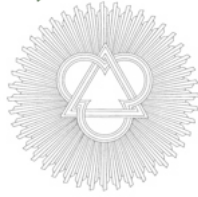

Most Holy Trinity Seminary Newsletter



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My dear Catholic people,

This newsletter *may* arrive a little late. If it does, it is owing to a great deal of activity around Holy Week, as usual, but also because of our recent new apostolate in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

We, the RCI clergy, were asked recently to assume the role of providing the Mass and sacraments to the faithful who attend Sacred Heart Church in Lawrence. It is a town which lies at twenty-nine miles to the north of Boston. It is only a few miles from the New Hampshire line.

It is a beautiful, neogothic church, about one hundred years old, very large, able to hold at least five hundred people. There are approximately 140 who attend there at the present time.

We were blessed to have the availability of Father Reid Henrick, who came to us last fall. He had resigned in the spring of 2025 from the Society of Saint Pius X, owing to the fact that he held to the material/formal sedevacantist position, which we ourselves hold.

He became formally a member of the Roman Catholic Institute on Easter Sunday. In order to

become a member, it is necessary to sign the Constitutions, which indicate the governance of the organization of priests, and rules of their behavior. In addition, the applicant must sign our three Directories, which are statements which define our positions. The Theological Directory states our position regarding the condition of the Catholic Church since Vatican II. The Liturgical Directory states our position in regard to the rite of the Mass which we use, as well as what concerns the rites of Holy Week and the sacraments. The Pastoral Directory indicates what rules we follow in regard to the care of souls.

I wrote these directories myself about ten years ago as a preparation for an organization of priests which would be free of conflict and splits. I had seen enough of these since 1975, the year in which I was ordained. I

surmised that by spelling out everything clearly, conflict could be avoided. Furthermore, changes to these documents cannot be made by my own whim, but must be approved by a majority of the priest members.



The front of Sacred Heart Church.

I have lived through the flip-flop of the Society of Saint Pius X, and through the conflicts in the Society of Saint Pius V. These bad experiences urged me to create something which would be very stable. This is our ninth year of existence, and so far all has gone well.

We make these directories public. They are on the internet for everyone to see.

Succession is also secured, that is, there will be no contention as to who shall be the new Superior General upon my death or resignation.

Overflowing seminary. It is quite possible that we will have more seminary applicants than rooms this year. There are twenty-two student rooms in our building in Reading, Pennsylvania. So far, at this writing, about twenty will be taken. April 1st to June 30th, however, is “high season” for applications, so it is foreseeable that we will have an excess.

I will deal with this excess by sending some of our more advanced seminarians to Sacred Heart in Lawrence. They will be able to follow their courses by means of Zoom. The rectory at Sacred Heart has about eleven rooms, some with private baths, others with only a sink. There are enough full baths in the building, however, to accommodate everyone. The rectory also has a modernized kitchen.

The seminarians’ presence in Lawrence would also have the positive effect of giving some help to Father Hennick, as well as of inspiring some of the young men in the parish to join the seminary.

We also have the intention of eventually founding a school in the area, which would be staffed by our own Sisters of Saint Thomas Aquinas. They are becoming so numerous that they are looking to expand to other areas. Already they had to install modular buildings on a property next door to the school (the former seminary) in Brooksville, Florida, in order to accommodate *their* overflow of of new postulants.

One of the attractions of going to Lawrence for seminary studies is that there is a full-size basketball court on the property. That news made a number of seminarians anxious to go.

Massachusetts is the second most Catholic state after Rhode Island, that is, by percentage of Catholics. The Boston area is loaded with people who call themselves Catholics, and for this reason, I believe that our presence in Sacred Heart will draw a large number of parishioners.



A side view of the church, showing the rectory.

Yet another asset of the Sacred Heart property is a cloister. These are commonly seen in monasteries. It is a covered walkway, rectangular in shape, with a garden in the middle. The garden, in this case, is planted with fruit trees, which bloom and bear. There is a beautiful statue of the Sacred Heart in the middle. Clergy commonly use a cloister

to pray and meditate.

An imperfect council? There is a movement afoot to summon an “imperfect council” in order to elect a “pope.” This is being promoted by a number of sedevacantist ecclesiastics. They claim to have five bishops involved, as well as a greater number of priests and religious.

The idea is to come together and elect a true pope.

While the Church needs a true pope very acutely as the only way in which to solve the problem of the Modernist infection, unfortunately a council such as is envisioned by these persons cannot produce a valid pope.

A true imperfect council is one that is composed of bishops *who have jurisdiction*, that is, who have received from a valid pope the power to rule over a diocese. It is called *imperfect* inasmuch as it is not summoned by a reigning pope. To my knowledge, there was only one of these in the Church’s history, and it occurred at the time of the Great Western Schism, when there were three claimants

to the throne of Peter. In order to fix the problem, jurisdictional bishops came together in council and elected Pope Martin V. The other three claimants eventually resigned.

Jurisdictional bishops are distinguished from bishops who have no diocese. These last are typically attached to a diocese as auxiliary bishops, helping the ordinary (the bishop of the diocese) with the task of performing Confirmations and of fulfilling other ceremonial demands.

These non-jurisdictional bishops do not even have the right to attend a normal general council which is summoned by a pope. The pope *may* invite them, but they have no right to be there, as the jurisdictional bishops have.

It is easy to see, therefore, that their function is seen by the Church to be exclusively sacramental, and that they do not participate, by right, in any way in the government of the diocese or of the Church in general.

The popes over time have made it very clear that only the College of Cardinals has the right to elect a pope. We hold that the present College of Cardinals is capable of validly choosing a successor of Peter, despite their adherence to Modernism. We hold this because it is a dogma of faith that there would be successors of Peter until the end of time. This dogma was defined by the Vatican Council of 1870. Consequently, this body of cardinals receives from Christ as Head of the Church, by a supplied jurisdiction, the powers necessary to elect a successor of Saint Peter.

This principle of supplied jurisdiction can be seen in Canon Law, which gives the power of absolving sins, in cases of extreme necessity, to priests who are defrocked and/or excommunicated. Even validly ordained schismatic or heretical priests obtain this same power from the Church. The reason

is that the Catholic who is dying is in absolute and extreme need of the sacrament. The sacrament is the property of the Catholic Church. The Church may therefore empower the unworthy minister to use it.

So also, Christ, as Head of the Church may empower heretical cardinals to carry out what is absolutely necessary for the continuity of the Petrine lineage. The same holds true for the appointment of cardinals.

Let us return to the question at hand. Can a group of non-jurisdictional bishops call an imperfect council? No, because precisely they lack jurisdiction. Can they elect a pope? No, because they have no power to vote.

I am sure that the persons organizing this “council” are of good will, and desire nothing else than the good of the Church. The Church needs a true pope very badly. It cannot, however, be obtained in this way.

My fear is that such an attempt will place a stain of absurdity and ludicrousness upon all sedevacantists.

The real solution to the Church’s problem is, in my opinion, fervent and persevering prayer to God to obtain a true

pope. He could do this in various ways, but the most obvious way would be to convert a Leo XIV to Catholicism. God can move anyone by His grace. Witness Saint Paul, witness the Apostles who dropped their nets and followed Christ at His mere command. Witness other extraordinary conversions, such as that of Saint Augustine and of Saint Camillus of Lellis. God is all-powerful and can do whatever He wants, and He chooses His own time to do it.

Pope Pius XII said in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis* the following:

And if at times there appears in the Church something that indicates the weakness of our



The cloister, with the rectory in the background.

human nature, it should not be attributed to her juridical constitution, but rather to that regrettable inclination to evil found in each individual, which its **Divine Founder permits even at times in the most exalted members of His Mystical Body, for the purpose of testing the virtue of the shepherds no less than of the flocks, and that all may increase the merit of their Christian faith.**

The Pope is referring here to the personal sins of clergy, saying that they are permitted by Christ to test both the shepherds and the flocks “*that all may increase the merit of their Christian faith.*” Our problem, however, is not merely one of the personal sins of clergy, but of a would-be pope who is imposing a false religion upon the Church. How much more, then, is it true that Christ is testing the virtue of the shepherds and of the flocks? It is a general principle that God does not permit evil except for a greater good. It is my opinion that the greater good which is being accomplished by this modernist infiltration is the purging from the shepherds and the flocks all tendency to compromise with the modern world, which is nothing less than the product of Lucifer.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Donald J. Sanborn
Rector



The interior of Sacred Heart church. Above: the main altar. Below: the nave and choir loft. Below left: The library of the rectory. The rectory has eleven bedrooms.

