



Southern Sentinel

REGNAVIT A LIGNO DEUS

HOLY CROSS SEMINARY

The Priestly Society of St. Pius X

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Dear Friends and Benefactors,

The Month of St. Joseph opens to us the start of the Season of Lent and the start of the new Seminary year at Holy Cross. St. Joseph's solicitude for the Divine Child and the Blessed Virgin presents the requisite disposition for all as we begin our Lenten observance. The concerns that inevitably proposed themselves for St. Joseph's attention in fulfilling his duty to the Holy Family were addressed with not so much anxiety as with love to do well, as he was a man who loved God and loved to do well all for Him Whom he loved.

This divine charity was the pre-occupation of St. Joseph throughout his life and this same disposition should be our preoccupation in fidelity to the ideal of the Christian life. But we, poor fallen men, are easily distracted, quickly grow weary and often unconsciously foster dangerous habits that weaken the spirit of faith, the strength of hope and the union of charity. For the love of God, Our Lord and the Blessed Virgin, we turn our greater attention to the work of reinvigorating our devotion and virtues in the Season of Lent. Like St. Joseph, may we generously and joyfully spend ourselves in order to guard the precious gift of faith, which nurtures hope and solidifies the union of charity.

To ever advance in a more perfect union with God is an essential principle in the objective of the Seminary. If Our Lord's priests are not like Christ in all things – and earnestly strive for this goal – they will not accomplish the grave responsibilities entrusted to them. Thus, to form men called to be other Christs is to convince them and to give them the means to reach this goal. The Seminary formation presents the objective of being Christ-like, spending self in order to give greater glory to God. Lent presents the annual occasion to spend self more generously so as to strive for this ideal of living Christ.

But the frailty of our human weakness gives cause for some trepidation in the face of this high ideal. Since discouragement would be too human, we must recognise our human frailty and our tendency to evil. We must also recognise the reality of God's omnipotence through Our Lord's work of Redemption that has



St. Joseph's Solicitude for the Divine Child

enabled weak and fallen man to be victorious over sin and death. This truth instils confidence and attracts us to apply ourselves to the task of greater union with God – even at the cost of mortification.

The austerity of Lent urges us to forsake the preoccupations of this life and world for a more pure and total occupation in loving God. The start of the Seminary year also affords an abandonment of the world and a worldly life so as to focus upon and train for the love of God. Each beginning, as the start of a new day, follows the pattern of earthly life with the light of the rising sun illuminating the object of a day's labour, not merely temporal but spiritual; so Lent sheds light upon our accumulation of perhaps unnecessary or even inordinate attachments that risk hindering, or in fact do hinder, our progress in grace and zeal.

The first hour of prayer each day, the Office of Prime prayed in the morning by the clergy, begins with a hymn that calls upon God's help to guide us and to protect us from many dangers in this life, as the work at hand is considered:

Iam lucis orto sidere, Deum precemur supplices, Ut in diurnis actibus, Nos servet a nocentibus. Now in the sun's rising light, we implore God's aid, That in the works of day, He save us from dangers (First Strophe of the Hymn at Prime).

The Hymn continues to enumerate petitions to guard our senses, exterior and interior, from the vanities of this life, which easily draw us away from God. Archbishop Lefebvre, who established that the office of Prime be prayed in common in all our houses, said thus of this prayer:

The prayers of Prime are beautiful for helping us remain faithful to God. The Office of Prime is remarkable because it places us totally in the hands of Our Lord. Each morning we start again, we say the same things again. We are begging Our Lord to help us to be totally under His influence, totally dependent upon Him. But in order to do that we have to possess ourselves: if we do not possess ourselves we cannot give ourselves to Our Lord. (Priestly Holiness, page 220 – STAS Editions, 2011)

We pray to re-gain possession of ourselves by the discipline and austerity of Lent, which frees us from attachments to our own will and to the things of this life. The young man entering the walls of the Seminary or Novitiate physically separates from family, friends, home, occupations and interests in the world, which also facilitates that complete possession of self so as to more perfectly make the pure gift of self to God.

This idea to give all to God is fundamental in the Christian life. But to act upon the idea, profound reflection and clear consideration of divine truths are generally required to persevere. Prayer and mortification are key elements in discerning and seeking the ideal of the Christian life. The Canonical Hours of Matins and Lauds in the Divine Office are prescribed to be prayed in the silence and darkness of the very early hours of morning because the circumstances of this time are beneficial to profound reflection and clear consideration of divine truths.

Rising early in the morning to offer the major part of the priest's daily prayer is not without some measure of mortification. In these quiet hours less distracted by the interruptions of earthly life one more readily discerns life's supernatural goals. Without the light of the sun, the world is shrouded in darkness as the mind and heart are illumined by grace, drawing the prayerful soul to focus his attention on spiritual truths with greater conviction. With the rising of the earthly sun, our gaze more readily fixes upon the glories of creation, and risks being distracted from the divine light and the eternal glory of the Creator. Hence, the resolutions conceived in contemplation are guarded by the grace of God and made to rule the day in order that all is offered to God. At least this is why we pray and what we hope for by our fidelity in the ideal of prayer, in the Season of Lent or in entering the Seminary or the Novitiate. May we all discover in fuller measure the true purpose of life and life's goal, Who is God.

With grace, we understand this reality so that we may rightly desire it. Good intentions are formed and we begin our pursuit. However, difficulties, and even failures, may soon be encountered and determination and resolve begin to waiver. With this reality of our fallen nature we must recognise our need of God's grace to persevere and to succeed. Consequently, we call upon God: *Veni Sancte Spiritus... Come Holy Ghost.*

The Seminary community invoked God's guidance as we commenced the new Seminary year, with the votive Mass of the Holy Ghost, imploring God's abundant graces, which are necessary to effectively persevere in the good intentions at the beginning of the year. All need God's grace to accomplish His will to be faithful to God and to our duties in His service as seminarians, religious brothers and priests. Following the Solemn High Mass the professors pronounced the Anti-Modernist Oath according to the mandate of St. Pius X.

This oath is not only a formula to condemn the modern errors of our times, but also a compelling statement by each of the faculty to beseech God's assistance to reprove the modern errors that have corrupted the minds and hearts of men and to faithfully teach the truths of the Faith that free men from the deceits of error. This appeal is an admission of our human frailty and a profession of Divine Omnipotence and Providence which has ordained to make use of the foolish and weak things of this world to accomplish His glory.

It would be audacious folly to propose that a man's intentions and strong efforts alone suffice to protect from error and to unfailingly teach integral truth – for such an assertion would be a denial of our fallen nature and our dependence upon God. We can do no good without God, and we fail God in seeking to operate outside the parameters He has instituted whereby we may faithfully serve Him. Humility disposes a soul to the intimacy of Divine Presence that bestows strength and rectitude. We implore God's protection and guidance with the greatest of confidence; but, vainly would we suppose to serve Him simply by our own talents.

The act of submission is a contrary disposition to that of the world and its adherents. Independence, self-complacency in personal talents and ultimately a rejection of God are not exclusively the evil dispositions of the wilful enemies of God. This rebellious disposition thrives even in devout souls, although in a hidden manner, in the tendencies of our fallen nature. Perhaps, some "devout souls" are sadly deceived by their external occupations, put under a good light of human activity and natural successes that give the impression of serving God but may be more properly a disguised serving of self. The danger is real and not uncommon.

Submission, then, requires a denial of self in order to open to us the assurance of God's protection and fruitfulness that fills the soul with true peace and genuine happiness by fidelity to the Lenten discipline of Holy Mother Church. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid* (John 14:27).

Let us beg Christ for His peace and that we remain in peace even in time of weakness and the inevitable tribulations of Christian warfare. We do well to call upon Our Lady of Sorrows, who will console us by reminding us that those who walk with Christ will also bear the sufferings of His Passion in some degree but are also assured His grace to persevere to the end. May Our Lady of Consolation give us Christ's grace in abundance.

The seminarians who have returned to, or entered Holy Cross Seminary this year, must be men who desire to renounce the world and who desire to live purely with God. With the seminarians beginning their studies after the opening retreats, we beg your prayers, dear friends and benefactors, that we may fully embrace this life we have started in Lent and with the Seminary year.



The Seminary Faculty, Staff and Seminarians begin the 2014 Seminary Year

held at the Seminary, we were able to replace our antiquated main electrical switchboard, which had become a grave concern, posing many safety dangers. Also, by the generous efforts of a number of men from the Melbourne area, a number of walls have been repaired and painted after some years of remaining unfinished (since the sinking foundations were stabilised in 2009 and the cracks repaired in 2011).

Our gratitude goes out to all who have helped us to prepare for the start of another year of priestly formation at Holy Cross. Please help us to continue our work of training future priests and religious brothers. You are remembered in our prayers and assured of God's abundant blessings. May the Immaculate Mother of God watch over you in this season of Lent and bring us all to perfection in the fullness of life in the grace of God now and forever.

In Christ the King,

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

Seminary Electrical Switchboard Replacement

Before →



After →



Thank you for your generous donations!

Announcements:

▪ Ordinations:

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

▪ **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