



Southern Sentinel

REGNAVIT A LIGNO DEUS

HOLY CROSS SEMINARY

The Priestly Society of St. Pius X

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No. 115

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The solemn days of Holy Week and Our Lord's Resurrection are most striking when time is given to study and recollection with respect to the ceremonies that portray Christ's Life, Passion, Death and Resurrection – lessons for us in the Faith, its meaning, and our practice. The Sacred Liturgy teaches us the doctrine of Our Lord's salvific mission and man's cooperation in His work. We are blessed to be afforded the occasion to solemnly reconsider these elementary and profound truths of God, which argue His love for us and encourage us to embrace the means we have to live in union with God.



The supreme Lesson of the Lamb of God – both offering and being offered in Sacrifice
one who integrally and necessarily lives in and genuinely practices the all the lessons of the Faith Christ taught the world.

Our sanctification and salvation are achieved by Christ only with our cooperation. We cannot share in the resurrection without our first sharing in the sacrifice of our present life. This must be done with integrity and generosity as is taught in the Life of the Eternal High Priest, Who, offers Himself as the perfect Sacrifice.

The Sacred Triduum and the Feast of Our Lord's Resurrection are of special significance for all, but are especially poignant in a seminary where young men train to become priests to offer Christ's Sacrifice. The Catholic knows well that any man who dares to call himself a Christian must embrace both Christ's Priesthood and His Sacrifice, which means to offer self as victim with Christ. The heretical sects of Protestantism naively deny there to be a connection between suffering and the Christian life; hence, they inappropriately apply the name Christian to their multitudinous sects. Only the called a Christian. The Christian is

As *the Priest* and *the Sacrifice* cannot be separated, neither can the true Christian be without a true priestly ministry. It is the priest that mediates between God and man whereby men share in Christ's sacrifice and receive the necessary understanding of the Faith and example of applying the lessons of Faith in his life, to be true disciples of Christ.

The Protestant heresies that have vastly inspired our modern sensibilities embody a compromise; however, a compromise that rejects the cross and erroneously embraces *only* the resurrection, must necessarily be rejected as opposed to Christ's mission, will and command: *The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the ancients and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day rise again. And he said to all: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me* (Luke 9:22-23).

The very nature of priest and sacrifice (of Christian and sacrifice) are essentially united. Sacrifice is offered only by a priest and a priest who has no sacrifice to offer is not truly a priest. It is the nature of a priest to offer sacrifice and of a sacrifice to be offered by a priest. Archbishop Lefebvre says this: *The priest is above all for the sacrifice. There is no sacrifice without the priest, there is no priest without the sacrifice. There is an intimate link, it is the raison d'être of the priest* (Spiritual Conference, 7 October 1982).

Saint Paul explains this reality in his definition of the priest: *...every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins...* (Hebrews 5:1). Christ, the Priest *par excellence*, offers His Sacrifice to God, in mediation between God and sinners, in order to reconcile sinners with God. All cannot and need not be priests, but we do receive God's graces and go to God by the ministry of Christ's priests.

God's enemies, and even Catholics, are often vastly ignorant of the salutary and necessary truths of Christ's Sacrifice and our necessary cooperation in sacrifice. The responsibility of making truth known rests upon the Church and her priests, who must sacrifice themselves in combating errors and edifying the faithful by teaching the truths of faith.

Christ, the Word of God, shed His Blood in *the Sacrifice* in order to dispel the darkness of sin and ignorance and has revealed the truths of faith that open the way for grace and that free men from the bonds of sin. Truth and grace enable sinful men to rise to the heights of sanctity and eternal life. Hence, Christ solemnly commands priests to make known the truths of Faith: *Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...* (Matthew 28:19-20).

Men's ignorance of the true Faith is prevalent. Heretically corrupt or tarnished notions of faith flourish in this age of subjectivism and prideful independence, by which men selectively develop this or that particular *iota* of "faith" into a "faith-system" that has little or nothing to do with the true God or His Christ. The gross (and ubiquitous) ignorance of Catholics is sadly manifest by the worldly (or simply sinful) lifestyles of many.

The words of Jeremias' Lamentation, six-hundred years before Christ (which are chanted each year on Good Friday during Tenebræ) are poignantly contemporary and applicable. Speaking of the children of God, the Prophet says: *Her kings and her princes are*



St. Anthony teaching the Faith

among the pagans; priestly instruction is wanting, and her prophets have not received any vision from the Lord (Lamentations of Jeremiah 2:9). Sinful men abandon themselves to faithlessness and anarchy, civil rulers know nothing of God and His justice, priests do not teach the truths of faith and virtue, and the prelates of the Church do not cherish the supreme ideal of their duty to look after the flock entrusted to them for the glory of God. This very dark picture of the Church is lamentably the state of affairs today.

To counter man's inclination to complacency with sin, Pope Saint Pius X frequently instructed the Bishops of the Church to ensure that their priests teach Christian doctrine. Saint Pius X wrote in *Acerbo Nimis* (§7): *...this most important duty rests upon all who are pastors of souls. On them, by command of Christ, rest the obligations of knowing and of feeding the flocks committed to their care; and to feed implies, first of all, to teach. "I will give you pastors according to my own heart," God promised through Jeremiah, "and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine" (Jeremiah 3:15).*

When Christ's priests do not sacrifice their time and energy to teach the truth of God and to exemplify it in their lives, doubt concerning veracity of the Faith rises in the minds of men. The sceptic ponders: "If Christ's priests do not live accordingly, do they really believe? Can their faith be true?" The light of truth, obscured by clerical negligence and bad example, opens the door to confusion, which reigns in the shadows of ignorance. In this confusion the devil more easily snatches weary souls who aimlessly stray from the path of salvation. When the soul is resplendent with the light of truth, on the other hand, the Faith is armour against the darts of the enemy.

The modern catechism, corrupted with heretical notions, and the absence of any sound Catholic instruction have allowed ignorance to give birth to error. Witnessing the loss of faith among priests and faithful, Archbishop Lefebvre was urged to undertake the work of our Priestly Society of Saint Pius X, which primarily strives to rightly form true priests and to assist priests in their priestly ministry.

Priests, faithful to their duty of instructing men in the faith, and laymen, sufficiently instructed in these truths, both more readily embrace the Christian life of sacrifice in order to joyfully live Christ in holiness. The priest not only helps others to strive for holiness in life by teaching the Faith, but he too draws nearer to holiness by his fidelity to his duty. The restoration of all things in Christ draws nearer...

It is for this reason that Archbishop Lefebvre obliged all who would join the Society to undertake a year of study and training in Ascetical and Mystical Theology (Spirituality), before being admitted to the family of our Priestly Society. The Society is a brotherhood of priests, whose chief characteristic is the striving for holiness in life lived in conformity to the doctrines and morals magnificently presented in the theology of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It would seem obvious that this truth be the very spirit of all priests; but, alas, in the present crisis that afflicts the Church, so few priests understand this truth and so many are deceived by the new teachings of activism and an exaggerated individualism.

A superficial notion of spirituality, rendered to the peripheral and no longer an integral and essential quality of the priestly ministry, has contributed to the widespread increase of error in the hearts and minds of so many souls, both clerical and lay. This fact prompted Saint Pius X to speak strongly about the clergy's duty to give instruction on Christian doctrine.

The enemy has, indeed, long been prowling about the fold and attacking it with such subtle cunning that now, more than ever before, the prediction of the Apostle to the elders of the Church of Ephesus seems to be verified: "I know that ...fierce wolves will get in among you, and will not spare the flock."(Acts 20:29) Those who still are zealous for the glory of God are seeking the causes and reasons for this decline in religion. Coming to a different explanation, each points out, according to his own view, a different plan for the protection and restoration of the kingdom of God on earth. But it seems to Us, Venerable Brethren, that while we should not overlook other considerations, We are forced to agree with those who hold that the chief cause of the present indifference and, as it were, infirmity of soul, and the serious evils that result from it, is to be found above all in ignorance of things divine. This is fully in accord with what God Himself declared through the Prophet Osee (4:1-

3): “And there is no knowledge of God in the land. Cursing and lying and killing and theft and adultery have overflowed: and blood hath touched blood. Thereafter shall the land mourn, and everyone that dwelleth in it shall languish”. (*Acerbo Nimis*, §1).

Priests have the duty to be true Christs; they are consecrated and ordained to offer sacrifice and must teach the ways *of and to* Christ. But their ordination does not make them saints; it does, however, give them “power” to become saints, to continue the work of their own, and others’, sanctification and to grow in an ever higher degree of perfection. God gives us all we need to correspond with His Will – we have but to cooperate with God’s grace.

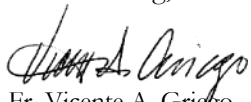
Pray for us at Holy Cross Seminary to correspond with God’s Will to pursue this holy ideal. Young men come to the Seminary to learn how to become priests, holy priests – both in theory and in practice! Pray that the priests who have the grave responsibility to direct their formation will be truly docile instruments of God, so that, despite our weakness, God may work great wonders in bringing forth new Christs, zealous of teaching all nations and baptising them in the sanctifying Blood of Christ, by which men may rise eternally with Christ in the joy of His Resurrection. May we be united in Christ’s Sacrifice so that we may be united in His Resurrection!

In the joy of Easter we look forward to one of the great gifts of our Lord’s Victory on the Cross – the advancement of young men to the altar. This year we do not plan for the Priestly ordinations, but we do plan for Major Ordinations; namely, the Subdiaconate in August and Diaconate in December. The Tonsure and Minor Orders will also be conferred in August. Perhaps, many will consider attending one or another of the ordinations this year, so that you and your children may learn more about the priest, his formation and his sacred mission, while praying for his fidelity and sanctification.

With the hope of encouraging more priestly and religious vocations, I would like especially to encourage the men to consider bringing their sons to witness *how God makes priests*. They will see that the process is not quick. Not only are the ordination ceremonies mysterious and of a *suitable* duration, but so too is the life-long and multi-faceted programme of formation: family and society, which contribute to the preparation of young men for their vocations; seminary training, which prepares men for the priesthood; and fidelity to duty and the rule of life, which guide the priest to all that sustains him in the priesthood.

Please pray that this work of forming priests and religious brothers at Holy Cross flourishes according to God’s Will. This is the work of the Society – to train priests, to sanctify priests and to adore *the* Priest, which should be the preoccupation of all Christians. Without *the* Priest we cannot adore God, without Whom we cannot be saved. It is truly a wonder and miracle that God deigns to share the work of His Only Begotten Son with mere men, sinful men. God does so with a demand laid upon all Christians: holiness. May we all be truly like Christ, filled with the Holy Ghost and zealous for the salvation of souls – teaching and leading to the eternal glories and adoration of Heaven – to see God face to face!

In Christ the King,



Rev. Fr. Vicente A. Griego
Rector, Holy Cross Seminary

Announcements:

▪ Ordinations:

- a) The Clerical Tonsure and the Subdiaconate – 15 August 2014
- b) The Minor Orders – 16 August 2014
- c) The Diaconate – 18 December 2014

▪ **Retreats:** Register at retreats@holycrossseminary.com or by post at the addresses listed above. Retreats are as follows:

- a) Ladies’ Ignatian Retreat – 5 to 10 January 2015
- b) Men’s Ignatian Retreat – 12 to 17 January 2015

▪ **Electronic subscription to the Seminary’s Newsletter.** If you would like to receive the Seminary Newsletter via email, please make your request at: website@holycrossseminary.com