



Southern Sentinel

Regnavit a Ligno Deus

HOLY CROSS SEMINARY

The Priestly Society of St. Pius X

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Dear Friends and Benefactors,

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“To suffer generously, I once believed, was to suffer with a courage that never wincses. I thought it meant to go to meet suffering, to hold out my arms to it. Now I understand that we can suffer just as generously, yet suffer with sorrow, fear, worry, repugnance, that we can suffer miserably ... When a soul is conscious of its generosity, can testify that it is fully resigned to the will of God, its sorrows are softened. But to suffer in such an interior confusion that no luster issues from the suffering ... ah, that is suffering par excellence. It is that of Our Lord in the Garden of Olives.”

These are the words of Fr. Almire Pichon S.J., a priest not well-known today. But Fr. Pichon was the spiritual director of someone who is very well known – St. Therese of the Child Jesus. Hopefully, this is enough to establish his credentials in our eyes and to give us confidence in his explanation.

Suffering is a part of life, just as consolation is. For those who are glad to be the disciples of the crucified King, suffering, although certainly painful, is neither a shock nor a scandal.

We know the cause of suffering, and we know its purpose. Its cause is sin, and its purpose is the healing of sin. Suffering is permitted by God as a just punishment for sin *but also* in order that, in cooperation with grace, it might become a supernatural force which *heals the very wounds* which sin has caused within the soul. And so suffering is meant to be, for each one, the cross which saves him once it is united to the grace merited by the Cross of our King.

But while this truth should give us great courage – for we should see in it the unconquerable power of the Savior to transform defeat into victory – we nevertheless find ourselves so often weakened by despondency. It is not the wisdom of God's plan which we doubt but rather our own correspondence with it. Our emotions give us little



Conferring of the Tonsure and Minor Orders

On the Feast of the Assumption, His Lordship Bishop Bernard Fellay conferred the clerical tonsure on four seminarians and the first two minor orders on a fifth seminarian. Students from St. Thomas Aquinas College in Tynong and St. Augustine's College in Wanganui both travelled to the seminary for the event.



assurance that we are being faithful in this business of following in the footsteps of our Master. We want to feel within us the generosity which we know our Master deserves to find among His disciples, but we feel only disgust for the cross. We sense that, at any moment, we might give in to this disgust and cast our cross upon the ground – and this imminent possibility only increases the disgust which we feel, because now we are disgusted with ourselves.

But it is here that we must take to heart Fr. Pichon's wisdom. He points out to us that there is a good deal of romanticism in our theory of Christian suffering and a good deal of injustice in the reproaches we heap upon ourselves for our apparent cowardice. *“And He taketh Peter and James and John with Him; and He began to fear and to be exceedingly troubled.”* (Mark 14:33) Our Lord *fears* His approaching sufferings; He is *exceedingly troubled* by the thought of them. But would anyone dare to call

Mr. Martin Anozie, from Nigeria, received the orders of Porter and Lector on 15 August.

Him cowardly in the Garden of Gethsemane? Fr. Pichon points out that, in times of suffering as in every other situation of the Christian life, Our Lord is our model. *“Oh, my soul, why do you reproach me for being fearful? Jesus was fearful before I ever was, and even more than I, yet He is my model in suffering. Even then, in the midst of my fears, even while I feel myself to be so poor, so weak, in my discouragements, in my despairs, I can go to Gethsemane. I can kneel by the side of Jesus and offer my sufferings to God, Who will receive them favorably for they resemble the sufferings of His Son.”*

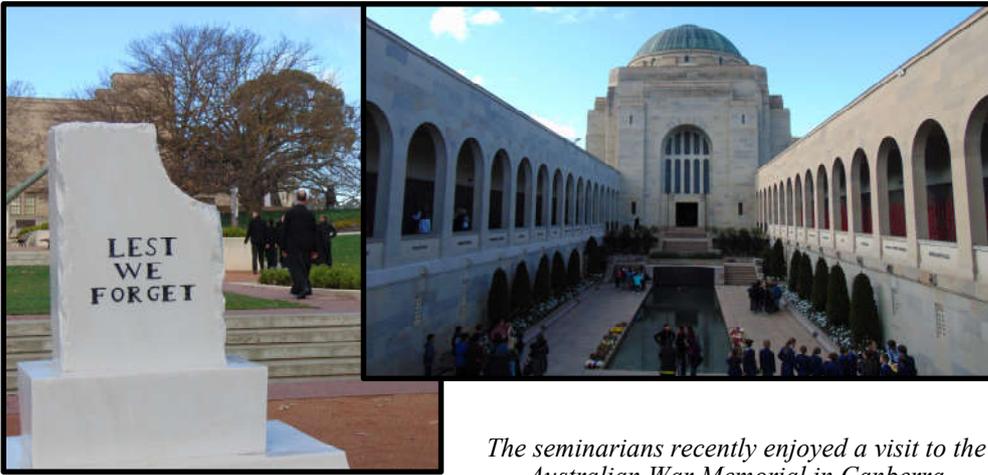
The cowardice for which the Christian could justly reproach himself would be a cowardice of choice, not a cowardice of feeling. When a soul, despite its overwhelming repugnance, fear, and self-doubt, perseveres in trying to hold the straight course, this is truly a glorious triumph of grace and charity within the weak human frame. Despite feeling as if it has lost the best part of its strength, the soul fights on with whatever resources it can still muster, seizing whatever opportunities still lie open to it. The soul struggles on like the soldier in battle who fights with his sword even after it is notched and finally broken – striking blows with the hilt of his weapon but refusing to throw it down or to surrender to the enemies of his King.

How difficult it is to persevere without the consolations of perseverance. But how the soul is healed by pushing on when all human motives have failed. Finally the way is open for charity to burn away the stubborn roots of vanity and egoism with a heat that is generated by the fierceness of the struggle. And what an acceptable sacrifice is consumed in those unfelt flames of charity, a sacrifice which brings upon the world a large measure of that grace which the Savior won for His Mystical Body.

Let us have courage. Jesus Christ has walked the way of sorrow before us. He does not despise our sorrow; He sanctifies it and accepts it gratefully. Let us be on guard against the illusions of the devil. He would discourage us when our generosity does not match the counterfeit heroism which he proposes to our imagination – a too human heroism which has nothing to do with the Passion of Christ.



The seminary community poses for a photo with Fr. Andrew Cranshaw and the students of St. Augustine's College who visited the seminary in August.



The seminarians recently enjoyed a visit to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra

Vocations Crusade

Please find enclosed your tally sheets for this year's *Crusade for Vocations* which runs from the Feast of Christ the King until the Immaculate Conception. We will, as usual, present your offerings to Our Lady on 8 December. Although you also have a demand upon your generosity in the form of the current rosary crusade, during this brief period, please remember the cause of vocations.

An Appeal to Volunteers

As any visitor to Holy Cross will know, the seminary is in a state of more-or-less continuous renovation. I wish to extend a general invitation to any men who might be willing to lend a day (or a few days) of their time to the seminary. We could be extremely flexible in welcoming such volunteers at almost any time during the year. Projects accommodated to the abilities of the individual volunteer and to the time which he has available could be prepared in advance. Please keep such a possibility in mind even if your schedules would not allow you to volunteer in the immediate future. Those who are interested are asked to contact Fr. Todd Stephens.

Ordinations 2016

We hope to welcome many of you for the joyous occasion of the ordination of three priests on Thursday 15 December and for the first Masses on the following day. For those who are able to remain until Sunday, the seminary will celebrate tenth priestly anniversaries of Fr. Christopher Curtis, Fr. Paul Robinson, and Fr. Christoph Pfluger. A 10:00 a.m. Solemn Mass on Sunday 18 December will be followed by a luncheon to which all are invited. While thanking God for these many graces, I would also appeal to your generosity inasmuch as the ordinations festivities place a significant strain on the seminary's budget.

Please note the dates for the January retreats. For those of you who are not able to attend this year, please pray for those who will attend. One of the great consolations of the Mystical Body of Christ is that the holiness of any one member, profits the whole Body. Let us then pray sincerely for the spiritual advancement of our neighbor, upon whose prayers and generosity, our own salvation or sanctification might later depend.

In Christ our King,

Fr. Daniel Themann
Rector, Holy Cross Seminary

Events at Holy Cross:

Ordinations to the priesthood, **15 December.**

Ladies Retreat **2 to 7 January**, 2017

Men's Retreat **23 to 28 January** 2017.

You may email the Seminary for retreat information at
retreats@holycrossseminary.com