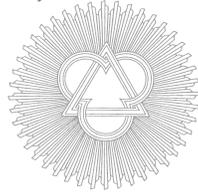

Most Holy Trinity Seminary Newsletter



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My dear Catholic people,

This month we are pleased to announce the upcoming episcopal consecration of Father Germán Fliess, scheduled for November 30th of this year, in Brooksville, Florida.

We have decided upon this consecration in order to make sure that the Roman Catholic Institute, its seminarians and its faithful, never be deprived of the services of a bishop, particularly in what pertains to the continuation of valid sacerdotal and episcopal orders.

Not only is validity of orders a concern, however. We desire also to ordain and consecrate clergy who are well formed, both spiritually and academically, and who enjoy good reputations.

The Catholic priesthood and episcopacy could be compared to 24 carat gold, inasmuch as they are gifts which proceed directly from the Holy Ghost. They are always of supreme supernatural dignity, whether they should be possessed by great saints or by the most depraved sinners. Just like gold, they do not change, do not tarnish or rust, do not lose their intrinsic excellence, no matter who possesses them.

Since these gifts are so exalted by nature, it behooves the possessor of them to be of the highest morals and piety, and sufficiently trained in philosophy and theology, according to Canon Law. It is for this reason that we operate the seminary according to high standards, the best that we can do, always improving wherever we can.

A good and well-trained priest can attract non-Catholics and Novus Ordites to the Catholic Faith simply by his piety, dignity, knowledge, good morals, and refinement.

Conversely, although a strong Catholic can look beyond even the serious faults and sins of a priest, concentrating on his sacred priesthood, none-

theless the weak can be easily turned away by such aberrations.

For these reasons, we strive to produce from our seminary priests and bishops with all of the good qualities which I mentioned.

Father Fliess is just such a priest. Anyone who knows him could attest to that.

He is pious, zealous in apostolic labors, humble, obedient, discreet, very intelligent, absolutely



Father Germán Fliess

firm in his faith and uncompromising detestation of modernism. He is well versed in Sacred Theology, and teaches Sacred Scripture, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew in our seminary.

He is so humble, in fact, that when we approached him about the idea of being consecrated, his first reaction was that he would absolutely abhor any position of direction or management. We assured him that we would preserve him from such roles, and reserve him for the distribution of the sacraments.

Please keep Father Fliess in your prayers, as the episcopacy is a heavy burden. The very life of the Church — the priesthood, the Mass, the Holy Eucharist, and the episcopacy itself — is placed in the hands of a consecrated bishop, and his accounting to God increases a hundredfold. The Church rises and declines as its priests rise and decline, and it is the bishops who choose and ordain priests.

Progress in the Reading seminary building.

The remodeling has continued at a feverish pace in order to make our September 15th start date a reality.

We have moved the entire library, about 15,000 books, to Reading. We are awaiting the bookcases which are being built by Mike Gough, a parishioner in Michigan. He will also cut down the eight-foot bookcases which we have here in Florida (which he also made years ago) in order to fit a low ceiling. We have to stash our books in various parts of the building, since there is not a single room which will accommodate all of them. But that is not a serious problem.

As is the case in any building project, our remodeling has met with some setbacks, but nothing insurmountable. Occasionally there was a shortage problem. For example, there is a

shortage of electrical panels because, when there is rumor of shortage, the big building contractors buy them all up, so as not to be lacking for their enormous projects.

Why do we have shortages in this country? I thought that it was only the Soviet Union that had shortages. In my seventy-two years of living in the United States, I never thought that I would see the day that we would want for anything.

More springtime in the Church. Of course, I am being sarcastic. In a recent study, it was determined that the average age of Novus Ordo nuns is 80. Given the fact that there are still some under 80, we must conclude that there are many who are well over eighty years of age.

The conclusion is that the Novus Ordo nun will become extinct in about a decade or so, at least in this country.

This is both good news and bad news. The good news is that they will no longer be able to corrupt the souls of the young by their modernism. The bad news is that it represents the death of religious life. It died a long time ago, when Vatican II sucked the Catholic Faith out of it. For all these sixty years since Vatican II, religious life of nuns has been operating merely as a dying institution with the momentum left over from the past. The same can be said of religious brothers.

There are *some* vocations to the Novus Ordo priesthood, but even that number is in severe decline. This year there were thirty-eight dioceses in this country which ordained no new priests.

There is no life left in the Novus Ordo institutions. The Novus Ordo is like a dead body in a casket. Whatever is left is from the time that it had life, but even this institutional vigor will



Boxes containing some of the fifteen thousand books which are waiting to be placed on bookshelves

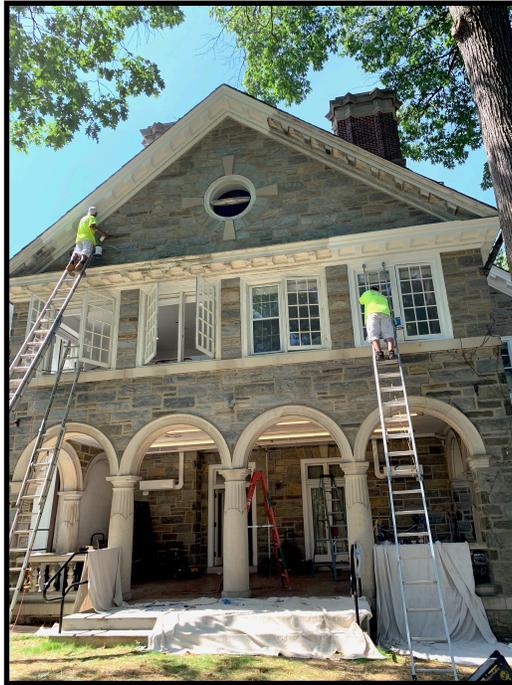
gradually fade away, just as a dead body rots in the grave.

The Novus Ordo has attempted to place the soul of modernism into the body of the Catholic Church. These are two things which are radically opposed, and will never come together into one living body, one moral entity. It is something like infusing the soul of a gorilla into the body of a man. It just will not take. The Catholic Church, as an institution, was made for a single thing, which is the Catholic Faith. Only then will it function properly, and only then will it produce the richness of vocations to the priesthood and the religious life.

Salvation through piety alone. Everyone is familiar with Luther's heretical teaching known as *salvation through faith alone*. This means that the single act which is necessary for salvation is faith, which for him, and for protestants in general, means *trust in God*. For Catholics faith means the assent of the intellect, by means of a supernatural virtue infused by God, to the truths revealed by God and proposed as such by the teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church.

Therefore for Luther, and for those who follow him, sins do not count against you in the order of salvation. There is no need to mortify yourself. No need to do penance. Luther said: **“Be a sinner and sin boldly, but believe and rejoice in Christ even more boldly...No sin will separate us from the Lamb, even though we commit fornication and murder a thousand times a day”**¹

No Catholic would ever hold this. Every Catholic knows that he will be judged on his actions when he dies, and not merely on his trust in God. Nonetheless there are many Catholics, and



The painting of the sashes and trim

I am referring to those who have rejected Vatican II and adhere to the traditional Faith, who hold an equivalent formula, which I describe as *salvation by piety alone*.

This is the typical case. Such a Catholic believes all that the Church teaches, recites faithfully his Rosary frequently, even every day, goes to Mass every Sunday, goes perhaps to devotions during the week, goes to confession often, and has many pictures of Our Lord, Our Lady, and the saints in his house. He may even conduct the family rosary every night in his home.

On the other hand, this same Catholic will live by all of the standards of the modern culture. He watches impure movies on television, the theater, or the internet. He listens to rock music. He raises his children according to all of the modern ideas, that is, permitting them to follow their instincts without discipline, or by inefficient discipline. If he is a man, he fails to assert his authority in the home. If she is a woman, she is heavily influenced by feminism, and fails to understand her role in the home.

All of the modern style of clothing is worn, no matter how immodest. They go to crowded beaches where there is grave immodesty. They go to places like Disneyland, which needs no comment.

They accept into their families those who are divorced and remarried, or who are living in fornicatory concubinage.

They send their children off to colleges and universities which are designed to destroy the Catholic Faith in their children as well as their morals. They applaud their achievement when they graduate, thinking nothing of the spiritual

¹ Weimar ed. vol. 2, p. 372; Letters I, Luther's Works, American ed., vol. 48, p. 282

destruction of the child.

They approve of spouses for their children who are heretical, godless, and/or impure.

And when finally all is said and done, and their children are grown and have become atheists and leftists, these same Catholics will come to the priest and ask, "Where did I go wrong?"

They went wrong in the same way that Luther went wrong. They thought that piety alone would make their children Catholic, and would protect them from bad influences of the modern world. For Luther it was *faith alone*; for these Catholics it is *piety alone*.

Contemplate the Holy Cross. There are two great lessons in the Cross of Christ: (1) the love of Jesus for His Father; (2) the putting to death of the old Adam of sin.

Our Lord on the Cross obtained our salvation by giving His Father, in the name of the humanity which He had Himself taken, the obedience to His will, even to the death on the Cross. This obedience of Christ was the remedy for the disobedience of Adam, and ultimately of every human being who commits a sin. The fragrance of His Son's obedience far outweighed the stench of human sin. This is one aspect of the redemption of the human race.

The other aspect is the mortification of the man of sin. There was a death penalty to be paid for the sins of men, and Our Lord paid it.

Catholic spiritual life is based on these two aspects of the Cross. On the one hand there is love of God, which includes obedience to the commandments of God and piety, that is, all of



The altar in the chapel in Reading

the acts of adoration and prayer which we offer to God. On the other hand, there is mortification, that is, the putting to death in our souls of the effects of sin, original sin and actual sin. Part of this mortification is the avoidance of the occasions of sin.

The modern culture is a product of the devil, and is one, enormous occasion of sin. Piety will not be pleasing to God, and will produce no good effect, if Catholics are imbibing every day the poisoned cup of the modern culture.

If Catholic parents want to raise Catholic children and not pagan children, and if they want Catholic grandchildren, it is necessary that they cut from the modern world. It requires a great deal of sacrifice. They cannot frequent or enjoy many things which others frequent and enjoy. Children must understand the necessity of this mortification and sacrifice.

I am sure that the Catholics who lived in the Roman Empire in the early days of the Church had the same problem. Rome was a place of wanton debauchery, cruel games, gross immodesty, idolatry, and superstition. The Church flourished, however, in these early times, and it is because the Catholics kept themselves away from the pagan culture of their time.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Donald J. Sanborn

Most Rev. Donald J. Sanborn
Rector