



# Southern Sentinel

REGNAVIT A LIGNO DEUS

## HOLY CROSS SEMINARY

*The Priestly Society of St. Pius X*

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Dear Friends and Benefactors,

25 March 2015

On this blessed day when we celebrate the joy of God's mercy in commencing the wonderful work of the Redemption by the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, I take the opportunity to give news about the start of the new Seminary Year at Holy Cross. Our seventeen seminarians and one brother postulant returned and welcomed seven new seminarians; three who begin their philosophical studies and four who begin the Year of Humanities. Among the



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new philosophers, we happily receive two Benedictine Monks from Our Lady of Guadalupe Monastery (in the State of New Mexico in the United States), who come to Holy Cross for their priestly formation.

The year began with a small delay due to immigration difficulties encountered by a number of our seminarians from overseas. However, all has fallen into place with a slight rescheduling to accommodate the delay. The Opening Retreat for the returning seminarians was preached by Rev. Fr. Karl Stehlin, District Superior of Asia, who urged the seminarians to be zealous in the work of Redemption, as soldiers and true Christs under the banner of Our Lady. How grateful we are for Fr. Stehlin's generosity in visiting us and assisting us, starting the year's formation!

The Seminary formation strives to impart the spirit of Our Beloved Founder, Archbishop Lefebvre, who explains in the Statutes of our Society that we are to be *Apostles of Jesus and Mary*, men who live and work "under the *agis* of Mary, Mother of the Priest *par excellence*, and through Him Mother of all priests, in whom she forms her Son." This *apostleship of Jesus and Mary* will send forth vocations to serve men in the world, but after they themselves have been transformed by a profound love of God, which they desire to instil in their neighbour and which begets a lasting and perfect joy, now and forever in heaven.

This truth is presented to us in recalling the Annunciation, when the Word of God was made Incarnate by the work of the Holy Ghost and the loving cooperation of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, who gave Christ to the world. By her *Fiat*, the Blessed Virgin Mary willingly accepted her role in Our Lord's Redemptive Sacrifice – she offered herself in union with the divine Victim. Her acceptance of the Cross would bring her many and great sufferings, but there were also unspeakable joys. We readily focus our attention on the terrible sufferings consequent upon following Christ, because we are weak in our love of God. Fearing to give ourselves unreservedly, we cannot and do not taste the joys communicated to whole hearted lovers of Christ.

The preeminent example of Our Lady manifests that worldly joys and comforts do not necessarily accrue to those who give themselves to God. As the Mother of God, she received greater supernatural joys, but also greater sufferings, because she desired to share with Christ in His work of Redemption that is carried out in the Cross. Christ's choice of the Cross means that it is the supreme means for Divine Providence to reconcile sinners with God. The Blessed Virgin Mary, in perfect fidelity to God's Will, imitated Christ in the most perfect way possible for a mere creature by her total embracing of the Cross. In this mysterious union with the cruciform wood, Our Lord and Our Lady possessed joys-divine that alone over-ride, so to speak, the sufferings endured in this life. The reason for this is that we were made to be with God, and the Cross is the unique way to achieve this happy union. This paradox of perfect joy possessed by those who cling to the crucifying crosses of Christian life is the teaching of Our Lord: *...my yoke is sweet and my burden light* (Matthew 11:29-30).

Our Lord's affirmation of the concomitance of the greatest joys with the severest sufferings beckons us to *do manfully* and to walk with Christ, which means to forsake (at least in spirit) the ways of the world and its spirit. Unfortunately, we vainly try to compromise. Can we honestly say we accept the Cross if we cling to such contradictions as immodesty in dress, immorality in recreation, disaffection in prayer or apathy towards virtue? Our inclination is to try to avoid sacrifice as much as is "wisely permissible", meaning that we would not wish to offend God, but we may likewise do little to honour Him. We wish joy without sacrifice; thus, we readily settle for a cheaper joy than that which God desires to give us. *With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you...* (Luke 22:15)

Sacrifice costs. Willingness to spend demonstrates how we value an object of purchase. Our Lord *spent* everything to win our love; but our lack of generosity sadly manifests our poor estimation of supernatural joy. If we will not “purchase” what God offers, we will not obtain it. Of course, Christ, the Redeemer, is really offering us what He has purchased – the gift of perfect happiness. But to receive His gift, we must hold out our empty hands to be filled by His generosity. As long as we cling to the distracting trinkets of this life, we will not be able, nor inclined, to accept and cherish Christ’s priceless treasure. Our pusillanimity keeps us from receiving the joy He begs us to receive.

The trepidation we suffer in sacrificing our personal treasures in favour of those which God wishes to give us is exacerbated by the fear which lacks confidence in God’s goodness and generosity. We insult Our Divine Benefactor by our reluctance, which is why we garner meagre results from the religious practices we periodically carried out. Our various spiritual *duties* (e.g. prayers, spiritual reading, sacrifices, virtues, etc.) are meant to be moments of greater undivided attention given to God, which re-affirm and re-offer our love to Him as we depend upon and beg His divine help. Too often our spiritual duties are disjoined from our *real*, daily lives. Our religious practices are meant to permeate the whole of our lives and raise and offer them in loving service to God.

Perhaps, we are too concerned with only “practicing” and not simply doing. Do we merely talk about, plan and idealise the faith, and then do quite little to earnestly conform every aspect of our lives to the faith? We risk becoming mere actors, who play out our own version of “Christ”, but do not really succeed in *becoming* like Christ in His virtues and happiness. This is not only applicable to the priests’ spiritual life, it is the ideal of all who call themselves Christian. We must not merely act like Christ, we must become real living examples of Christ in the present world, facing real crosses and making genuine sacrifices to persevere in conformity to Christ.

If we choose to compromise, we compartmentalise our lives. Dividing our lives into periods of “acting” and “reality”, we eventually grow tired of the act. At first, we more or less submit to the impositions of this part-time faith because we entertain a faint hope of avoiding future punishments and harbour a weak desire for some otherly-world, “heavenly”, happiness. But this ethereal notion is unreal and faith weakens. We stop *acting* and become prone to infidelities, and the demands of Christian life become reproachful and burdensome. The contradiction between our faith and the facts of our lives nags our conscience and we try to think little about it. Little by little our faith dims and feebly influences our lives: our faith becomes merely a dreamy idea. Now indifferent to Christ and His ideal, any reminder of heavenly joys won through sacrifice are upbraiding and seem an unpleasing yoke from which we wish to be freed. We ignore these distressing thoughts and inevitably ignore God and forget the gift of Christ. We indulge ourselves, living apart from God, and are eventually entirely severed from the Divine life, seeking happiness in the vanities of this life.

This lack of generosity that leads to such a disastrous state is combated by magnanimity, which stirs up courage to face the Cross and employs God’s gifts of grace to unite with Christ in His Sacrifice. It is a magnanimous God Who unflinchingly and lavishly demonstrates His love for us by sending His beloved Son to work out the sanctification and salvation of sinful men and it is magnanimous souls who spend all they have to purchase the true happiness God offers.

As Divine magnanimity preferred the Cross as the unique means whereby Christ would assure us of His help to obtain perfect joy, so the lover of God must be magnanimous in accepting God’s terms. This we see in the Blessed Virgin, when the Angel hailed her as God’s messenger.

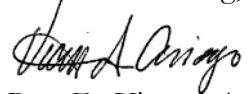
Our Lady's *Fiat* is but a simple word which expresses her total submission to the loving Providence of God. This word manifests her faith, her confidence and her pure love. We must begin pronouncing this word, when adversity befalls us, when we are moved by God's gentle grace to forsake some pleasure or to embrace some cross if we would share in the joy we consider in Our Lady. It is a beginning of our generosity towards God which frees us from our attachment to anything but Himself, for Whom we were made. Let us be generous and endeavour to accompany Christ on the way of the Cross, knowing that we will suffer much, but in the beautiful company of God, Who alone can fill us with joy. Difficult means are desired because the good end is loved.

Dear Friends and Benefactors, please pray that all at Holy Cross Seminary follow Christ and Our Lady to the joys of self-sacrificing for the love of God and neighbour. In this we will be true to our vocations as priests and religious members of the Society. This fidelity will enable us to do our duty of charity to neighbour and to possess the joyful love of God found in the Holy Cross of Christ.

I wish to thank all who generously contributed to our appeal for help to cover the expenses incurred in the unexpected replacement of our collapsing wood and machinery shed. We have covered all the costs and hope to proceed with our previous plans to renovate the Seminary's Sacristy, which is in a terrible state and in need of attention. Realising that we continuously call for your help to repair our poor old buildings, we are confident that the generosity of the faithful, which has always been forthcoming, will come to our aid for the glory of God. We are dependent upon the material support of the faithful to carry out these repairs and improvements. We ask God and you, dear friends, to come to our assistance.

Thank you especially for your spiritual generosity, which is still more necessary than material support. Of course, we need both. So please keep all the seminarians, postulants, brothers, priests and staff at Holy Cross in your daily prayers. You are assured of our efforts to be faithful in our duties in forming priests and brothers and of our prayers for you and your intentions. May God bless you abundantly in the joy of Our Lord's Resurrection and may Our Lady Immaculate watch over and protect you from all evils.

In Christ the King,



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

### **Announcements**

- 1) The seminarians in the Year of Spirituality are scheduled to receive the Cassock on 12 April. Please pray for their generous fidelity in pursuing and discerning their vocation as they take this important step in their formation.
- 2) Ordinations to the Minor Orders and the Subdiaconate will be conferred on August 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, respectively.
- 3) Ignatian Retreats for the Faithful: a) Men's Retreat – 4 to 9 January 2016; b) Ladies' Retreat – 18 to 23 January 2016. You may obtain a registration form on our website or email Fr. Pfluger at <[retreats@holycrossseminary.com](mailto:retreats@holycrossseminary.com)>.
- 4) As we economise in light of the high costs of postage, we ask all who wish to receive a colour pdf file of the Seminary Newsletter via email to please notify us at <[website@holycrossseminary.com](mailto:website@holycrossseminary.com)>. Thank you for your consideration.