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14 September, 2010

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

St. Helen, the first Christian Empress, went to Jerusalem to search for the true Cross. She found it Sep. 14, 320. Later, the feast of the Finding was transferred to May 3, and on Sep. 14 is celebrated the Exaltation of the Cross. This commemorates Heraclius' victory over the Persians in 629, as a result of which the relic was returned to Jerusalem.

Three Years and Counting

Three years ago Pope Benedict XVI gave the Church a great gift in *Summorum Pontificum*. There followed a period of unprecedented growth for the Traditional Latin Mass. Now growth is slow but steady — about 380 Masses in 154 U.S. Dioceses. The Holy Father has expressed a wish that there be at least one Mass in the Extraordinary Form every Sunday in every parish. In spite of this, there are groups of the faithful who cannot find a priest; there are dynamic young priests who are rebuffed by their pastors when they ask to say the Latin Mass.

However, young people are enthusiastic, priests are hopeful. Training programs are offered for interested priests. We encourage each priest who offers Mass in the Extraordinary Form to teach one other priest. Latin must be taught in every seminary, as Bl. Pope John XXIII insisted. All who love the Latin Mass should persevere, with patience, prayer, penance, and above all, charity. Pray, pray for our Holy Father, for bishops, priests and seminarians, for the Holy Mass.

A recent survey of Catholics in England reports that while 40% of Catholics were aware of *Summorum Pontificum*, 60% had never heard of it. A further question: "If Mass were celebrated in Latin and Gregorian chant in its Extraordinary Form in your parish without taking the place of the ordinary one in English, would you attend it?" Practicing Catholics (defined as those who attend Mass at least monthly) gave these responses:

43% would attend every week; 23%, once a month; 17% occasionally; 8% never.

What results would such a poll reveal about Catholics in the United States? How can anyone be expected to want the Extraordinary Form if they haven't ever been told that it is allowed, much less encouraged by the Holy Father? Those of us who are so informed should redouble our efforts to spread the word, to educate and encourage priests and faithful

Other news concerns the new English translation for the Ordinary Form of the Mass. Many years in the making, it is to be used in every parish in the US effective the First Sunday in Advent, 27 November, 2011. Some ask: "What's wrong with the present translation? Why do we need a new one?" If you're reading this newsletter you probably know many of the sound theological reasons! But we all need some short, concise talking points to give our *Novus Ordo* friends. *Credo* means "I believe", not "we". The new translation is so much closer to the Latin original. *Lex orandi, lex credendi!* — as we pray, so we come to believe.

This new translation does not affect the Traditional Latin Mass, the Extraordinary Form. Our Booklet Missals all use the traditional English translations. These correct literal translations reflect the true theology of the Holy Sacrifice. Nothing has changed. Could it be that in the future Catholics, exposed to the truths of their Faith better expressed in the new wordings, would become more open to the traditions expressed even more fully in the Latin Mass?

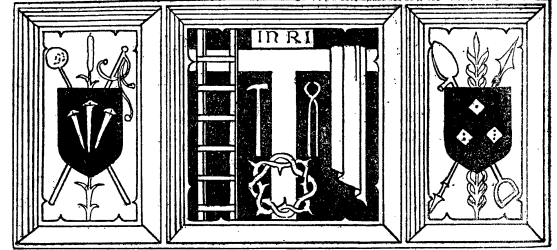
In November, 1988, a group of 16 Catholics met in Chicago to assess the status of our beloved old Mass in Latin. Pope John Paul II's letter *Ecclesia Dei* (July, 1988) gave hope to Catholics who felt the loss of something priceless. After 21 years Coalition *Ecclesia Dei* has contacts nationwide, and has distributed over 300,000 booklet missals and tens of thousands of tapes, DVD's, and leaflets to churches, bookstores, and individuals.

Now we beg your help. Our shoestring is stretched to the breaking point. Times are hard for everyone. Please **pray for us**. Order if you can. Send a small donation when you are able. We do not charge for our mailings. Please keep in touch! May God bless you all.

In Domino,

Mary M. Kraychy

Mary M. Kraychy (Mrs. Stephen Kraychy)
Executive Director

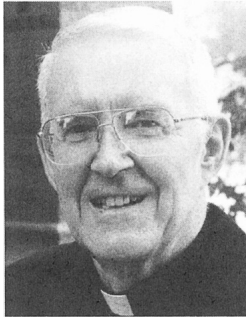


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In defense of dogma

■ I want to raise my voice in defense of dogma. Since the Vatican Council dogma has been neglected, downplayed and even reviled by some theologians. This has been the result of the emphasis on Holy Scripture, because the Council urged preaching at all Masses—mainly with preaching on the readings in the form of a homily. So in a short period of time the scriptural homily replaced the sermon which, before the Council, was primarily an explanation of the Catechism—Creed, sacraments, commandments, with explanations of the Mass and prayer.

Articles from the Creed were common topics, as also were explanations of how to go to confession and the need to do penance. In those days often Catholics went to confession before they would dare to receive Holy Communion. Basically, priests preached material from the Catechism of the Council of Trent. Scripture was used to prove points, but it was not the main focus of most Catholic preaching.



Editorial

What has happened is that, for many theologians and priests, the Bible has replaced the Catechism as the center of concern for both theology and preaching. Recently I heard a Catholic theologian say at a public meeting that theology is interpreting Scripture. There was no mention of the Magisterium of the Church or Tradition.

Before Vatican II dogma was Ace, moral theology was King, canon law was Queen, and Scripture study was Jack. That certainly was the case at Innsbruck, Austria, where I studied and where both Rahners taught and also the famous liturgist, Josef Jungmann. In the USA before the Council in some theologates moral theology was Ace because priests were being prepared to hear confessions, while preaching was a secondary goal.

As a result of the emphasis in the seminary on the importance of dogma and morals, priests were well-schooled in those subjects and were prepared to preach on them. There was emphasis on dogma, and also morals, because of the certitude connected with them. Each thesis had a “note” of doctrinal certainty, with the authority of the Church behind it from defined definitions in the previous twenty ecumenical councils.

Catholic dogma gives the student certitude about what the Church holds and also offers different levels of certitude, for example: a defined dogma, a matter of Catholic faith (*de fide catholica*), theologically certain, common opinion and so forth.

Scripture study, on the other hand, does not offer the certitude that dogma does. Yes, the text of the Bible is without error, but every text has to be interpreted and that is where the problem is. As you know, there are thousands of different interpretations of the meaning of passages in the Bible. The “*sola scriptura*” of the Protestants has resulted in thousands of different Protestant groups. Books on the Bible offer the *opinions* of the author, but they do not give you certitude. And the famous scholars often disagree with each other about the meaning. Only the Magisterium of the Church can give you certitude and the Church has defined the meaning of only a few passages of the Bible, such as Rom. 5:12-21 and James 5:13-15. Perhaps the problem here is that too many Protestant opinions have crept into the Catholic Church and too many Catholic scholars are seeking approval from Protestants.

Dogma is not anti-scriptural—it is based on the word of God and is an authoritative declaration of the meaning of Holy Scripture. The procedure in a dogmatic treatise is to state a thesis, such as “God is immutable.” The proof is given first from the Magisterium, then from the Bible, then from Tradition, then from reason. Here is material that a priest can use to develop a good sermon on the nature of God and the difference between temporal and eternal things.

Before Vatican II most Catholics knew the basics of their faith; more than 70 percent went to Mass every Sunday. They learned their faith because it was taught in the schools and preached to them every Sunday at Mass. Now most Catholics do not know their faith well; about 30 percent go to Mass regularly on Sunday, few go to confession, and almost all receive Holy Communion, including public sinners. There is more than one reason for this, but certainly the dethroning of dogma and its absence from many pulpits in the USA is a contributing factor. Therefore, we need more homilies that include an explanation of Catholic dogma.

—Fr. Kenneth Baker, S.J., *Editor Emeritus*

Modernism

'New Church' not true Church: what modernists believe

by Pastor Remotus

It is obvious that there are two main streams of theology in the Catholic Church today that can be summed up fairly accurately as “modernist” and “orthodox”. It is also becoming more obvious that “never the twain shall meet”.

What may be called the first wave of “modernism” gathered force at the end of the 19th century and was identified and condemned in 1907, first in the Decree of the Holy Office *Lamentabili*, and then in the Encyclical of Pope St. Pius X, *Pascendi*.

The second wave began to break on the Church after Vatican II. Pope Paul VI found it necessary to sound a warning about “opinions that disturb the faithful, and fill their minds with confusion about matters of faith”.

There is no doubt that confusion among the faithful is continuing, as clergy, lecturers, religious and teachers differ on fundamentals. For whereas the orthodox accept the teaching authority of the Church as established by Christ and that there is such a thing as objective truth, the modernist mindset asserts one's own authority, and declares that truth is subjective or relative.

Similarity

Recently on the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), there was an interview on “The Journey Home” program with two ex-Jehovah's Witnesses who are now Catholics. It was informative, instructive and fascinating.

As the interview proceeded, this viewer was struck, albeit ironically, by the similarity that emerged between some of the Jehovah's Witnesses principles and those of the modernists in the Catholic Church.

First, both believe in the doctrine of progressive revelation. Modernists, because of their philosophy, question the ability of the intellect to receive knowledge from outside itself.

They argue that revelation must be made directly and interiorly to each individual. The Jehovah's Witness eagerly awaits the latest message—“new Light”—from headquarters, proclaimed, for example, at Jehovah Witness Conventions, even though the latest may contradict what was held previously on a particular matter.

Second, both hold that there is no universal truth. Truth is subjective, relative. There is “past truth” and “present truth”. Modernists have an obsession with change. The Church, they say, must move and change with the times. I believe it was G. K. Chesterton who said something to the effect that the Church can only “rot with the times”.

Third, the modernist does not believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. One strand of modernism holds that the resurrection means only that the teachings of Christ will live on. The Jehovah's Witness also does not believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ, but he at least goes a little further and declares that Christ has risen as a spirit.

Fourth, the Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall, according to former members, is just that, a hall, a meeting place, bare of any adornments. As for the modernist idea of a church, it is emphasized as a gathering place for the community, often with the bare minimum of religious art, and that is generally ugly.

The culling or complete removal of statues has been a feature in the “wreckovation” of older churches. In fact the modernist church (building) and the Kingdom Hall have more than a little in common.

Turning to philosophy, I am indebted to Fr. W. J. Hayes' book *The Second Wave: Return of Modernism* (1978) for its clear outline of the philosophical basis of modernism.

Fr. Hayes wrote: “As the philosophy of subjectivism began to gain popular acceptance, it soon became apparent that it raised problems in the field of theology. Two basic elements of the traditional notion of revelation were called into doubt: is supernatural revelation possible, i.e., a revelation which contains mysteries which are beyond the natural power of the intellect? (And) can any message be revealed by God and transmitted through human words?”

“This doubting brought the new philosophy into direct conflict with the Church. The rationalists engaged in direct and open attack. They denied both the possibility and the need of supernatural revelation, and by ridicule and scorn, attempted to dismiss Christianity as a collection of myths.

Modernism is continued on page 4

“A more devious and insidious attack came from inside the Church. It was the result of efforts to adapt the faith to fit the new philosophy. Pope St. Pius X identified the modernists of his day as ‘the most pernicious of all adversaries of the Church’ because of the fact that they performed their work of destruction ‘not from outside but from within’ (*Pascendi*, 1907).”

Subversion

Popes Pius XII and Paul VI likewise drew attention to a similar kind of subversion in the Church during their pontificates. Pope John Paul II and the former Cardinal Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI) have been stalwart defenders of the traditional and orthodox tenets of the Catholic Faith, and consequently have been subjected to bitter opposition and attacks by clergy, religious and laity who have the modernist mindset.

The latter desire to conform the Church to the world, and endeavor to make it in “their own image and likeness”. St. Paul (Rom 12:2) had something very relevant to say on this matter: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.”

No doubt the modernist, true to form, would reply: “Paul’s statement is past truth, not present truth”: besides, he was “pre-Vatican II”.

Pastor Remotus is a Catholic priest living in retirement in Queensland, Australia. His article is reprinted from the Australian Journal AD2000, Vol. 19, No. 2 (3/2006), p. 10

As the beatification of John Cardinal Newman draws near, it is unfortunate that some in liberal/modernist circles are trying to pre-empt him as an early devotee of modernist thinking. John Cornwell (author of *Hitler’s Pope*, a biased, distorted “biography” of Pope Pius XII) claims that Cardinal Newman was “a champion of conscience before the Pope”. The *London Tablet* calls Newman a forerunner of liberal Catholicism. These charges come in spite of the Cardinal’s explicit declaration: “For thirty, forty, fifty years I have resisted to the best of my powers the spirit of liberalism in religion.” (12 May, 1879)

It is anticipated that on his visit to England and Scotland, our Holy Father Benedict XVI will officially proclaim the beatification of John Cardinal Newman on 19 September, 2010, in Birmingham. The feast of Bl. John Newman is to be celebrated on 9 October, the date of his conversion to the Roman Catholic Faith.

May the following selections from his writings give some measure of the depth of his Faith, and provide inspiration to the readers.

A MEDITATION

God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.

I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught.

I shall do good; I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth, in my own place, while not intending it—if I do but keep His commandments.

Therefore, I will trust Him whatever, wherever I am. I can never be thrown away.

If in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. He does nothing in vain. He knows what He is about.

He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirit sink, hide my future from me--still He knows what He is about.

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now, for I shall not pass this way again.

Ven. John Henry Cardinal Newman

21 Feb 1801 - 11 Aug 1890

converted 9 Oct 1845

PRAYER IN ALL THINGS

May God support us all the day long, till the shadows lengthen and the evening comes and the busy world is hushed and the fever of life is over and our work is done— then in His mercy —may He give us a safe lodging and a holy rest and peace at the last. Amen

PRAYER FOR A HAPPY DEATH

Oh, my Lord and Savior, support me in that hour in the strong arms of Thy Sacraments, and by the fresh fragrance of Thy consolations. Let the absolving words be said over me, and the holy oil sign and seal me, and Thy own Body be my food, and Thy Blood my sprinkling. Let my sweet Mother, Mary, breathe on me, and my Angel whisper peace to me, and my glorious Saints smile upon me; that in them all, and through them all, I may receive the gift of perseverance, and die, as I desire to live, in Thy faith, in the Church, in Thy service, and in Thy Love. Amen.