

After the aftermath

As *Oriens* went to press, reports from Rome indicated that the Vatican will issue a new document clarifying the terms of *Summorum Pontificum* in which Pope Benedict XVI liberated the traditional Latin Mass.

The Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, told Italian magazine *Famiglia Cristiana* that the Ecclesia Dei Commission will issue instructions to “clarify the criteria for the application of the *motu proprio*.”

The reason for the new document, Cardinal Bertone said, was “confused reactions” by the bishops to the

As of writing, we do not know when the new directive will be published.

The jugglers

A few weeks before Christmas, a close observer of current Church affairs, and one well informed about the quality of ecclesiastical manpower, suggested to *Oriens* that, when it came to implementing a liturgical “reform of the reform,” bishops had to confront the fact that many, perhaps the majority, of their clergy were “ecclesiologicaly challenged.”

This was a kindly way of saying that much of present generation of clergy, for the most part trained in the period 1965 to 1995, is so compromised by contemporary styles of manhood and priesthood, that it lacks the cultural aptitude for a sympathetic response to Pope Benedict XVI and his call for teaching and worship to be anchored in the whole tradition of the Church. This analysis includes “papal liners” as it does “liberals”.

It is the “pope’s men” who interest us here. During the John Paul II years, it was easy to be a “papalist”. In those days one could declaim against the culture of death while liturgically celebrating the culture of banality. One could proclaim human rights, and bemoan the marginalised, while kicking traditional Catholics in the pants and banishing them to the outlands. One could condescend to Catholic pieties while paying reverence to the shaman’s humbug. One could kiss the papal hand and Mr Mahomet’s

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motu proprio. Contrary to the claims made by critics, Bertone said that the Pope neither rejected Vatican II, nor planned to replace the new Mass with the old. Less diplomatic than Bertone, Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith, secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship, charged that some bishops have imposed arbitrary interpretations on the *motu proprio* in order to render its terms null and void in their dioceses.

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Here and there

Oriens staff report and comment on Catholic events.

The move by Pope Benedict XVI to free the traditional Latin Mass for a return to Catholic altars has met with both magnanimous and pusillanimous responses.

In recognition of the publication by the Pope of his *motu proprio*, *Summorum Pontificum*, three Australian archbishops publicly celebrated the traditional Mass during recent months. *Summorum Pontificum* was issued on 7 July 2007 and came into force on 14 September 2007, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

The first Australian bishop to give major public recognition to the new legislation was Archbishop Denis Hart who celebrated, on 28 August 2007, a Solemn Pontifical Mass according to the 1962 missal in St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. Next was Archbishop Barry Hickey, who celebrated Mass in the same form in the Chapel of St Michael the Archangel in Leaderville, Western Australia, on 20 October. Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne, Peter J. Elliott, followed on 28 October by celebrating Solemn Pontifical Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo, at the conclusion of the *Christus Rex* pilgrimage.

Finally, on 3 November 2007, and at the request of the Oriens Foundation, George Cardinal Pell celebrated Solemn Pontifical Mass in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. (At the last-named event a stunning 2,000 people turned out for the Mass and afterwards the Cardinal joined the Oriens Foundation, and a group of its supporters, as guest-of-honour at a luncheon to celebrate the occasion.)

As we look abroad, similar events were taking place in Cathedrals here and there, sometimes with the local ordinary fully on board, in other places, such as in Westminster and Southwark cathedrals in the UK, without the presence of the local bishop.

Dutch robust

Much more robust, and surprisingly so, was the reaction of the Dutch bishops. In response to *Summorum Pontificum*, they published *Het Heilig Misoffer*, a handsome book containing the text of the *motu proprio*, its accompanying letter from the Pope to the Bishops, plus the text of the traditional *Missale Romanum* (the Ordinary) in Latin and Dutch. To top it off, the Bishops indicated

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book with nearly equal respect. For a certain type, combining ornery attachment to some tough Catholic doctrines with obeisance to the most respectable fads was a cakewalk. But suddenly it is not so easy to juggle incompatibles.

First, we have a *motu proprio* that rejects discarding the historical forms of worship, and calls for the new liturgy to be reformed by re-establishing contact with the liturgical tradition.

Secondly, we have an encyclical, *Spe Salvi*, dated 30 November 2007, that contains not a single direct reference to the documents of Vatican II.

And, thirdly, we find in this same encyclical, contrary to the separation of Church and society often credited to Vatican II, a rejection of private holiness in favour of one that transforms and challenges the pretended autonomy of things that are doomed to pass away.

Strange country

We have insufficient space to expand on each of these points. Taken together, however, they signal that we have entered the post post-conciliar world where the landscape is disconcertingly unfamiliar. That is why Rome is contemplating – and perhaps might have published by the time you read this – “a new document clarifying the terms of *Summorum Pontificum*.”

When the Church’s leadership group falls short of the required level of catholic cultural literacy, a document like *Summorum Pontificum* will pose some comprehension problems. It is completely understandable that the apostolic administrator of the diocese of Savona-Noli in Italy, for example, should have banned the celebration of the traditional Latin Mass (see our story “Here and there”, page 2) until the terms of the *motu proprio* should

be sufficiently clarified. Similarly, there is no problem to fathom in a university with a jaunty Catholic swagger like Ave Maria (Florida) waging an internal war against the Latin liturgical and musical tradition. These are symptoms of a well-understood syndrome. When men and women have kept a long-established peace with the culture, it is not realistic to expect that overnight they should become advocates for a Catholic world-view and sensibility now foreign to them. Even among Benedict XVI’s episcopal supporters, there would be quite a few for whom his liturgical thought as a cardinal,

will need to insist upon certain things to lay the ground for work that others after him must do.

- Latin must be a compulsory seminary subject, and seminarians must meet minimum standards of competency in it before ordination to the diaconate.
- Seminarians must be trained in the Church’s liturgical music, and must attain minimum levels of competency in the singing of the Mass before ordination to the diaconate.
- The traditional Latin Mass and the art of celebrating it must be

One could declaim against the culture of death while liturgically celebrating the culture of banality.

and now his teaching and legislation as pontiff, would pose marked discomfort.

A burst of “reform of the reform” activity by the bishops, predicated on a “dialogue” between old and new Masses envisaged in *Summorum Pontificum*, is not, therefore, going to develop easily. Even where bishops might be willing, their clergy and diocesan liturgical apparatus will mostly prove inapt to the task. Consequently, the liturgical reform indicated by Pope Ratzinger will have to be the work of future generations. So, when making further “clarifications” about how his *motu proprio* should be implemented, he

a compulsory seminary subject alongside teaching about the new liturgy.

- Apart from any other church or chapel in which the traditional Latin Mass might be celebrated in any diocese, the traditional liturgy should be celebrated every Sunday in every cathedral backed by the full liturgical and musical resources available.

It is only by obliging the bishops to implement such measures that the harmonious discourse between liturgies old and new can ever take place. If such be the Pope’s objective, then he must take measures fitted to the purpose.



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that Dutch seminaries henceforth would train seminarians to celebrate both the traditional and modern forms of the Mass.

Interestingly, the National American College in Rome, also has begun to implement a plan to train seminarians studying there in both forms of the liturgy – a decision that reflects a shift in the mentality of the American church leadership and the fact that, on the ground in the USA, a growing number of bishops have decided that they, and not the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, will rule their dioceses and direct their seminaries.

2007 came and went and no nice counter was poised against the Pauline liturgical revolution – but, then, that had already taken place on 7 July 2007.

Other things, however, were taking place in Rome: some lower-key, others higher.

On the low end of the keyboard, and on the Feast of St Cecilia, patroness of music (22 November), Dario Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos celebrated Solemn Pontifical Mass in the Church of Sant'Ivo alla Sapienza, a church discreetly tucked away in the courtyard of the former Sapienza University. The celebration was supported by two

At this event the Cardinal received delegations from about a dozen lay associations petitioning for the *motu proprio* to be implemented in their dioceses. The French bishops have a well-established reputation of being among the Church's most stubborn opponents of the traditional Mass.

Ranjith red

Back in Rome, and on the higher end of the scale, Archbishop Albert Malcolm Ranjith Patabendige Don, Secretary for the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, was banging out some forceful notes. On 5 November he gave an interview to the Italian Internet website *Petrus*. In it Archbishop Ranjith let fly at bishops who sought to whittle away at the plain meaning of *Summorum Pontificum*.

He found it difficult to understand the action “and even rebellion” of bishops who have sought to limit the access of lay people and priests to the traditional Mass.

“On the part of some dioceses, there have been interpretive documents that inexplicably aim to limit the *motu proprio* of the Pope ... I invite everyone to obey the Pope. If the Holy Father thought it was his obligation to issue the *motu proprio*, he had his reasons and I share them fully.

“The bishops, in particular, have sworn fidelity to the pontiff; may they be coherent and faithful to their commitment.”

Ranjith went to say, in even more forceful language, that if discussion and debate

The French bishops have a well-established reputation of being among the Church's most stubborn opponents of the traditional Mass.

About the next move in Rome, there has been much speculation, with many a traditionalist blogger trying to predict the date in the liturgical calendar when Pope Benedict XVI might publicly celebrate the traditional Latin Mass.

Some of the shiniest optimists predicted the First Sunday of Advent on the grounds that it would offer a nice counter-poise to the introduction of the Paul VI Missal which came into force on the First Sunday in Advent 1969. The First Sunday of Advent

choirs: a *Schola Gregoriana* carried the chant, while *Festina Lente*, a professional Roman group, sang the polyphony in the shape of Palestrina's *Missa “Regina Coeli”*.

Not long afterwards, on 8 December, Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos was in Versailles, France, for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and another Pontifical Mass, this one on the occasion of the *Journée de Chrétienté*, which celebrated twenty-five years of the re-establishment of the famous Chartres pilgrimage.

“does not in the end lead to a spirit of obedience in the service of unity, then it divides and can only be interpreted as a manifestation of the intent of the Evil One to disturb and retard the noble mission of Christ. Even those wearing ecclesiastical purple or red are not exempt from the tempter’s enchantments.”

Rome’s tougher line

A few weeks later a *crisi* over the traditional Mass in the Italian diocese of Savona-Noli illustrated the kind of problem that Archbishop Ranjith may have had in mind and the tougher line being taken by Rome.

Savona-Noli is a diocese in the Liguria region of north-west Italy, and the see had been vacant pending the appointment of a new bishop. Meantime, in the chair as diocesan administrator, was Monsignor Andrea Giusto.

During the interregnum, a traditional Latin Mass was celebrated at a place called Celle Ligure in the Parish of St Michael the Archangel. The Mass was organised by locals with the half-hearted approval of the parish priest, and with the help, it seems, of people outside the diocese. The celebrant came from Verona. About 150-200 people turned up, and the good priest expressed during his sermon the view that “Italy, the garden of the Catholic Church, may become the garden of pagans, of Muslims ...” which sounds not far from the mark.

A few days later, on 26 November 2007, Monsignor Giusto issued, via the diocesan website, an order directing that priests of the diocese do not give permission to groups that request celebration of the traditional

Latin Mass, and to ensure in no church in diocesan territory should Masses “according to the pre-conciliar rite” be celebrated.

He alleged as the grounds for his decision, the absence of a bishop and a lack of clarity about the conditions under which the traditional Missal might be celebrated. Una Voce Italia responded to Monsignor Giusto’s decree by an appeal to Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos, President of the Ecclesia Dei Commission.

Just four days after Monsignor Giusto’s decree, Rome announced that it had selected Monsignor Vittorio Lupi, vicar-general of the diocese of Ventimiglia, as the new Bishop of Savona-Noli.

“liberals”. The case of Ave Maria University in the USA provides a relevant cautionary tale.

Founded by the pizza billionaire, Tom Monaghan, Ave Maria University aspires to be not only a model Catholic university but also a model Catholic town. But the model Catholic university and would-be model town has been finding it tough to accommodate Catholic culture and the Catholics who love it: its founding president, Fr Joseph Fessio SJ, among them.

The university’s new president, Nick Healy, has followed up the “doing over” of Fr Fessio, by, among other things, waging a campaign within the university against the use

Being “Captain Catholic” does not guarantee sympathy with the policies of Benedict XVI.

In December Monsignor Lupi went to Rome to swear his oath of office – and in circumstances that sent a message to every bishop in the world. On the morning of 12 December, Monsignor Lupi took his oath of office at the Ecclesia Dei Commission and before Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos.

It’s hard to imagine how a point could have been made more forcefully.

Message for “Pope’s men”

This is a message with import as much for “Pope’s men” and “pillars of orthodoxy” as for the over-demonised

of Latin in the celebration of Mass on campus, against the introduction of the traditional Mass, against kneeling for communion, against the use of the Church’s traditional music in campus liturgy; and, finally, his interventions into the university’s music department over teaching of the liturgical music tradition has led to the resignation of the department’s founding head.

Being “Captain Catholic” does not guarantee sympathy with, or comprehension of, the “agenda” for the Church being set by Pope Benedict XVI.

O

Some Catholics just don't get it

David Kehoe* on the latest exercise in Australian public dissent from the Church's teaching.

“What is it about the above that you don't get?” is a colloquial question popular at present when someone has explained a point several times but the listener is still bamboozled.

It is pertinent in the case of the promoters of the petition to the Australian bishops urging them to allow priests to marry, to allow laicised married priests to return to priestly ministry and to consider ordaining (sic) women to provide more priests to boost a dwindling supply of local clergy. On the latter, read “consider” as meaning “allow”.

To anyone who follows and studies the theological and spiritual life of the Catholic Church, it is clear the Church is not going to change its mind and practice on these matters – to accept the demands would mean trying to change the nature of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ in which its celibate male high priest and Son of God, Jesus Christ, is the mould from which its priests come and on which its fruitfulness lies.

The petition – organised by the laicised priest, Dr Paul Collins, and layman Frank Purcell under the umbrella of Catholics for Ministry and with the enthusiastic support of website *Catholica Australia* – had, by 30 November 2007, gathered 16,746 signatures online and on paper.

Of course, the dissenters aren't really interested in numbers – they want married male and female clergy whether it adds to congregations or not. The fact that those Protestant congregations with women masquerading as priests and bishops are in spectacular decline does not seem to bother their analysis.

Petition & counter-petition

Meanwhile the John XXIII Co-operative's *Fidelity* website organised a counter-petition to show Australia's bishops that there were still Australian Catholics who believed in the life-giving teaching of the Church on these matters.

The Collins-Purcell petition was delivered to the Australian bishops in time for their meeting in Sydney between 27 and 30 November.

Despite some early enthusiastic wishful thinking from the petition's organisers that the bishops had accepted their petition as part of the bishop's agenda for their meeting, the reply of Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president Archbishop Philip Wilson of Adelaide to the petition revealed that the bishops had only “received” the petition, which is not official recognition.

Archbishop Wilson said delicately that the bishops referred to “the issues mentioned in the petition” in a “wide-ranging discussion of vocations,

Church ministry and the life of the Church.”

He went on to say that “during the discussion it was clear that the bishops continue to be deeply concerned to make adequate pastoral and sacramental provision for the Church in Australia. We intend to pursue discussions at future plenary meetings of those aspects of Church life which are within our competency as a conference of bishops in the Universal Church.”

Continuing in confusion

At one level, the dissenters could be forgiven for continuing in their confusion, since the bishops as a group said nothing publicly to relieve them, and the wider Australian Catholic and non-Catholic population, of their confusion. It could also be asked of the bishops as a conference: what is it that you don't get about your role as teachers?

The bishops were telling the dissenters and the rest of Australia's Catholics that a decision to change the teaching and practice on the issues raised was not in the job description of a bishops' conference.

True, it's not. But who in the Church from the Pope down and from ages past until the end of the world also said that a bishops' conference couldn't clear up confusion among the faithful in their flock?

In fact the very Code of Canon Law that describes the limits for a national conference of bishops in issuing decrees (Canon 455), and upon which, presumably, Archbishop Wilson's letter drew for the "within our competency" distinction, sets out the conference's responsibilities in ensuring the Catholic faith is taught in their territory (Canon 753).

That the ACBC could not issue a clear statement on behalf of all Australian bishops setting out the teaching of the Church on these matters implies that there are bishops within the conference who agree with the petitioners, and not just on the question of married clergy but also that the Church should attempt to ordain women as priests. The correct verb here is "attempt", as the matter for ordination includes male biology and any ordination rite naturally fails with women.

If all the bishops not only agreed with Church teaching on these matters, but also understood how to explain the life-giving and liberating truth of these matters for both men and women, then the conference would have had no problem in proclaiming the truth through a public statement.

Voices at variance

That the ACBC could not speak with one voice, when the evangelical and catechetical opportunity was presented, shows that the crisis of faith gripping the Catholic Church in Australia, which was explicitly identified in the 1998 Statement of Conclusions between the Holy See and the Australian bishops, still exists. In fact, it is the presence of a significant number of bishops within the ACBC

who reject Catholic teaching on these matters, or who are wavering in favour of the dissenting petition, that has emboldened the petitioners.

The Age reported, on 24 November, petition spokesman Collins as having said: "We think about 28 of the

Combine this state of affairs with the fact that many of the orthodox clergy are not confident about explaining the life-giving truths of the faith about a male priesthood – and so fall back on simply stating it's true and that you have to believe it on the basis of

Many of the orthodox clergy are not confident about explaining the life-giving truths of the faith.

42 Australian bishops are pastoral bishops." For "pastoral", read: agreeing with married clergy at the least and almost certainly on women priests and a range of other heterodox beliefs that go with the theological job lot.

Potent minority

Even if the woolly-minded Collins is half-accurate, there must be at least a small and potent minority within the Australian episcopacy that does not think with the mind of the Church.

Any orthodox Catholic with regular contact with the life of the Church in Australia outside of Sunday Mass knows that anything up to one-third of the clergy are effectively Protestant in belief, and the rest split between clergy who hold to the teaching of the magisterium as it is understood by the Pope and those bishops in communion with him, and a section in the middle who can be one way or the other in belief, but are effectively with the dissenters as long as no-one in authority forces them to make a choice.

magisterial authority – then the Church in Australia is definitely in a crisis of faith.

Thankfully, one archbishop has publicly disowned the petitioners directly and rejected the writings of the former auxiliary bishop of Sydney, Bishop Geoffrey Robinson, from which the petitioners draw comfort.

Hart address

The Archbishop of Melbourne, Denis Hart, saw to it that his 11 December address to the Melbourne Archdiocesan Council of Priests was published on the archdiocese's website.

After declaring to the Council of Priests, and through them to the Melbourne clergy, that the spiritual fruitfulness of their ministry as "priests of the Church and other Christs" lay in "our unity in Christ, with the Church and with each other", he addressed the issue of the petition and Bishop Robinson's book, *Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church: Reclaiming the Spirit of Jesus*.

Archbishop Hart referred to the petitioners and Bishop Robinson as “discordant voices pleading for a vision of the Church, which is not that of Jesus Christ and not that of our Holy Father and the Bishops.”

“I believe you need to be one with me in promoting only those things,

to the dispositions of the Holy See concerning who may be ordained to the priesthood.”

On Bishop Robinson, Archbishop Hart said that a “number of assertions” in the bishop’s book would “in due time, I am sure, be judged by the Church.” What can this mean if not

their diocesan papers to teach on the spiritually life-giving practice of celibacy for priests as the way to maintain and expand the Church.

“Reforms” rejected

Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett of Lismore, in the Christmas issue of his diocesan paper, *Catholic Life*, rejected the solutions of those Catholics who were “trying to pressure the Church into making changes she has no power to make, or calling for ‘reforms’ that have been repeatedly and with good reason rejected by longstanding and proven tradition.”

“Catholic means Catholic and we honour that title when we remain faithful to the universal teaching and practice of the Church, even if at times it might challenge our capacity to understand some particular point.”

Messages of support

The messages of support that Archbishop Hart’s office received, after his teaching was made public, show that Catholics are eager to hear the successors of the apostles defend the life-giving message of Jesus when other Catholics attack it. Insofar as other bishops don’t honour their first responsibility to preach, then their flocks will continue to be as the biblical flocks without shepherds – prone to the wolves in sheep’s clothing that dissenting bishops, priests, religious and laity represent.

** David Kehoe is a Melbourne journalist.*

“Grave harm is caused if an impression is created among the faithful that the Church teaching in these serious matters is in a state of flux or under review.”

– Denis Hart, Archbishop of Melbourne

which are consonant with the teaching and discipline of the Church, not allowing to be promoted in anyway in parishes or in bulletins anything which is contrary to that,” Archbishop Hart told the council, clearly having in mind the promotion of the petition from the pulpit in some Melbourne parishes. He also refused to endorse the public meeting held to promote the petition at Melbourne’s Camberwell Civic Centre on 22 November.

Epistle in writing

The Archbishop said he had told the petitioners in writing that the “Archdiocese of Melbourne now and in the future, will remain totally faithful

that the Vatican is investigating the book?

Archbishop Hart continued: “Grave harm is caused if an impression is created among the faithful that the Church teaching in these serious matters is in a state of flux or under review. Our mission is to teach and live constantly what the Magisterium teaches.”

He was not alone in teaching his flock on how to be a Catholic in the wake of the dissenting petition. Both Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Canberra and Goulburn and Bishop Kevin Manning of Parramatta used

The Old Mass: news from France

Traditional Catholics in France – despite obstruction, or worse, from numerous bishops in their land – are increasingly benefiting from the *motu proprio*. They are also increasingly vocal on the topic of the old rite.

Recently the newsletter of a French organisation called *Paix Liturgique* included an interview with Louis Renaudin, co-founder of the traditionalist group *Oremus*. Renaudin answered various questions regarding *Summorum Pontificum*, and what impact he thought it would have on liturgical life in France generally.

“We wish that liturgical peace may be established in France in 2008”, Renaudin said. “We wish that the year 2008 may bring about in reality, in our dioceses, the end of liturgical apartheid. ... The holy words of the Pope have confirmed that what we insistently ask is perfectly legitimate.”

He went on: “In theory, the *motu proprio* of 7 July 2007 changes everything! No, the Mass of St Pius V isn’t ‘forbidden’, it isn’t ‘integrist’, it isn’t ‘marginal’, it isn’t ‘obsolete’, it’s no longer ‘merely tolerated’ as a ‘merciful parenthesis’ for some senile dotards. The Mass of St Pius V was never abrogated or forbidden. This reminder has considerable consequences, because the religious segregation to which the faithful attached to the Church’s traditional liturgy have been subjected, was long justified by these falsehoods now swept away by the Holy Father himself.”

No French Catholic can be long unaware of the ecclesial problems specific to his country. Mass attendance is dismally low, even by Australian standards (5 per cent, according to a 2007 article in America’s *Newsweek*), although the media presence of Catholicism in high-quality French magazines would be the envy of many an Anglo-Saxon. Episcopal paranoia at the thought of propitiating “Lefebvrists” seems much more evident in France

Brieuc (*pictured*), in France’s north-west, the local bishop has granted permission for the Old Mass to be celebrated each Sunday.

Meanwhile the recently founded Institute of the Good Shepherd (*Institut du Bon Pasteur*) continues its work. The Institute’s Fr Paul Aulagnier – formerly of the Society of St Pius X – released on 30 December last year an open letter to Benedict XVI, urging that



than does any official concern for the laity’s overall spiritual welfare. Against these discouraging odds, green shoots of promise are sprouting forth.

Latin Masses with official approval were offered on 13 January at Rambouillet (south-west of Paris), and on 16 January in Paris proper, the latter as part of a Marian pilgrimage within the parish of Saint-Eugène-Sainte-Cécile. At the cathedral of St

the dossier on Archbishop Lefebvre be reopened. “Please, Most Holy Father,” Fr Aulagnier writes therein, “restore justice, repair injustice.” He notes in his open letter that even Archbishop Lefebvre’s criticisms of the *Novus Ordo* were not as astringent as those of Monsignor Klaus Gamber, whose book *The Reform of the Roman Liturgy* bears the honour of a preface by the then Cardinal Ratzinger. **O**

The return of the tonsure, wimple and soutane

With the quiet support of the Pope, France is seeing an explosion of traditional religious communities, says **Elisabeth von Thurn und Taxis***. This article originally appeared in Britain's *Catholic Herald*.

We are often told that the Church has to modernise, because the young, especially, can no longer relate to its teachings. It is sometimes even suggested that we should be grateful for a decline in vocations to priesthood: could this not be a sign from the Holy Spirit that the age of the laity is finally dawning? This eagerness to make a virtue out of a necessity finds its most radical conclusion in a booklet entitled *Church and Ministry* published in the Netherlands by a group of Dominican academics. One of them, Fr André Lascaris, recently explained his thesis in *The Tablet*.

Numbers of vocations to the priesthood in Holland are plummeting, and according to Fr Lascaris there is “no hope of a remedy for this situation.” Apart from his own remedy, of course. His proposal is clear and simple: “In the absence of ordained priests, lay persons should be allowed to celebrate the Eucharist.” He adds: “Whether they be men or women, homo or heterosexual, married or unmarried, is irrelevant.”

The beauty of all this, according to Fr Lascaris, is that it is “based on the statements of the Second Vatican

Council, and on publications of professional theologians and pastoral experts.”

Did the Second Vatican Council really say that? Are we really supposed to believe that the Holy Spirit deliberately manufactured a crisis in vocations, just to make way for the establishment of a new age of laity?

Laity's essential role

Of course, we laity have an essential role in the Church's evangelisation. We have the awesome responsibility of carrying the message of Jesus Christ to our contemporaries who are searching. If falling vocations force us to acknowledge this, and to act on it, then the Holy Spirit will indeed have brought much fruit from any current crisis.

But perhaps Fr Lascaris's Brave New Church of feminists concelebrating Mass in rainbow-coloured jilabas is not the only remedy to declining numbers of priests. A beautifully illustrated new book on the religious life in France suggests that there might be another solution. Reading the two books side by side you might be forgiven for assuming that the authors belong to two completely different religions.

If the photographs in *Les communautés traditionnelles en France* are anything to go by, then just across the Channel there lies a whole rich seam of Catholic religious life that is young, vibrant and growing.

Ratzinger's support

In addition to youthfulness and success, there are two other common features that unite the communities featured in this book. One is that they all have the extraordinary form of the Roman liturgy – the “traditional” rites liberated by Pope Benedict XVI's recent *Motu Proprio* – as the heart and foundation of their spirituality. The other is that many of them long enjoyed the steadfast, if unofficial support, of a certain well-placed cardinal in Rome. His name was Joseph Ratzinger.

There is no gain without pain and most of these eighteen communities have at some stage suffered from misunderstanding and prejudice. Before the *Motu Proprio* there was often intense pressure from unsympathetic ecclesiastical authorities to abandon all adherence to the “old rite”. But when the going was particularly rough, the abbots, prioresses and rectors of these institutes were sustained by the

knowledge that they had an influential friend in Rome – a friend who is now reigning as Pope Benedict XVI.

Cardinal's preface

Every pope has to be father to the whole Church. But looking through this book it does appear that the current incumbent of the See of Peter has a particular affection for his children of the traditionalist movement. On one page there is Cardinal Ratzinger swathed in full Tridentine pontificals, processing into a traditionalist seminary in Bavaria; on another he poses with tonsured monks in their cloister in Provence; elsewhere, we find him presiding at a conference promoting the traditional liturgy at the Benedictine Abbey of Fontgombault. Another indication of papal approval can be found in this book's enthusiastic preface by Cardinal Dario Castrillón Hoyos, one of the Pope's most loyal collaborators and head of the Vatican's Ecclesia Dei commission, which is charged with looking after traditionalist communities in communion with Rome. Cardinal Castrillón makes no excuse for this book's coffee-table format. "Go and teach all people,"

Jesus said to His disciples; in order to do this effectively in the modern world, says the Cardinal, we need to make good use of images.

Looking at these particular images it is not difficult to understand just why the Pope and his right-hand cardinal have invested so much hope in these communities. Whether it is Solemn Vespers in a great baroque abbey, or Low Mass celebrated on a rock in a clearing for scouts, the liturgical celebrations depicted in this book are all beautiful and dignified. The average age of the monks, nuns, friars and priests and seminarians is also remarkably young.

According to Cardinal Castrillón, this should not surprise us. The message that these communities pursue is the message of Jesus Christ. This message is eternal, and therefore forever young.

Entering another world

These intriguing photographs invite us to enter into another world. Despite the obvious challenges implicit in a daily life circumscribed by rules and traditions, the subjects of these

communities look remarkably happy. The text often talks of sacrifice and self-surrender, but the pictures show young faces that are smiling and laughing.

It would be foolish to allow glossy photographs to carry us into the realm of romanticism. No doubt the world, the flesh and the devil pose as many challenges to the religious life as they ever did. But there are no signs in this book of any of those particularly modern crises that seem to have dogged Catholic religious life in recent decades.

No identity crisis

There is certainly no hint of any crisis of clerical identity. These young clerics do not rely on jeans or Che Guevara T-shirts to make them feel connected to the youth; rather, it is the authenticity of their life that seems to make that connection. We see seminarians effortlessly skiing through the alps in long black soutanes, while nuns in crisply starched wimples gather hay in the fields outside Marseilles. At the high point of the traditionalist calendar – the annual Pentecost pilgrimage to Chartres – thousands of young pilgrims walk behind priests, monks and friars on the three-day march from Paris. Carrying crosses and banners, they all look very glad, and proud, to be Catholic.

Neither is there any evidence of a decline in vocations. The story of the Benedictine convent of Jouques is typical. Since its foundation near Aix-en-Provence in 1967 this community has attracted so many vocations to its novitiate that it has been necessary to open daughter houses elsewhere in France and in Africa to house the overflow.

Two of the Jouques nuns have also been commandeered to live in a convent in the grounds of the Vatican, as a result of a request made by



Oriens

Religious life

Cardinal Ratzinger before his election to the papacy. The fifty-five young nuns who remain in the mother house in Provence have become famous for their angelic singing of the daily office in Latin. At harvest time they can be found negotiating combines around the stony fields of their farm.

Monastic corona

The monks of Le Barroux, north of Avignon, still wear the corona – the full monastic tonsure depicted in mediaeval woodcuts and books of hours. After humble beginnings in a caravan in 1970 this community now worships in a mighty abbey church which the monks built themselves in the form of a Romanesque basilica. In the early hours of the morning, this building hums like a holy beehive as the many priest-monks celebrate their private Mass at side altars, served by novices and lay brothers. The extensive choir-stalls here are now so full that this monastery has been able to spare a detachment of young monks to found a daughter house not far from Toulouse.

All of the institutes featured in the book are run on strictly traditional principles. But this does not make them old-fashioned. Rather, it gives them a timelessness that many young people are finding increasingly attractive. Some of the communities are contemplative, but many are active. A good example is the Institute of Christ the King. From its picturesque Renaissance villa outside Florence, “The Institute” has gradually grown into a global conglomerate. In addition to serving parishes in France and America, it also runs several missionary stations in Africa.

The Regular Canonesses of the Mother of God, meanwhile, maintain a fine balance between the vocations of Mary and Martha. It is through contemplative adoration of the Blessed Sacrament that they gain the spiritual energy required in their work of

found in it a form of encounter with the Mysteries of the Most Holy Eucharist particularly suited to them.”

Perhaps Pope Benedict had a copy of this book open on his desk while he composed this letter. A huge percentage of those in these pictures

All of the new French institutes are run on strictly traditional principles. But this does not make them old-fashioned. Rather, it gives them a timelessness that many young people are finding increasingly attractive.

educating young girls and tending the old and the sick. Their convent at Gap has grown rapidly in numbers in the last couple of years, attracting young girls from all over France.

No ban

The recent *Motu Proprio* confirms what these communities have known all along: that the traditional Mass never was, and never really could be, abrogated. In his explanatory letter accompanying this decree the Holy Father stated that the extraordinary form of the liturgy is not just for an older generation that found innovation difficult to cope with. He wrote: “It has been clearly demonstrated that young persons, too, have discovered this liturgical form, felt its attraction and

look as if they would be far too young to remember anything of the liturgical upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s. Most of them look as if they were born after the introduction of the Missal of Pope Paul VI in 1970.

Venez et voyez says the cover of this fascinating book, quoting the words of Our Lord: “Come and see.” It is an invitation not to be declined. If there is really a crisis in vocations, *Les communautés traditionnelles en France* might contain the seeds of a solution that is challenging, attractive and, in its own way, really rather radical.

* Elisabeth von Thurn und Taxis is a writer and journalist. *La Nef*, Hors-série 20, Av: Les communautés traditionnelles en France is available from www.amazon.fr.

In search of a merciful God

Fr Paul Stenhouse MSC* provides a sobering analysis of Qu'ranic teachings.

Non-Muslims are perplexed by many Western TV productions and radio interviews that treat of Islam. Such programmes usually include segments of melodious Qur'anic chants, accompanied by images of smiling young people, and references to Islam as a merciful and peaceful religion – despite innumerable world-wide and continuing instances of barbarism, cruelty and mercilessness. The Islamist suicide-bombers, kidnappers and murderers carry out their deadly campaigns against non-Muslims and their fellow-Muslims while holding aloft copies of the Qur'an, and shouting verses from it to justify their alleged fidelity to its tenets. Tony Blair, echoing the constant politically-correct refrain of most Western leaders, recently described such Islamists as following a “distorted” view of Orthodox Islam.

How distorted is this view of the Islamists? The concepts of Forgiveness and Mercy are kept to the forefront of Islamic consciousness by the repetition of the familiar mantra *Bismillahi r-Rahmani r-Rahim*, “In the Name of Allah the Merciful and the Compassionate”, at the beginning of all correspondence, all public and private functions and especially all prayer. Known as the *Bismala*, this formula occurs 114 times in the Qur'an at the beginning of every Sura except the ninth.

The nature of the invocation and the form it takes is modelled on and reminiscent of the Catholic

practice of making the sign of the Cross. Tertullian,¹ Minucius Felix,² St Ambrose,³ St Augustine,⁴ St John Chrysostom⁵ *et alii* hundreds of years before Islam arose, remind Christians that from the moment of rising until they retire at night everything they do should be done “In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

Ambiguities & contradictions

To understand what follows – which is mainly concerned with what Islam teaches about mercy and forgiveness, and not just what the spin-doctors would have us believe Islam teaches – one must appreciate the degree of equivocation not to say confusion that exists in the Qur'an and the Islamic Tradition (Sunna). Ambiguities, anachronisms and contradictions abound.

When Islamists say that the Qur'an reveals a merciful God they are telling the truth; one of Allah's names is “Merciful” (Sura 17,110). But Allah can also be merciless (Sura 4,48). They also speak the truth when they say, for example, that Muslims and non-Muslims have equal rights in Islamic countries. But the truth is not what it seems.

Allah is merciful and compassionate, and Muslims believe that he is “the most merciful of those who show mercy” (Suras: 7, 151; 12,64; 21,83; etc). But, according to the Qur'an, God's mercy is not bestowed upon all his creatures indiscriminately. Not everyone, according to Islamic teaching, is worthy of his mercy.⁶

The rub is that, according to the Qur'an, Allah loves only Muslims, he does not love the unbelievers and unrighteous (Suras: 2,276; 3,32, 57,140; 4,107). He is the “enemy” of the unbelievers (Sura 2,98). He does not extend mercy towards infidels, and even forbids Muslims to pray for them or to ask pardon for them (Sura 9,84,113-114).

Allah's mercy is reserved for *Muslims* – it doesn't extend to those who refuse to accept the “da'wa” or “invitation to submit to Allah as Muslims.” God will not forgive those who reject faith (Suras: 4,168; 9,80; 63,5-6) and who persist in doing evil (Sura 4,18). He shows no mercy to those who worship any god but himself (Sura 4,48, 116). Muslims are to be “hard of heart” towards unbelievers, but “merciful” towards one another (Sura 48,29; 16,88). God will not accept death-bed repentance (Suras: 4,18; 6,158; 23,63-67, 99-101; 38,3; etc etc). Nor will he accept angelic or human intercession (Suras: 2,123; 3,192; 4,109; 10,27; 39,54; etc).

Doctrine of fate

All this has to be filtered through the Islamic and Qur'anic doctrine of predestination and fate (Suras: 15,4-5; 16,35; 18, 57-58; etc). And also God's alleged fostering a predisposition to evil among sinners (Sura 2, 7, 10, 15) and the fact that, according to the Qur'an, God is not impartial, he favours (and, implicitly, forgives) whomever he chooses to favour and forgive (Suras: 2,105, 4,48-49; 6,83-88; 10,107; 33,17; etc).

Muddying the water for Christians and Jews who may be inclined to think that Islamic Law considers them to be acceptable objects of God's mercy, is the widespread and ineradicable association in Islamic consciousness of the terms "*mushrikun*" (polytheists), "*kafirun, kuffar*" (infidels, unbelievers), with Christians and Jews – despite the Meccan Suras that allegedly bestow privileged status on the "People of the Book". This is because the few verses favourable to Christians and Jews in the Qur'an (much quoted by Islamist sympathisers and beguiled Western commentators) have been abrogated, annulled, by Sura 9,5, the so-called Verse of the Sword,⁷ and other Suras like 2,216 and 47,4.

In fact, the Qur'an says, heaping insult upon insult, "God will destroy" the Christians who say the Messiah is God's Son, and the Jews who worship Usair (Ezra?) as God's Son (Sura 9,30).

Islamic literature is full of bellicose terms like these, especially when describing Jihads.⁸ It has persisted down to today – with consequences like September 11, 2001, and continuing radical Islamist terror against the much-mocked "People of the Book," on the grounds of their alleged faithlessness and polytheism. There is an all-out war declared on "unbelievers", (Suras: 2,216; 8,39; 47,4) and this term includes Christians and Jews (Sura 9,29).

Of course there are Equal Rights in Islamic countries for all the citizens: Muslims are equal *with other Muslims*; and Christians are equal *with other Christians*, but Muslims and Christians are not equal. That is impossible, because God hates infidels, and he is their "enemy" (Sura 2,98).

In practice, however, Qur'anic looseness of phraseology and ambiguity exposes Muslims to inequality even amongst themselves. Such equality as

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exists depends on the race, colour, sect, tribe, wealth and language of the Muslims in question. Hence the lack of mercy and forgiveness shown to fellow Muslims in the continuing Iraqi so-called insurgency in which Sunni murder Shi'a (and vice-versa) and Arabs murder Persians, apparently without a qualm. In Darfur, Arab Muslims murder their poorer black African coreligionists mercilessly.

To comprehend this "anomaly", non-Muslims must realise that even in the time of the greatest of the Islamic intellectuals,⁹ Islamic Law (Shari'a) whose foundation is the Qur'an, and whose ostensible purpose is to direct the body politic and regulate every aspect of the life of believers, was clearly not doing so.

This has been noted recently by a commentator on the killing-fields of the Sudan: "The pure Islamist theory of transcendental struggle and divinely sanctioned violence to achieve the Kingdom of God is theoretically bankrupt, and politically impossible."¹⁰ All the more so, because, despite its rhetoric, the Qur'an leaves no room for a God who genuinely has mercy and compassion for his creation.

Non-Muslims take no satisfaction in pointing out these flaws inherent in the Qur'an, which many good people take to be God's word and use as the touchstone for their conduct and beliefs. But unhappy experience from the time of Muhammad's many bloody raids on his non-Muslim neighbours to the time of writing, has shown that to ignore these flaws, as many Westerners prominent in politics and the media seem to ignore them, will inevitably have fatal consequences for those who do so.

NOTES

1. *De Cor Mil.* c.iii.
2. See Justin Martyr, *Apol.* 2
3. *Sermones*, 43, 56.
4. *Serm.* 53, "De Verbo Dei".
5. *Contra Judaeos et Gentiles quod Christus sit Deus*; Hom. 50 "In S. Matthaicum"; etc.
6. For this, and for much of the following comment on the Qur'anic suras, see two articles by Daniel C. Petersen: "Mercy", *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, vol 3, Brill, 2003, pp.277-280; and "Forgiveness", *op.cit.*, vol 2, pp.244-245.
7. See also verse 29.
8. See *Furuk al-Habasha, The Conquest of Abyssinia [Sixteenth Century]* by Shihab ad-Din Ahmad bin 'Abd al-Qader bin Salem bin 'Uthman, translated by Paul Stenhouse, Tsehai Press, California, 2003, *passim*.
9. Muhammad al-Chazali (died 1111AD).
10. *Islamism and its Enemies in the Horn of Africa*, Alex de Wohl ed., Shama Books, Addis Ababa 2004, p.22.

* *Fr Paul Stenhouse MSC PhD is Editor of Annals Australasia, and this article originally appeared in that magazine's March 2007 issue.*



Land prices and the moral law

John Young* discusses land-based principles that need to be borne in mind for lasting economic health.

How can young people afford to buy a house in the suburbs of our capital cities? Often they can't, particularly in Melbourne and, especially, Sydney. Does this situation signify some radical deformity in the economic system, some violation of natural moral laws?

A deeper question underlies that one: the question of the extent to which there are natural moral laws in the economic sphere. Just as the Ten Commandments express natural moral laws by which we should live, there are, I maintain, principles specific to the economic order which must be observed if economic society is to be healthy.

A study of that generally overlooked subject would view society from the standpoint of the free person and the common good, it would analyse the price system and the nature of competition, it would consider the place of the government in relation to the economy, it would ask whether economics at its deepest level is actually a part of moral philosophy.

In this article I just want to look at the question introduced above: land prices. I will argue that the current dilemma comes from violating the rational order pertaining to the wealth that arises from land.

Why is a block of land in the city more valuable than a physically identical block in the country? Clearly because of the population surrounding it and the improvements in the vicinity, such as roads and other amenities. There are more social and cultural advantages, greater business opportunities and so on.

Add to this the fact that land can't be manufactured and we see how fortunes can be made without the landowner doing a single day's work on his piece of real estate. If, say, tables and chairs were in unusual demand, their price would rise – but not for long. A greater

or a beautiful view, the recipient should be society – not the individual landowner.

The government should levy the owner on an annual basis, the amount depending on the value of the site. Of course we do have land taxes now, but

Just as the Ten Commandments express natural moral laws by which we should live, there are principles specific to the economic order which must be observed if economic society is to be healthy.

quantity of tables and chairs would be manufactured to meet the demand, and the competition would reduce the price to its previous level.

That can't happen with land. So there is an inherent monopoly element for scarce real estate.

A solution

So what should be done? We are speaking only of the “unimproved capital value” as it is called, not of improvements. Since the value of the site, disregarding improvements, arises from benefits bestowed by society and, usually to a lesser extent, from physical features such as valuable minerals

often of a very clumsy kind. Let us note some advantages of the system I am advocating.

1. The amount taken by the government is determined by the market, not by arbitrary government decree, because the selling price of the land depends on the market.
2. Whereas taxes increase prices, land revenue taken by the government decreases the price of land. This happens because the price I pay when I buy a piece of real estate is a capitalisation of the benefits I expect over the years: the greater the benefits I anticipate the more I will be willing to pay for the land.

But if I know I will have to pay site revenue to the government each year, this must cause a drop in the price. Land usually increases in value, and the buying price reflects the anticipated increase. But if I know I will not benefit, because the government will take more, the speculative element in land prices will vanish.

3. This payment can't be evaded. I can't hide my land; I can't send it offshore.
4. The taking of site revenue by the government causes no distortion of production. As economists Samuelson and Nordhaus say: "A tax on pure economic rent will lead to no distortions or inefficiencies" (*Economics*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1995, p. 244). There is no

1. Boom and bust conditions would be greatly reduced. Under present conditions, with land revenue remaining almost entirely in private hands, speculation in land is a major cause of recessions. People buy property with a large land component, usually borrowing a lot to help pay for it, then wait for it to rise in price. Prices go up, fuelled by the gambling urge to make a profit. The market finally sees that prices are too high; a crash and bankruptcies follow. But if the state appropriated the increased value, land speculation would cease, thus eliminating this major cause of economic disruption.
2. Privilege and corruption would be greatly lessened. Those who reap benefits to which they have no right are in a privileged position compared with other people.

rare, for it is the land price, not the house price, that imposes the major burden on buyers. Young families would be free from financial slavery to the banks. As things are today the total interest payments over the years are usually more than the combined price of house and land.

Historical background

The special place of land was clearer to the ancient Israelites than to modern societies. In the Old Testament the book of Leviticus sets out legislation to provide against exploitation of land ownership. Permanent alienation of a family's land was not allowed. If sold, it was to be restored to the family within fifty years, at the Jubilee, and the sale price took into consideration the number of years remaining before restoration had to be made. In the Jubilee year, "all that is sold shall return to the owner, and to the ancient possessor" (Leviticus 25:28).

In the Middle Ages land owners had special responsibilities to society, as in being obliged to provide fully equipped soldiers when the sovereign needed them, and to maintain roads. Revenue from Church lands provided for education and gave help to the poor. There were extensive common lands for the use of all.

St Thomas Aquinas was asked about the morality of forms of taxation. The matter was put to him by the Duchess of Brabant, who was the daughter of the King of France, St Louis IX. St Thomas replied that a sovereign's own lands should be the primary source of revenue. If there was still insufficient revenue, taxes having the sanction of established custom should be levied. Other taxes should only be resorted to if these proved inadequate. (St Thomas Aquinas, *Ad Ducissam Brabantiae*, Marietta [1954], *Opuscula Phil.*, pp. 249-252).

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decrease in the supply of land, and the demand remains; but now instead of going into private hands, the revenue replaces taxation.

The four considerations above show advantages of site revenue over taxation. Now let us glance at some benefits apart from those pertaining to taxation.

Further, possession of land confers power over the landless. Then there is the corruption associated with rezoning: those in the know can often make a fortune by buying early.

3. With the proposed system in full operation, land prices would be low. Crippling mortgages would be

“That you should sing My praise and glory”

R. J. Stove on the life and legacy of a great nineteenth-century Catholic composer, Anton Bruckner.

One of Sir Isaiah Berlin's best-known essays is “The Hedgehog and the Fox”, which takes its title from a maxim by an obscure ancient Greek poet, Archilochus: “The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing.” Berlin used this dichotomy to classify two sorts of writer (without attempting to suggest the superiority of one sort over the other). Foxes are eclectic, “scattered or diffused” in thought, “pursu[ing] many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory”; hedgehogs, on the other hand, have an “unchanging, all-embracing ... unitary inner vision”. Among foxes, Berlin listed Shakespeare, Montaigne, Pushkin, Goethe, and Balzac; among hedgehogs, he listed Dante, Pascal, Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche and Proust. Berlin concentrated on authors, but his classification is equally appropriate to the other arts.

Anton Bruckner might be called the hedgehog's hedgehog, because he refracted his entire creative life through the sensibility of his changeless Catholic devotion. The phrase ascribed to Pasteur – “I have the faith of a Breton peasant, and I hope, before I die, to have the faith of a Breton peasant's wife” – could equally well have been said by Bruckner. If he heard church bells while giving a lecture, he would fall to

his knees and pray. None of his chief musical contemporaries, except for the Walloon-born but French-domiciled César Franck, possessed anything like Bruckner's uncomplicated *pietas*. Against, in particular, most leading Teutonic composers of his time, he cut an incongruous figure indeed: against Wagner the mythic pagan; Brahms the tepid Protestant who often seemed no more than a deist; Johann Strauss the suave, euphoric and matrimonially eventful entertainer. Unlike all three of these men (even Brahms), Bruckner had no gift for self-promotion. He needed to be sought out. So he does even now, well over a century after his death.

There are those who instinctively recoil against Bruckner's music, finding it dull and enervating. Above all, his nine canonical symphonies – two other symphonies, student pieces both, appeared only posthumously – have been often censured for their length, thickness of texture, and sameness of emotion. But for anyone temperamentally attuned to coming under the spell of Bruckner's majestic art, such criticisms soon seem mere glib excuses. Those on whom this spell operates find that his most characteristic utterances have not only a powerful appeal, but a lasting one. Ernst Kurth,

a German musicologist writing in the 1920s, remarked: “Bruckner will be ready for the world when the world has to flee to him for refuge.”

Moreover, Bruckner's most severe antagonists tend to be persons who find his religion uncongenial. To such



individuals one can only say, as Richard Strauss once teasingly said to someone who admitted a failure to appreciate *Der Rosenkavalier*: “What a shame for you!”

Working as organist

Although Bruckner spent the last three decades of his life in Vienna, he came originally from Ansfelden in northern Austria (the home where he was born on 4 September 1824 is now a museum in his honour), and never lost his rustic bluntness. His black, baggy

Oriens

Music

peasant attire, worn in all weathers, made him stand out among the elegant Viennese even more than did his thickset build, crew-cut coiffure, and bullet head. Before arriving in Vienna he had worked as organist at St Florian – an Augustinian monastery near Linz – and he continued to play the organ thereafter, occasionally giving recitals in Paris and London as well as nearer home. (When accorded an honorary doctorate, he responded with eloquent

or for Pius XII, the subsequent belief among certain American ultra-traditionalists that Catholics must shun Wagner like the devil); after finishing his Second and Third Symphonies, he took both scores along to Wagner, hoping to be able to dedicate to his hero whichever piece Wagner preferred. Unfortunately the sheer excitement of meeting Wagner caused Bruckner to drink so much beer that he promptly forgot which symphony the great man

– particularly the Seventh Symphony, written as a Wagner memorial – yet in no sense a direct imitation.

Admirers and detractors

Always Bruckner had admirers, especially after he became professor of organ and music theory at the Vienna Conservatorium. Some of these admirers overtly championed him, including the conductor Hans Richter, whose rehearsals of the Fourth Symphony pleased Bruckner so much that he insisted on giving Richter a silver coin: “Take this, and drink a mug of beer to my health.” (The gesture so touched Richter that instead of spending the coin, he kept it on his watch-chain.) Bruckner’s retirement from the professorship, in 1891, occasioned an official eulogy to his powers as a teacher.

In contrast to César Franck, who managed to train almost the entire officer caste of late nineteenth-century French music, Bruckner did not have a whole group of brilliant protégés. Mahler and Hugo Wolf never formally studied with Bruckner, though they eagerly defended him. Nonetheless his students continued to cherish his memory long afterwards. One of them, the subsequent Viennese journalist Max Graf, reported:

“When Bruckner left the lecturer’s table and sat at the old piano which stood beside it, to play one of his symphonies, one could understand the religious background of his music. In its highest climaxes the themes are transformed into hymns. Sometimes the music sounds ... like the organ – and what are the abrupt pauses of his symphonic music if not the Elevation of the Host in the Mass, when the priest lifts up the chalice, the bell is rung thrice, and the

“Bruckner will be ready for the world when the world has to flee to him for refuge.”

– Ernst Kurth, *German musicologist*

naïveté: “I cannot find the words to thank you as I would wish, but if there were an organ here, I could tell you.”)

Punitive instruction

Meanwhile he submitted himself to punitive compositional instruction – mostly by correspondence – from an appallingly prolific Viennese pedagogue named Simon Sechter, who wrote no fewer than five thousand fugues, and who inculcated in his charge a similar diligence, albeit with less spectacularly abundant results. Sechter’s teaching accentuated Bruckner’s natural modesty, which made him continue undergoing lessons and exams long after he might have been expected to start taking some pride in what he had already done. Following his splendid playing in one organ test, a judge commented: “This man should be examining *us*.”

There was always something for Bruckner to be diffident about, particularly after he had discovered Wagner’s work. Wagner left Bruckner flabbergasted with admiration (not for Bruckner,

liked better. On realising this lapse, he frantically scribbled a note to Wagner, who replied by saying that it was the Third which he especially admired.

Even this favourable verdict could not prevent Bruckner from incessantly revising most of his symphonies, these revisions being a minefield for subsequent editors, who have bitterly quarrelled with one another as to which amendments are justified in musical terms and which were forced on him by outside opinion. In his dozens of wonderful sacred compositions, strangely enough, he avoided such tinkering. He seemed to gain fortitude from the sixteenth-century heritage of choral polyphony, which – thanks in part to Sechter’s example – meant so much to him. Paradoxically, the sacred works derive from recognisably the same pen as the symphonies. All are grave, solemn, short on vivacity (Vienna’s wits called Bruckner “*der Adagio-Komponist*”, “the *Adagio* composer”), apt to halt in portentous silences, clearly influenced by Wagner

worshipper kneels and bows his head? ... He pondered over chords and chord associations as a mediaeval architect must have contemplated the mysteries of arches, rose windows, and buttresses. They were his path to the Kingdom of God."

Alas for Bruckner, his detractors included Brahms – who referred with scorn to Bruckner's "symphonic bo-constrictors" – and Vienna's leading music critic, Eduard Hanslick, whose invective terrified Bruckner into begging the Emperor Franz Josef: "Oh, Your Majesty, please stop that man Hanslick from writing horrible things about me."

Excruciating loneliness

Some composers can console themselves for public humiliations by a comfortable domestic life. Not Bruckner, who spent most of his days in excruciating loneliness. Awkward by any standards (let alone Viennese standards) with women, he had a habit of proposing marriage to ladies whom he scarcely knew. The one time where matrimony might have resulted, it came to nothing; the woman's father, a Lutheran, forbade it on religious grounds. Bruckner's nerves periodically overcame him, a severe breakdown in 1867 having confined him to hospital for three months; and he never lost an obsession with numbers, which led him not only to write down the prayers he said each day, but to count the turrets on buildings, the leaves on trees, windows, weather-vanes, church crosses, even buttons. Which makes it all the sadder that he should have died, apparently, without a priest present. On the last afternoon of his life, 11 October 1896 (during the morning he had worked on his Ninth Symphony's finale), he suddenly felt ill, asked his housekeeper for some hot tea, went to bed, and there passed away.

It is to Bruckner's credit that his output, even at its most agitated, conveys a fundamental serenity of aim which suggests a kind of inspired somnambulism. In accordance with his unworldly detachment, he talked of his Maker with a frankness more mediaeval than modern. Not long before his death he informed an astonished well-wisher: "He [God] will say: 'Why else have I given you talent, you



*Bruckner conducting:
a silhouette by Otto Böhlér*

son of a bitch, than that you should sing My praise and glory? But you have accomplished much too little.'"

As for his compositional worries, let us note that he insisted on depositing in Vienna's Court Library (*Hofbibliothek*) his original manuscripts – however comprehensively they had been worked over at others' behest – for future generations to scrutinise. He deserves to have the last word:

"They want me to compose in a different way. I could, but I must not. Out of thousands, God gave talent to me ... One day, I shall have to give an account of myself. How would the Father in Heaven judge me if I followed others and not Him?"

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A (very) selective Bruckner discography

Each of Bruckner's symphonies (including the long-suppressed student works latterly known as "No. 0" and "No. 00") is now accessible, several times over, on Compact Disc. Two notable series – both at bargain price – are conducted by, respectively, Georg Tintner (eleven discs, only available separately, produced by Naxos) and Eugen Jochum (nine discs, only available as a boxed set, produced by EMI, and omitting 0 and 00). Herbert von Karajan, Otto Klemperer, and Carl Schuricht recorded outstanding interpretations of specific symphonies, all available in stereo (and thus without the sonic limitations of older, much-admired versions such as Wilhelm Furtwängler's). Since conductors seldom agree on which editions to use, Bruckner symphony recordings differ from one another not solely in their modes of performance but also in the actual music they contain.

The only complete edition of Bruckner's sacred music currently available is another Jochum set, this one released by Deutsche Grammophon in a four-CD box. Two single-disc selections from Bruckner's liturgical corpus have been issued on the Hyperion label: one consisting solely of short pieces, with the Corydon Singers conducted by Matthew Best; and the other combining seven miniatures with the expansive *Mass in E Minor*, this disc performed by the Polyphony Ensemble and Britten Sinfonia under Stephen Layton. – RJS

The right man for the job

Prince of the Church: Patrick Francis Moran, 1830-1911, by Philip Ayres; Melbourne, Miegunyah Press, 2007; 384 pp.

Reviewed by Martin Sheehan

Philip Ayres' new book, *Prince of the Church*, is a vivid portrait of the man who was, arguably, Australia's greatest churchman, Patrick Francis Moran. Ayres' book uncovers many interesting and intriguing facts about Moran, particularly his early life in Ireland and in Rome, and his relationship to the Irish Church and the Irish nationalist movement, as well as his huge influence on the development of the Australian Catholic Church in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

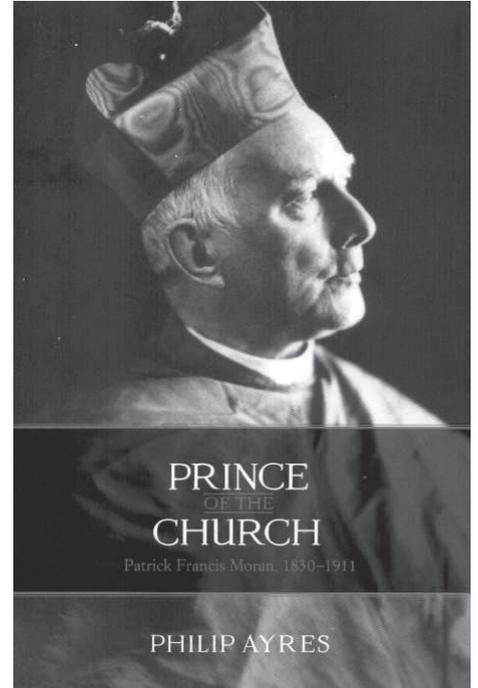
I first encountered Moran as a teenager in the pages of Vance Palmer's excellent little book, *National Portraits*, originally published in 1940. Palmer's Moran was a cosmopolitan, cultured figure, a man whose long years at various posts inside the Vatican bureaucracy had mellowed his allegiance to Irish nationalism. The Moran described in Palmer's essay was highly suited to the largely Protestant-secular culture of the early colony of New South Wales. Refraining from partisan polemic, he wooed the local political and social Establishment with his refined intellect and his diplomatic approach to Church-State relations.

Combative character

This is not a portrait that accords with Philip Ayres' view of Moran, however, and his role in the Australian

Church. Ayres' Moran is a far more pugnacious and combative character, quite prepared to poke the local Protestant Establishment in the eye and offend their sensibilities if he felt Catholic Truth needed defence. Far from being the consummate diplomat, Moran comes across in Ayres' book as a prelate with little feel for the opinions of others, certainly not for the beliefs and culture of local Protestants.

Indeed, he comes across as someone who, it could be argued, contributed to the ghettoisation of Australian Catholics by his intransigence and his unwillingness to allow Catholics to integrate into the wider non-Catholic community of New South Wales. Moran also had a somewhat baleful influence on the nascent Catholic culture of the Australian colonies. Under his predecessor – the English Benedictine, Archbishop Roger Vaughan – the Church in New South Wales was influenced by English Catholicism, with its cultured and aristocratic forms of worship, its attachment to the Church's ancient liturgical musical tradition. Moran changed all that, replacing English with Irish clergy where he could, and doing away with much of the English liturgical forms that had thrived under Vaughan.



Reinforcing difference

But Ayres makes a strong case for understanding Moran's approach in the context of the political and social realities of life for most Catholics of Irish origin in Australia. Facing a dominant Anglo-Protestant culture in the colony, and increasing pressure from a political class wishing to implement compulsory secular education for all Australian children regardless of denomination, Moran felt obliged to reinforce what made Catholics different from other Australians.

To that end, Moran set out to build a distinctly Australian Church, though one dominated and guided by Irish Catholic forms of worship and culture. One way in which he achieved this was through the establishment of an Australian seminary at St Patrick's, Manly, for the training of an

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Genuine Catholic liturgical sense

The Heresy of Formlessness: The Roman Liturgy and its Enemy, by Martin Mosebach (translated from the German by Graham Harrison); San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 2006; 210 pp.

Reviewed by Gary Scarrabelotti

This is a remarkable book and its author has a remarkable gift.

This is the power of penetrating our ordinary – and sometimes out-of-the-ordinary – actions to the meanings that lie behind them. Such is the work especially of the novelist, the essayist, and the poet. Martin Mosebach is all of these, and, after having read and then re-read this book, I lamented my ignorance of his native German and the fact that his other work is closed to me.

Outwardly *The Heresy of Formlessness* appears to be a set of stand-alone essays strung together more or less loosely by the theme of liturgy. At first, I thought, there are some brilliant pieces here, but the whole lacks sufficient unity, the later essays appear to tail-off toward the end. On a second reading I took a different view. This is a work of art. The trailing essays with their apparent repetitions and superfluties restate and reinforce while, with the introduction of a new subject, the Missal as icon, the book closes with a magnificent recapitulation and finale.

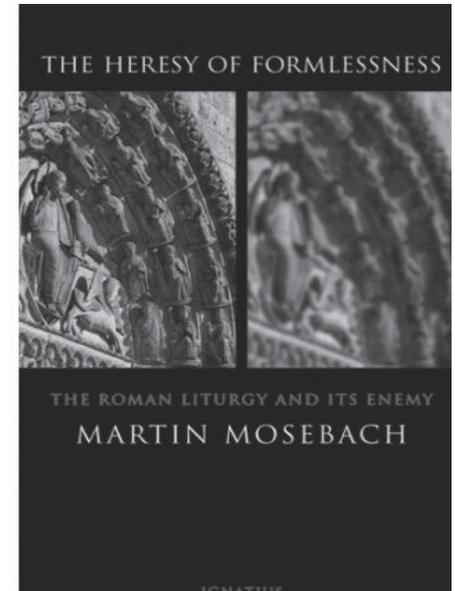
Second time around, I was bowled over.

Mosebach's central proposition is that a liturgy in which we separate *form* from *content* is a liturgy that, ultimately, disintegrates. A liturgy that changes form changes meaning; and a liturgy in which we deny significance

to form is a liturgy that can sustain no meaning however much we might want it to signify one thing or another. One cannot take a form and declare it to have any meaning. Forms only bear the meanings native to them. To force the issue destroys the form and loosens our connection with the meanings it once contained.

For an artist who deals with concrete things – “I am a Stone Age man” – and who reads their surface for the meanings they contain – “all matter is so full of spirit and life that they simply pour from it” – the abstract dividing of form and content makes it impossible to understand what the senses experience. This is not a problem just for artists. It is a problem for theologians, philosophers, and scientists. To insist upon knowing things strictly at the abstract level – which is what is involved in saying that form is inferior and disposable while only content matters – is an implicit denial of sensory experience as the basis of human knowledge and of the materiality with which truth, both natural and supernatural, has been embodied: “He who sees me sees the Father.” We do not rely on pure abstraction to know God. We have a flesh and blood Christ to deal with – and one who is still among us, and can be seen in the liturgy.

Extending the implications of this, Mosebach argues that the question *What constitutes a valid Mass?* is not a



liturgical question properly speaking. God is not confined to some valid minimum formula beyond which He does not act in, or is not present in, the liturgy – a misconceived notion which has led people to conclude that beyond the “essential core” of the Mass lies a field of non-essential, changeable, and ultimately disposable elements. If God is present in liturgy at all, He is present in the whole liturgy, and He is present wholly in that liturgy. To participate in the liturgy is not to be present in some abstract way with the Word. It is not to intersect immaterially with it, so to say, at some fine geometrical point at the centre of the consecration formula. It is, rather, to encounter the historical Jesus in the flesh, to reach out from the crowd and to touch the hem of His cloak, just as really as if we were stretching out a hand from the jostling crowd as He passed us by down some dusty lane in Galilee. We see Him, we hear Him, we receive Him in a single, completed liturgical action – which brings us to the question of the rubrics.

The purpose of the rubrics is to form the priest as a human personality to become invisible within – or

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perhaps one should say “transparent to” – the liturgical action in order that the *persona* who acts in, and through, him becomes visible to the worshippers: hence the vestments, the sacred furnishings, the highly disciplined orchestration of the ritual actions. The person of the celebrant disappears and the Son walks among us again. How wonderful!

And, finally, the great point. If it is God who acts in the liturgy then those actions are His and not ours, and consequently they cannot be changed, at least not changed arbitrarily. Liturgy comes to us not as the “work of human hands” but from God himself. Liturgy is, in fact, a revelation of God no less than that contained in Scripture.

“Jesus and his disciples, and the first Christians, were aware of the fact that if they were fully to grasp Jesus’ message, it was not enough to hand on his teachings faithfully ... If these teachings were to have their effect, it was essential for the disciples to have the experience and know the influence of Jesus, bodily present. And if the liturgy is to be this manifestation of the bodily Jesus, essential for the Christian life, it must be possible to experience it as something that is not a human artifact but something given, something revealed. Thus Basil the Great ... regarded the Mass as a revelation that is just as great as Holy Scripture, and consequently he strictly forbade anyone to alter or refashion it.”

To the modern, ratiocinating Western Catholic this idea, central to the liturgical thinking of the Eastern Church, would come as a shock. The greater the shock, the more powerful the instinct to reject it, and, I suggest, the more powerful the instinct, the greater the measure of how far we have travelled in the West from a proper

understanding of our liturgy. It is not an idea that most Western Catholics – whether liberal, conservative, or traditionalist – can easily accommodate. Embedded, nevertheless, in this book

We do not
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know God.

– as also in Joseph Ratzinger’s *Spirit of the Liturgy* – is the conviction that to recover in the West the genuine Catholic liturgical sense will require a turning to the East that is both ritual and theological.

The Heresy of Formlessness is, to my mind, one of the most powerful, accessible, and effective books written on the liturgical question. If you want to understand it, you cannot ignore this book.

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The right man for the job*

indigenous clergy to serve the needs of the local Church. His elevation to Cardinal also proved a boost for the Australian Church, and was even seen by many local Protestants as a mark of distinction and a sign of maturity for the rapidly developing society of colonial Sydney.

Perhaps Moran’s greatest triumph was the influence he gained over the development of the early Australian Labor Party and the broader trade union movement. With its ideological roots in English secularism and socialism, the early ALP could easily have become an anti-Catholic force in the new Australian Commonwealth

at the start of the twentieth century, dedicated to eradicating religion from society and potentially turning many working-class Irish Catholics away from their Church.

Reformism and ameliorism

Despite his own conservative and aristocratic inclinations, Moran had the foresight to see that most of his working-class, trade-unionist flock viewed the ALP as their natural political home and as the champion of their values. Moran therefore threw the moral weight of the Church behind the developing a trade union movement and the early ALP, guiding them away from more radical forms of socialism and towards a reformist and ameliorist commitment to social justice. In doing this, Australia owes a great debt to Moran for restraining the more radical and extremist tendencies in the Australian labour movement, thus probably avoiding the kind of violent class conflict that existed in Europe at that time and later.

Moran emerges from Ayres’ fine book as a giant not only of the early Australian Church, but also of the wider Roman Catholic Church at the end of the nineteenth century. Despite his many faults, Moran was the right man for the job, gaining greater respect for Australia’s Catholics at a time when they were struggling against a largely hostile and alien Australian community. More than any other early prelate, Moran established the Australian Church, giving it a distinctly Australian outlook and directing it outwards towards Asia. Ayres’s highly readable and scholarly account of Moran’s life should contribute greatly to a deeper understanding of Moran’s highly significant and unique contribution to the establishment of Catholicism in Australia.

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In the eighteenth century the land question was central to the thinking of the Physiocrats and of Thomas Spence, William Ogilvie and Thomas Paine. Adam Smith pointed out that land revenue taken by the government does not raise the rent of houses and does not discourage industry. “Nothing can be more reasonable than that a fund which owes its existence to good government of the state should be taxed peculiarly, or should contribute something more than the greater part of other funds towards the support of that government” (Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, London, Dent [1960 reprint], book V, chapter 2, p. 325 [volume 2]).

The concept I have outlined was developed especially by the American economist Henry George (1839-1897). His book *Progress and Poverty* became an outstanding best-seller, and is still in print today. He contended that land should be left in private hands, but that the ground rent (an economic term for the wealth arising from natural advantages and the activity of society) should be taken by the government in place of taxation.

The idea became very popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with support from Winston Churchill in England, Sun Yat-sen in China, and many other political leaders. It was a plank of the Australian Labor Party platform for many years.

It is no longer fashionable; but neither are a lot of other good ideas. With the present awareness of the critical, and worsening, plight of people with mortgages and those desperate to own a home, it is urgent that this proposed solution be studied – and implemented. The amassing of unearned wealth from mere possession of land is, I contend, a first cousin of usury.

** John Young, of Melbourne, has written and lectured extensively on philosophy and theology. His book The Natural Economy explores the question of natural moral laws in the economic sphere. His booklet Economics is for Everyone deals more briefly with the same topics.*

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undergo personal sacrifice is one of the marks of a magnanimous man or woman.

The importance of sacrifice, indeed of *the* sacrifice, is manifested in the care taken in the preparation of the altar in many places where the traditional Mass is celebrated. The Altar plays an extremely pivotal role in the life of Catholics. The Altar is where the unbloody Sacrifice of Calvary is offered and the sacrifice is directed to God. As such the Altar symbolises God. Magnanimity is demanded with regards to the construction of the altar itself (and especially so in the traditional rite). The altar should be made of worthy material and should be *objectively beautiful*. Something is objectively beautiful which possesses order, proportion, integrity and clarity. St John Vianney never spared expense nor labour in beautifying his parish church at Ars for the worship of Almighty God.

Magnanimity is likewise demanded of both the priest and faithful. Time and labour are needed in order to make the necessary preparations of the Holy Liturgy, especially for the great feast days of the Church. The maintenance of the altar antependia (frontals), candlesticks and sacred linens takes time and sacrifice. The generosity of the faithful who maintain the material needs of the Church building and its furnishings allows the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to be offered with dignity and with fittingness. The Saints took particular delight in rendering their service to the service of the sanctuaries of Churches. It is related in the life of St Clare of Assisi that she spent much time embroidering sacred linens for the use of the different churches in the surrounding region of Assisi and it gave her great consolation to have been able to contribute her services which directly related to the Divine Liturgy. Would that more of

the faithful realised how much their services are appreciated by the priests and the abundant graces that God would bedew them with for their dedication to the material preparation for the holy liturgy!

Magnanimity and humility are two virtues very much needed in the Church today. The generosity we give to God should reflect the gratitude we owe Him for His manifold benefits to us especially for the gift of the traditional rite of the Mass. Let us recall also His promise to us: “Be thou faithful until death: and I will give thee the crown of life” (Apoc. 2:10).

** Fr Duncan Wong, of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter, is currently the director of Ezechiel House Novitiate – located at Petersham, Sydney – for men who feel called to be sanctified in a Society of Apostolic Life rooted in the age-old traditions of the Church.*

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The sacred liturgy and the practice of virtue

Fr Duncan Wong FSSP* discusses the connection between the virtue of magnanimity and the traditional rite of Mass.

Judge me, O God, and distinguish my cause from the nation that is not holy: deliver me from the unjust and deceitful man. (Psalm 42)

The spiritual life of every Catholic is necessarily linked to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, for by it we receive the graces necessary to live virtuously and to grow in holiness, especially when we receive Holy Communion. Indeed, Holy Communion is the best means we have of preparing ourselves for the spiritual combat which we wage daily.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass leads to a deepening of our interior lives and in turn this deepening assists us to enter more profoundly deeply into the mystery of Liturgy itself. As such, one's personal piety must be rooted in true devotion to the Mass and to the traditions and liturgical rites of the Church. As His Holiness Pope St Pius X taught:

“The Holy Mass is a prayer itself, even the highest prayer that exists. It is the Sacrifice, dedicated by our Redeemer at the Cross, and repeated every day on the Altar. If you wish to hear Mass as it should be heard, you must follow with eye, heart, and mouth all that happens at the Altar. Further, you must pray with the Priest the holy

words said by him, in the Name of Christ and which Christ says by him. You have to associate your heart with the holy feelings which are contained in these words and in this manner you ought to follow all that happens on the Altar. When acting in this way you have prayed Holy Mass.”

Humility & magnanimity

In order to better understand the spirit of the sacred liturgy, it is helpful to consider the virtues of *humility* and *magnanimity*. In this discussion I will relate my comments to the traditional Latin Mass, especially in regard to the challenges faced by Catholics who attend the traditional rite.

In many ways, the traditional rite of Mass demands the exercise of humility. This is most noticeable in the many external gestures of reverence it requires, emphasising the submission we owe to Almighty God. This humble submission is reflected in the obedience a priest exercises when celebrating the traditional Mass by adhering to the extensive body of rubrics given by the Church. The faithful manifest this same humble obedience at Holy Mass

when they willingly comply with those rubrics which relate to them. However, this precise attention to the rubrics must be a reflection of a true internal humility and of an abiding charity. A rigid over-emphasis on certain aesthetical aspects of the liturgy, or worse, on small matters of minor significance, can sometimes engender a spirit of pride which is contrary to true piety. When one falls victim to this subtle trap of the Devil, one does not reap the full benefits of Holy Mass, for “God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5).

The virtue of magnanimity “by its very name denotes a stretching forth of the mind to great things” [St Thomas Aquinas: *ST*, IIa IIae, Q. 129, Art. 1]. Many Catholic faithful who attend the traditional Latin Mass manifest a high degree of magnanimity. Often they travel long distances to assist at the traditional Mass, often with large numbers of children in tow. Indeed, there is an ever-growing number of faithful who have moved house and home, some even changing their country of residence, in order to be able to be able to assist at the traditional liturgy. The willingness to

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