



S S P X



Holy  
Angels  
novitiate



# Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Greetings from the Winona Artic where it is presently eight below zero. Yes, it is cold up here in Minnesota, and the opportunity of mortification is all around us. Prepping for this season is always a pastime. Purchasing road salt, bringing in the hoses, preparing the chicken coop, putting the snow blade on the truck, testing the snow plows, putting up a snow fence, the list goes on. It is really just another season to work for Our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the spirit of the Brothers at the Novitiate. It is a labor of love. "Love serves," says St. Bernard.

The brothers have offered their lives as a complete oblation to serve Our Lord. All of their daily actions have a special merit in the service of Christ our King. Every little task they do is an offering of service for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls.

The faithful also have this opportunity to give every moment of their day to the service of Our Lord. Your morning offering is the beginning of a successful day walking in the path of Christ. This is working for your salvation and that of others. We are all asked to work for the glory of God:

*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast and unmoveable; always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. [1 Corinthians 15:58]  
All whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. [Colossians 3:17]*

Currently, the brothers are in the middle of two grand meetings; one for the priors and the other for the priests of the Society of Saint Pius X. They will prepare rooms, pickup priests from the airports, serve mass, and serve tables for one hundred priests during the priests' meeting alone. The brothers are the "right arms" of the priests, especially at the Novitiate of the Holy Angels. In future columns you will see and understand the importance of their works.

Father Kenneth Dean, the Novice Master here in Winona, in his excellent article, [found] herein, helps you to understand the purpose of religious vows. Pass it on to a young man who may have an interest.

Also included is a small glimpse into the talent of our artistic brothers. Not everyone is able to draw a straight line...even with a ruler. It takes a special gift from God to be able to notice shadows, see angles, know dimensions and to see the grand scale of intricate design. Brother Marcel has what it takes to make art happen. Enjoy seeing the work done well.

As always, the brothers of the Society depend on your support. We only received twenty-five percent of what we needed per our last newsletter. So, we trust in your continued support to upkeep our property. The brothers pray the entire rosary daily for our friends and benefactors.

Fr. Charles Ward  
Rector

"Like a marriage; like a funeral; this ceremony celebrates both a new life and a death." With these words, Fr. Asher explained the ceremonies of the habit and vows of the Society of Saint Pius X Brothers. The vows are a death — but they are also a new life. Consecration certainly entails separation, like a chalice being removed from any other use than to hold the precious blood. But that separation is the ennobling and life-giving aspect of the consecration, for who would consider it a loss to the chalice that it can henceforth only contain the Blood of Christ?



# On the Beauty of the Religious

## The Purpose of Vows

By Fr. Kenneth Dean



The Brothers of the Society of St. Pius X are religious. This means that they consecrate themselves to God by taking the vows of religion: poverty, chastity, and obedience. These vows are taken publically, with their religious superior present and accepting them in the name of the Catholic Church. This is how men and women have consecrated themselves to God throughout the many long centuries of the Church's history.

Behind this act of pronouncing vows is something very simple but very beautiful – the desire to give oneself to God without any conditions. We are all called to give something back to God, from whom we have received everything. Good lay Catholics working in the world, strive to give back to God what they've been given: their talents, their possessions, their time. Religious give back to God just one thing: themselves. But this includes everything else. Religious life is a consecration to God of one's person, whole and entire. Dom Marmion says:

“The religious life is not an institution created on the borders of Christianity... it aims only at expressing the Gospel in all its integrity. Our religious “holiness” is but the plenitude of our Divine adoption in Jesus; it is the absolute handing over of the whole of ourselves through love, to the will of the Most High.” (Christ the Ideal of the Monk, p.32)

The religious spends his life living and deepening his consecration. His vows are the expression of his will to give God everything. He gives God his material goods by the vow of poverty. He gives God the goods of wife and family by the vow of chastity. He even gives God his own will by the vow of obedience. Thus, in taking the three vows of religion, a person is really giving God everything they have and are.

Worldly goods can never satisfy the cravings of the human soul, which is made only for God. The experience of the ages proves this truth; for if the goods of this



life could content the heart of man, then those who abound in riches, and honors, and the pleasures of the world would spend all their days in pure joy. Yet history and experience show us that they are often the most unhappy and discontented of men. Riches and an abundance of worldly things are rather sources of fears, troubles, and bitterness for them. The same is true of those who seek the pleasures of the flesh, or to have their own will in everything. They live miserable, unhappy lives, at least on the inside. A religious, however, has freely given up such things in order to please God alone. It follows, then, that religious are the happiest and most content of persons, so long as they live the spirit of their vows.

Now, we might be able to conceive of a person giving up worldly possessions for natural reasons - so long as all their needs are taken care of. We might conceive of persons giving up family and spouse for natural reasons -so long as they have enough interactions with other decent folk. But it's hard to conceive of people giving up their own will for natural reasons. The most we can say is that we give up our will sometimes for a good friend, to follow their will. This is done out of love for that person. The same is true of religious obedience –

it is done out of love. Love for the good God, love for Our Lord Jesus Christ. Self-sacrifice is always done out of love, which provides it with the fertile ground. It is this love, or charity, which is the basis of religious life.

Charity is also the end of religious life. The religious vows are not an end in themselves. It is true that they consecrate a person to God, but union with God is only perfected by charity. The whole purpose of the vows, then, is to remove those things which typically hinder charity from growing in a soul: too much attachment or preoccupation with material things, the flesh, or our own will. St. Thomas says that without the vows, a person's life is easily taken up with secular business and pursuits. He says in another place, “*The religious life was instituted primarily that we might reach perfection by means of certain practices, by which the obstacles to perfect charity are removed.*”

“*The perfection of charity is the end of the religious state.*”

A religious then, is not meant to stop at his vows. They are not the final purpose of his life. That purpose is to perfect his charity as far as he can. His vows simply make this much easier.





# Brothers' Artwork



Recently, Brother Marcel finished a custom made statue of St. James the Greater for our parish in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, named after this patron.

The main altar needed a statue of its patron and had to be formed to fit the beautiful gothic altar. Such a project requires that a sculptor first make a sculpture of clay (this is of course the hard part) then, a fiberglass mold is created around the clay. Once this is accomplished, a unique resin is poured into the new mold (in this case similar to stone) and presto...you have your statue ...after paint and gold-leaf gilding, it was a perfect fit. This process can take months.

Currently, Brother Marcel is working on a project for Immaculate Heart of Mary school chapel. Some time ago he made an altar for the school chapel. Now, he is completing the statuary for this sanctuary, which is being coordinated with that altar.



Brother Jude is seen here working on a halo for Our Lady.



Brother Marcel works on the cross that will be used in the sanctuary of Immaculate Heart of Mary school chapel.





Holy Angels Novitiate is the house of formation for the Brothers of the Society of Saint Pius X in the United States.

The Brothers of the Society are religious dedicated to the glory of God through the service of His priests. They accomplish this primarily through the observance of the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience—the foundations of Catholic religious life through the centuries—by their prayers, and by their example. They also assist the priests of the Society in their apostolates in many different ways according to the needs of each individual priory. Brothers are currently engaged in teaching catechism, serving Mass, maintaining sacristies, and directing choirs. They also care for the material needs of the priests by cooking, performing maintenance, accounting, and completing innumerable small but useful tasks.

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, founder of the Society of Saint Pius X and its Brothers, recognized the dignity and value of the brothers' vocation when he exhorted them to be the "guardian angels of our communities." It was his wish that each priory of the Society would eventually have a resident religious brother. This wish can only be realized through the selfless response of many souls to Christ's call together with the generosity of our benefactors. God will certainly reward all of them abundantly.

#### **Donation Information**

Please make out checks or money orders in US dollars only to: "Holy Angels Novitiate."

#### **Holy Angels Novitiate**

21077 Quarry Hill Rd., Winona, MN 55987  
T (507) 454-8000  
[www.sspcx.org](http://www.sspcx.org)

—Please do not send cash since this is against US Postal Regulations.

—Please call (816) 753-0073 to discuss the donation of securities or precious metals.

#### **Upcoming Events**

Events are subject to change due to Covid-19.

- Summer Camp: June 20-28
- Men's Ignatian retreat: June 1-6
- Men's Vocation retreat: July 6-11