Holy Communion through fear or loss of reputation and one motivated by malice, though both are mortal sins.

Adsum, a publication 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:

MATER DEI SEMINARY
7745 Military Avenue
Omaha NE 68134-3356
www.materdeiseminary.org