



LATIN LITURGY ASSOCIATION

JAMES HITCHCOCK, CHAIRMAN

MILLBANK
AFTON, VIRGINIA
22920

NEWSLETTER NO. 4
FALL 1977

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

The time has come in the existence of the Latin Liturgy Association when the officers feel the necessity of seriously raising the question as to whether the group should continue to exist, and if so, in what form.

We have no doubt about the importance of such an organization for the future life of the Church in America, or about the great desirability of its goal of encouraging the use of the Latin liturgy, novus ordo. Quite obviously, we are a long way from realizing that goal.

The problems are entirely practical. When this group was formed several years ago we hoped that its formation would bring forward a large number of people all over the United States who were eager to preserve the Latin liturgical heritage and would be full of energy for the task. What we have found is something rather different.

There is no question about the existence of such people. We meet them in the course of travelling and giving speeches. We receive letters from them. We get unsolicited inquiries about the work of the Association. Articles are published, even in "liberal" Catholic publications, deploring the poor state of contemporary liturgy and lamenting how much has been lost.

Yet somehow very little of this is translated into action. Despite much good will, enthusiasm, and knowledge, little has been done. We remain for the most part a paper organization. During the past two years the chairman and the secretary have contacted numerous people who are known to be, or thought likely to be, interested in the Latin liturgy. We have gotten many expressions of support but almost nothing concrete in the way of suggestions or assistance.

Part of the problem is geographical. Our British counterpart, the Association for Latin Liturgy, is succeeding, in part because its members from all over England can congregate several times a year in London, Cambridge, or elsewhere for Mass, talks, and discussions. Our membership is scattered across 3000 miles, and the prospect of anything like a national convention seems totally impractical. Nor do we as yet have large enough local bodies of members to permit vigorous local activity.

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The future of the Association is problematical for two reasons. One, which is probably paramount, is that we do not feel justified in trying to recruit new members when we cannot be very specific in terms of what we can offer them. As it stands, membership in the LLA mainly signifies agreement with its goals. It leads to nothing very concrete, and we do not know whether we should try to attract new members on such a flimsy basis.

The second reason is the consideration of whether the time is simply not right for such an organization, at least in America. (Such groups seem to be flourishing almost everywhere else.) For a variety of reasons, which will be discussed below, there is perhaps at present not the maturity in the American Church which would allow an organization like this to function.

There is a fair amount of overt hostility to the Latin liturgy, which we hear about from time to time. Such hostility seems to be particularly strong among certain kinds of diocesan bureaucrats, who are committed to new programs and regard any use of Latin as a sign of regression.

However, still more there is a problem of massive ignorance and indifference, even on the part of the clergy. Time after time, according to reports we have received, lay people have requested that the Latin liturgy be celebrated at least on an occasional basis in their parishes, only to be met with incomprehension, incredulity, or simple lack of response.

The major obstacles to the retention of Latin in the American Church seem to be twofold. One is the fact that, in contrast to other countries, we have never had a strong tradition of loving and understanding the Latin. The Mass was not "done well" in very many parishes. Many, clergy in particular, seem to have discovered that the loss of the Latin was for them almost like shedding a burden.

More serious, however, is the fact that the use of Latin is tied in, psychologically, with many other kinds of things in the contemporary Church, and conditions will not improve on the liturgical front in isolation from numerous other problems. For many self-consciously "advanced" Catholics the Latin symbolizes all kinds of things in the traditional Church they are trying to rid themselves of. They cannot react with full rationality to proposals for its use. The fact that it has been urged by Pope and Council is, if anything, still another reason for abandoning it. Its use would symbolize the entire "classical" conception of the Church which they reject.

There are occasional theological modernists who would like the Latin for primarily aesthetic reasons. However, in the long run this could have even more deleterious effects than simple neglect, since it would precisely reduce the Latin liturgy to a concert or museum function in the Church, as its critics now claim it already is.

There are also some very good and orthodox people, priests included, who cannot interest themselves in the Latin because they see many other problems--moral, doctrinal, disciplinary--which take precedence. It is certainly true that the retention of Latin does not have the urgency which certain other issues arouse. However, it is also short-sighted not to recognize that the widespread use of Latin liturgy would be an important symbolic and substantial way of keeping strong present links with the Catholic past. It would help greatly in the overall struggle to preserve a vital and authentic Catholicism.

At this crucial stage in the Association's existence it therefore seems necessary to ask for members' suggestions as to the best course for the organization to take. Do we have a realistically vital and useful future? What can we do--realistically again--that we have not been doing? How can we hope to have more of an impact? We await your response.

--James Hitchcock

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THIRD LISTING OF LATIN MASSES NOW BEING CELEBRATED

The following are additions to the listings in our second and third newsletters. We are most grateful to the members who have sent us schedules, and especially to those at Old St. Mary's in Detroit who sent a cassette.

ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD

St. Justin, 230 Blue Hills Ave., (203)246-6897: 5:00 p.m. fourth Sunday of each month. High Mass.

ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES

Monastery of the Angels. Correct address 1977 Carmen Ave. We regret the error in newsletter No. 3.

ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

St. John the Baptist, 4731 NE 28th Ave. (Bayview Drive), Fort Lauderdale, (305)771-8950. Last Sunday of each month. High Mass.

ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

St. Therese, 9005 22nd Ave, Kenosha, (414)694-4695. 8:30 a.m. every Sunday, 8:00 a.m. every Saturday, 7:30 p.m. every First Friday, 7:30 p.m. every Holy Day of Obligation. The children in school sing the Mass from Jubilate Deo every Tuesday morning; 21 children, who volunteered to do so, have formed a Latin choir.

Cistercian Abbey, Our Lady of Spring Bank, 34639 W. Fairview Road, Oconomowoc⁵³⁰⁶⁶, (US Highway 16 and county highway PP on Oconomowoc Lake). All liturgy is in Latin except the readings of the Mass. All Hours except Matins and Lauds on ferial days are in Gregorian chant. Conventual High Mass with Gregorian chant: 7:00 a.m. weekdays, 9:00 a.m. Sundays and feastsdays. Vespers: 6:10 p.m. weekdays; Vespers and Benediction: 6:00 p.m. Sundays and feastsdays.

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN FRANCISCO

SS. Peter and Paul, 666 Filbert St., opposite Washington Square, (415)421-0842. 11:00 a.m. every Sunday. Sung High Mass in Latin and Italian.

St. Ignatius, Fulton St. and Parker Ave., (415)666-0600. 11:00 a.m. every Sunday. Sung High Mass in Latin and English.

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE

Blessed Sacrament, 5041 Ninth Ave. NE. The daily Latin Masses at Blessed Sacrament were listed in newsletter No. 3. Rosalie Stuart Franklin, an LLA member, published an article in Immaculata for September 1977 about Gregorian chant and about the liturgy at this church in particular, where Father Kieran Healy, OP, who became pastor shortly after the publication of Jubilate Deo, has been using the booklet to encourage his parishioners to sing the chant. Director of the Gregorian choir at Blessed Sacrament is Dr. Michael Loraine, a member of the LLA General Advisory Board.

DIOCESE OF ALLENTOWN

St. Mary's Cistercian Priory, R.D. No. 1, New Ringgold, Pennsylvania 17960. The monks sing the entire office in Latin daily. Sung Mass is at 6:00 a.m. daily and at 8:00 a.m. Sunday. The schedule for the office, celebrated according to St. Benedict's Rule, is:

Matins 4:30 a.m.	Sext 1:15 p.m.
Lauds 5:45 a.m.	None 3:30 p.m.
Prime 8:30 a.m.	Vespers 5:00 daily
Tierce 11:45 a.m.	5:45 Sunday
	(and Benediction)
	Compline 8:00 p.m.

DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

Magdalen College, Bedford, NH, on old route 3 south of the Bedford Mall, south of Manchester. The 8:00 a.m. Saturday Mass during the academic year is a low Latin Mass for the entire student body, with some parts or hymns sung in Latin.

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

Old St. Mary's, Washington Park, 15 South St., (716)232-2422. Latin Ordinary from Jubilate Deo at the 12:15 Mass every Sunday. A choir will sing the first Sunday of each month, adding parts of the Proper and suitable Gregorian hymns. This is the first regularly established weekly use of Latin in the Diocese since the introduction of the vernacular. The English lectionary is used every Sunday, and the English Sacramentary is used when the choir is not present. The congregation always sings in Latin, and the Missale Romanum is used when the choir is present. Seminararian Dennis Bonsignore and Vincent A. Lenti, director of the Preparatory Department, Eastman School of Music, have been especially active in furthering the cause of the Latin liturgy in and around Rochester.

DIOCESE OF SALT LAKE CITY

Cathedral of the Madeleine, 331 East South Temple St., (801)328-8941. The 10:00 a.m. Mass is in Latin on some Sundays.

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

St. Peter's, 929 Main St., (617)752-4674, near Clark University. The 11:00 a.m. Mass on the first Sunday of each month is a Latin/English Mass with the parish choir of men and boys under Prof. Curran singing the Ordinary according to settings by Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, and other modern composers.

St. Benedict Center (Benedictine Oblates), Still River, Massachusetts, state route 110, six miles south of US route 2 at Harvard (not the University).
St. Therese House. The Oblates are a group of some 30 men and 20 women religious who, as part of their community life, celebrate the Latin Mass and office with Gregorian chant according to the following schedule:

Mass Sunday 9:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m. (Maronite rite)
Holy days 8:00 a.m.
Holidays 9:00 a.m.
Weekdays 8:00 a.m.
Saturday 8:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.

Office Sunday: Lauds 7:45 a.m., Sext 12:20 p.m., Vespers 5:00 p.m.,
Compline 10:00 p.m.

Weekdays: Lauds 7:30 a.m. (except holidays, 8:25 a.m.), Sext
12:20 p.m. (except Saturdays, 12:45 p.m.), Vespers
5:00 p.m., Compline 10:00 p.m.

CANADA

Abbaye Sainte-Marie des Deux-Montagnes, 3803, Chemin d'Oka, Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac, Quebec JON 1P0. All liturgy at the Abbey is in Latin. Mass and Vespers are entirely sung every day. Other offices are entirely or partially sung depending on the degree of the feast. Prime is never sung. Visitors are welcome at Mass and at all offices except Matins.

Lauds 6:30 a.m. every day, 7:00 a.m. on Sundays and great feasts
Mass 9:45 a.m. every day
Vespers 5:00 p.m. every day
Compline 8:00 p.m. every day

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BISHOP LYONS'S LETTER ON LATIN MASSES IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

Most LLA members have probably read by now the letter to priests of the Washington Archdiocese encouraging the use of Latin at Mass, written by Bishop Lyons, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington, at the request of Cardinal Baum. For those who have not, we reproduce it below.

August 23, 1977

Dear Father:

Newspapers, radio and television have recently given wide publicity to the differences between Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and the Church. Not infrequently these sources of information erroneously describe the differences as being simply an insistence on the use of Latin instead of the vernacular and of saying Mass with the celebrant's back to the people.

In fact, Latin is still the official language of the Roman rite. Permission is not needed for a priest to say Mass in Latin or to have public Masses in Latin. The rite which must be used in such celebrations is the revised rite. The so-called Tridentine rite may not be used except in certain specific circumstances.

Archbishop Lefebvre's rejection of the revised rite is a readily visible aspect of a more fundamental difference with the Church, which includes his rejection of much of the Second Vatican Council. In other words, simply to allow use of the Tridentine rite would not resolve the basic problem. Your prayers are requested that there may be an early and peaceful resolution of the Archbishop's differences with the Church.

On the topic of Latin in the Liturgy, Cardinal Baum has asked that I inform you that he urges parishes to consider having a Mass in Latin on occasion, or even on a regular basis. He commends the Archdiocesan Sacred Music Commission for its initiatives and encouragement of Latin in the Liturgy. He particularly urges that we carry out the exhortation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy that "steps should be taken so that the faithful may pray or sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them." In the spirit of this exhortation Pope Paul VI urged pastors to do what they could to preserve certain Latin chants which are simple and familiar to our people. The Holy Father arranged for publication of a leaflet of such chants under the title Jubilate Deo. The leaflet includes the 16th Kyrie, the 8th Gloria, the 3rd Credo, the Pater Noster and the 16th Gloria and Agnus Dei (the last are the Requiem Mass melodies).

These basic chants are familiar to many adults and can easily be taught to young people and children. The leaflet is available in an inexpensive form from Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., Huntington, Indiana 46750.*

The point is not that we give up the use of the vernacular but rather that along with it we preserve a rich heritage that can serve as a bond of unity among Catholics of many nations and languages.

Should you wish to copy, condense or paraphrase any of the contents of this letter for inclusion in your parish bulletin, please feel free to do so. Because our people receive so much of their information from the media, it would be well to use some means to correct any erroneous statements they may have heard or read on the topic of Archbishop Lefebvre.

For your reference there are appended quotations from official documents relating to this matter.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Thomas W. Lyons

Most Reverend Thomas W. Lyons
Auxiliary Bishop of Washington

*LLA note: We understand that the OSV version of Jubilate Deo is out of print. Our newsletters have listed other sources from which to buy the booklet.

The quotations appended to Bishop Lyons's letter are from the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Arts. 30, 36, 54, and 116; General Instruction, Art. 19, Par. 3; and Instruction on Music in the Liturgy, Arts. 47 and 48.

LITURGICAL BOOKS

Of the bilingual Mass books we have seen, we believe the two most useful for the people to be:

1. The Ordo Missae published by the Association for Latin Liturgy (England) in 1974, with a graceful and accurate (unofficial) English translation by Professor J. A. W. Bennett. Send \$2.00 for a sample copy by airmail (surface mail has been much delayed by a strike in New York) to:

Mrs. R. H. Richens
Secretary, ALL
11 Barton Close
Cambridge CB3 9LQ
ENGLAND

2. The Latin Mass Booklet (expanded) published by C. Goodliffe Neale (also England), which is less complete--it lacks the Prefaces, for example--but beautifully clear and easy to follow. The English is the ICEL version. The price in England is 15p; the firm has not quoted us a price by airmail to the States and Canada, but we suggest rounding it up to \$1.00 as a reasonable amount.* Goodliffe Neale also publishes an unexpanded booklet, but the expanded one is so much more useful that we don't recommend the other. Write to:

Mr. John F. Neale
C. Goodliffe Neale Ltd.
Arden Forest Industrial Estate
Alcester, Warwicks. B49 6ER
ENGLAND

Neither of these contains music. The two best editions of Jubilare Deo that have come our way are the Vatican edition, available for \$1.25 (net of postage) from

Libreria Editrice Vaticana
Città del Vaticano
Rome 00120
ITALY

And the Catholic Truth Society edition, available for 40¢ (net of postage) from:

Catholic Truth Society
38/40 Eccleston Square
London SW1
ENGLAND

The CTS edition now contains, in addition to the complete Vatican edition text, the Ordo Missae cum Populo (no English) in an abbreviated version. It would not satisfactorily replace either of the two books referred to at the top of the page.

We have also found the Vatican Missale Parvum useful and pleasant to read for those who need no translation. It contains the Missae de Tempore, Ordo Missae, Missae pro celebratione Sanctorum, Missae et Orationes ad diversa, and Missae Votiva. \$7.00 from the Libreria Editrice.

A new edition of the catalogue of Vatican Press publications is now available free from the Libreria.

*For a sample. We assume the bulk price would be lower.

The Graduale Romanum, which of course is essential for the more ambitious choir, is available from the:

Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes
72 300 Sablé sur Sarthe
FRANCE

Ask for current price.

The above sums up the most useful information about Mass books now available to the Association. For the future, the UK ALL is working on a new bilingual Sunday missal (ICEL English) which will, to quote the ALL November 1977 newsletter,

"provide, in parallel, Latin texts (for Sundays and holidays) from the new Missale Romanum and Graduale Romanum and the official English version. It will include the Ordinary of the Mass and all the requisite Propers, excepting only the readings, responsorial psalm, and lectionary alleluias. The texts of the Latin chants between the readings will be given in their entirety. The missal will be equally usable at Latin and vernacular Masses. It will cover the entire three-year lectionary cycle, and will be sold at cost in the price range of existing hymnals. It is hoped that paper-backed copies will be sold for £1.00 or less and case-bound copies in the £1.00-1.50 range."

The publication of this missal will of course be a financial strain on the ALL until enough copies have been sold to cover costs, and advance bulk orders will be appreciated. For particulars, write to Mrs. Richens, address on page 7.

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CPA AWARD TO THOMAS DAY

Professor Thomas Day of the City University of New York, an LLA member, received first prize recently in the Catholic Press Association's annual competition for the best original article in a Catholic periodical. The prize was awarded for "A Syllabus of Musical Errors," published in Commonweal for 27 August 1976. Members of the Association would appreciate his analysis of the present and past American Catholic musical scene.

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1967 INSTRUCTION--TEN YEARS LATER

Monsignor Richard J. Schuler, President of the Church Music Association of America, writes on the above subject in the fall issue of Sacred Music, the CMAA official journal. His discussion of the implementation of the Musica sacra instruction on sacred music issued by the Holy See in 1967, and comments on the questionnaire circulated a few years ago by the Consociatio Internationalis Musicae Sacrae, will be of interest to LLA members. To subscribe to Sacred Music, send \$12.50 (CMAA voting membership) or \$7.50 (journal only, nonvoting membership) to:

Earl D. Hogan
3800 Crystal Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55422

Make checks payable to Church Music Association of America.

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE ICEL VERSION

Professor Richard Toporoski of the Classics Department of St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, an LLA member, has published in the Fall 1977 issue of Communio an analysis of the ICEL English version of the Mass entitled "The Language of Worship." It is a fair and dispassionate discussion of the work of the ICEL translators, and is about as far as one could get from the "indignant and sometimes violent. . .denunciations" and "startled screams" of which they have complained. Professor Toporoski's conclusion, nonetheless, is that "the work of translating the Latin liturgy must be done over again by others."

Communio has been recognized by the Catholic Press Association as the best scholarly journal entered in its journalistic competition for 1976. A year's subscription costs \$8.00 in the United States, \$9.00 abroad, to be sent to:

Communio
Gonzaga University
Spokane, Washington 99258

* * *

Here we should like to add a note on one problem related to the ICEL translation. Writers sometimes suggest that its defects are attributable to national differences in usage, since, to quote one, "the English spoken beyond the bounds of England [sic--?the educated South of England] subsists in a series of dialects."

One suspects that those holding this opinion have taken too seriously the language of the man in the street, the popular journalist, the writer of television commercials. But these people are not going to translate the Mass, nor are the jargon-haunted sociologists. The more colloquial--or the more corrupt--the usage, the more evident are national differences. When the tone of a written language is raised, as it must be in a translation of the Mass, local peculiarities fall away.

Professor Bennett's ALL translation would surely be welcome anywhere in the English-speaking world. As for a modern-English translation, we should very much like to see one in the spirit of the spare, spacious style of Willa Cather in Death Comes for the Archbishop or Shadows on the Rock. One thinks also of the J. F. Powers of "Lions, Harts, Leaping Does," or the Paul Horgan of Things As They Are. This is to name Americans only, and very few of those. Many more could be listed, along with writers in other countries. The invention of a novelist or poet would of course not be required--only the ear, the love of language for itself, the real translator's knack, in the old definition, of pouring a text from one language to another without spilling a drop.

This the ICEL translators have not done or tried to do. While their English is clearly not of the elevated kind needed for the Mass, neither is it the easy colloquial English they may have attempted, and so it cannot have the flavor of any particular country. It is lifeless, it has much in common with a computer translation, because it has been accommodated to a theory.

Here there is a direct link with one reason for resistance to Latin. Latin is incorruptible. ICEL language, numb and vague as it is, is easily manipulated. It seems to be policy in some dioceses to encourage celebrants to add or omit words throughout the Mass to make it more conversational. We ourselves have heard the final words pronounced as: "Run along now to love the Lord, bless your hearts." Also, "Now out you go, may your love keep you warm, and God bless every cotton-pickin hair on your cotton-pickin little heads."

This is harder to do in Latin.

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LEARNING LATIN LATER

An Irish priest once remarked in The Furrow (with some satisfaction) that "no-body under 70 knows Latin any more." We wonder what he would think of "Back to the Ablative Absolute," by Meg Greenfield of the Washington Post. In this personal essay, reprinted in the September 9 Post from Newsweek, Miss Greenfield tells readers how glad she was that she had gone back to school to recover and improve on her Latin in an adult education course at Georgetown University. She had "hated Latin and despised Julius Caesar and all his works as a child," but realized later how much she was missing. Even with no time to spare from a demanding career--time had to be made--and with the sometimes painful readjustments involved in going back to school after having become "accustomed to being treated in a certain fashion," it was worth it, was "a great and absolutely consuming adventure. For each of us [in the class] the hard work has become a kind of liberation. There is a pervasive joy in learning and an endless surprise in seeing a page come alive."

Imagine that, Father.

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FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Income and expenditures as of 1 December 1977:

Excess of income over expenditures to 30 September 1976 (cf. newsletter No. 2, p. 13):	\$1452.58	Expenditures for printing, postage, legal fees (incorporation), office expenses	\$1972.22
Income from contributions	1000.75	Excess of income over expenditures, on deposit with the Virginia National Bank, Charlottesville	481.11
	\$2453.33		\$2453.33

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AND A FINAL NOTE

We want to keep the LLA alive. We will keep it incorporated for 1978 in the hope that our efforts to reassemble a working Council will yet succeed. As it is, the members we need in order to do the things outlined in our statement of purposes have become inactive and we have not so far been able to replace them. We are taking no new memberships or renewals, effective 1 December, until the problem of our future has been resolved. If we find we can continue, all receiving this issue of the newsletter will be notified. If not, this will be our last communication. We wish to thank those who have supported us; we are most grateful and only wish we had better news for you.

The distribution of Guardini's The Living God was made possible by a friend of the Association, who has found it a help in difficult times and in places where the Church seems distant.

Our appended talk is by Dr. R. H. Richens, editor of the ALL newsletter. We appreciate his permission to reproduce it.

ASSOCIATION FOR LATIN LITURGY

Text of the talk on the rationale of Latin at Mass
given by Dr. R. H. Richens on a visit to Ushaw Col-
lege, 3 May 1977

One of the consequences of being a material rather than an angelic being is that the principal exercises of religion are an episodic rather than a continuing activity. It is expected, for example, that Catholics will spend half to a full hour once a week on a particular day engaged in their most solemn act. Some will be so occupied three times only during their lives; the most fervent can hardly do so on average more than one short period a day. And while it is true that it is hoped and expected that the episodic participation at Mass will cast a hallowing influence on the more secular activities that follow it, yet a distinction is clear and inevitable between a larger secular time and a narrower consecrated time.

Similarly as regards space. While it is true that the celebration of Mass may take place anywhere--St. Brendan on a whale's back, various enthusiasts on mountain tops, and, with special justification, in the numerous hiding places forced on the faithful under persecution--, yet material reality imposes a different situation as the norm. Need for shelter and for freedom from disturbance of itself narrows the place for sacred celebrations to a humanly constructed building, and practically dictates only some kinds of room or a room apart. We have come to the distinction between a larger secular space and a narrower consecrated space or shrine.

And then we come to what I shall call the mode or manner of celebrating the sacred rite. If it be granted that some activities, those for instance that we share with the higher animals, may take place without reference to a religious framework, the basis is laid for drawing a distinction between mundane and religious modes of behavior. It is possible and commendable to perform a mundane activity, such as eating, with religious preoccupation, but this is not the same thing as the mundane activity; it is a mode of its own. We have arrived at the distinction between the predominant mundane mode of behavior and the narrower sacred mode.

This line of thought is carried a stage further by considering the interplay of good and evil. Those who regard the world as wholly good or wholly bad are mainly in psychiatric care. Whether explicitly or implicitly, most of us accept good and evil as in perpetual warfare within ourselves, all men experiencing both the attraction toward good and the lure toward evil. Taking our three categories of time, space, and mode that condition religious behavior, let us see how each of these relates to the interplay of good and evil. It is partly because weekdays are the main occasions of competitive exploitation that Sunday is an appropriate sacred time. It is partly because the market place is geared to profiteering and the home permeated with interpersonal tensions of family existence that it is appropriate that some other place should be reserved for worship. And it is partly because human intercourse, in particular common speech, so often serves selfish and uncharitable ends that it is appropriate that the form of worship, and its language, should be things apart, a unique uncontaminated and exalted spiritual mode.

You will perceive the analogy between my present drift and the via negativa by which we approach an understanding of what God is like. It is of the nature of God that in Him is no imperfection. It is fitting that he should be worshipped by means that, as far as we are able, are purged of association with imperfection.

The other classic approach to the understanding of the nature of God is the via eminentiae. Any perfection is attributed to God in the fullest degree. Applied to worship, the via eminentiae obliges us, having discarded imperfect forms, to seek the best, which, interpreted in aesthetic terms, means those that are most beautiful in the realm of art.

And over the centuries in the religious history of mankind and the particular history of the Catholic Church, this is precisely what has happened. The Christian calendar, with its complex interlocking of weekly, lunar, and yearly cycles, sets apart Sundays and the great feasts of the Church. Everywhere, with the obvious exception of the time of persecution, Christian worship has been celebrated in a building or room apart, and in these sacred spaces, the place of priestly offering, the holy of holies, is set apart within the holy place, nowhere more conspicuously than in the Anglo-Saxon churches, such as Escomb in this neighborhood.

And everywhere, in different ways in different cultural areas, the mode of celebration has been something apart, involving sacred actions, sacred vessels in precious metals, sacred languages and words, sacred texts and sacred music. It is strange, in discussing the rationale of sacred language, how easily the sacred mode of the Bible itself is overlooked. I am not here referring to its inspiration but to its remoteness from ordinary communication. Possibly in the former days of universal Latin, the strangeness of the Bible could go unremarked. But now that the scriptures are read publicly and in such variety, the distance between it and ordinary communication can no longer go unnoticed. In western Europe it is of course the Latin rite with which we are concerned, with its innumerable churches, distinctive ceremonial, its corpus of sacred texts in the Latin language, and its immense wealth of sacred music. It is sometimes implied that the Latin Vulgate was in the common language of the people in the fourth century A.D. This is far wide of the mark. The formal grammar of the Vulgate is largely that of the then contemporary popular speech, but much of the vocabulary and the concepts expressed were as alien to secular Rome as to secular Europe today. The special character of the music of the Latin rite needs little pressing; there is today no secular analogue of plainchant, and practically no analogues to the major liturgical works of the great polyphonic composers, even though these applied an essentially similar contrapuntal technique to their secular works.

The contemporary relevance of all this can conveniently be considered in the light of Bill McSweeney's recent analysis of the state of Christianity in the Times and of the ensuing correspondence, quite likely discussed already here at Ushaw. Bill McSweeney records the indisputable fact of Christianity in universal decline, familiar enough to the major Christian denominations in this country for the past fifty years, but only seriously affecting the Catholic Church in England since the recent Council. The proximate reason is bluntly expressed by one correspondent, a personal friend of mine, Mr. Gilmour, President of the Cambridge Humanists: namely, the impossibility of believing in the Christian or any other God. We have however to go more deeply than Mr. Gilmour does into the meaning of the word impossible. He cannot mean logically contradictory, since no one has pretended that Christianity has been disproved by syllogistic deductive inference from premises universally accepted, whether scientific, historical, or otherwise. He might mean that, inductively, a cumulative argument can be constructed of such weight that the probabilities are overwhelmingly unfavorable to Christianity, but this has not been done either. What is true--though I doubt whether this is Mr. Gilmour's line of thought--is that the noninferential conditions for accepting Christianity have recently been seriously adversely affected, and here I refer to the whole realm of feeling, conscious and unconscious, that interacts so powerfully and universally with all mental processes. Emotive and largely unconscious support for intellectual adherence to the truths of Christianity was found in the sacrality of space, time, and mode in the Latin rite.

Now it is well known that in order to correct other shortcomings in the public worship of the Church, the Conciliar reform introduced far-reaching changes, primarily aimed at fostering participation amongst the uncommitted. But in so doing it has unwittingly withdrawn from Catholics at large a major support to their faith. What I think has happened is that an atmosphere of spurious understanding has been created. By changing from Latin to an apparently transparent sort of English, the impression has been formed that the sacred mysteries are now clear. So, religious reality comes to be identified with the visible situation; the Mass comes to be equated with the gathering together of the parish community. It is then discovered that there is little difference between the community at Mass and the community in its secular environment; it may even be found that the community appears to better advantage in its secular environment, especially if the new rite is felt to be something of a bore. We pass, in other words, from seeing religious reality to seeing through it.

Lapse to secular living is not the only outcome of this situation. An attempt to rediscover spiritual reality no longer felt to be adequately presented in the customary official worship of the Church may be made. This can take an orthodox form as in some trends of the charismatic movement, or a far from orthodox form in the combing of inner spaces in the drug cults. Parallel with these movements and sometimes associated with them is the new fundamentalism, so startlingly expansive in the United States in the last few years. I cannot see that any of these movements, with their veiled or explicit anti-intellectual complexion, can make a lasting contribution to Catholic Christianity.

I come, then, to my principal point, namely, that worship in the traditional sacred mode of the Latin rite provides powerful psychological support in depth for the exercise of faith in the world today.

One clarification is necessary. I do not equate re-establishment of the Latin liturgical tradition with the liturgical freeze sought by traditionalist movements. Genuine tradition is a living, continually developing thing. The notion that liturgical development should cease and that the so-called Tridentine missal should be taken as definitive for centuries to come is to my mind a theological nonsense. We have, in fact, one more variant of fundamentalism, with the Tridentine missal substituting for the Bible. There was much that needed amendment in the old missal; and the immobility of the post-Tridentine era and the near-tyranny of the post-Tridentine liturgical legislation are, let us hope, over and done with.

The tradition I have in mind is the whole heritage of the Latin rite, in all its variants, culminating in the new Latin missal, including all that it has taken from the Greek that preceded it, the Aramaic and Hebrew before that, and beyond that the ancient religions of the Middle East.

One cannot create a sacred mode de novo, especially in the case of an historic religious community such as the Christian Church. This has already created its liturgical tradition, and this one either accepts or rejects. Acceptance carries with it an identification with the historic community, in itself a strong support to a living faith. The historic liturgy of the Western Church is principally enshrined in the present missal, but other elements in the tradition, for instance the Latin hymns, can be integrated where the rubrics indicate free option. The Latin rite is fundamentally musical. The settings of its texts are almost beyond enumeration. In addition to plainchant, later compositions are available in vast array of styles, from the early polyphony of Machaut and Dunstable, through the great Renaissance composers, Palestrina, Lassus, and Byrd, to the moderns like Poulenc and Berkeley, without doubt the largest corpus of fine music in existence.

The traditional sacred mode of Western Christianity has, we know, been cold-shouldered by many intent on liturgical reform. I think that now the task of establishing the new vernacular liturgy has been accomplished, the time has arrived for second thoughts and for reincorporation into the public worship of the Church of those elements that should never and need never have been discarded.

It is surprising how surprised the Secretary of the National Liturgical Commission appears to have been at the results of the Catholic Herald opinion poll, with its 75% return in favor of the Latin sung Mass. Anyone concerned with solemn celebrations of the new rite in Latin will be aware of how many of those attending it register no difference between it and a Tridentine high Mass. What one can conclude is that the Latin liturgical tradition, mainly preserved in this country through initiatives at parish level, continues to fulfil a current spiritual need.

To those, like yourselves, facing a life of dedication in the Catholic priesthood, the foundations and supports of Christian belief are of paramount importance, not only personally, but also in respect of those to whom they will minister. It is my serious contention that those who foster the Latin rite, in the form officially approved by the Church, will provide a powerful aid in sustaining their own faith, and in sustaining the faith of others, and a means of drawing toward Christian belief the agnostic and unbeliever. This is what the Association for Latin Liturgy is all about, and I think that the effects of its activities in the eight years since its foundation have been pervasive and significant.

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Points from discussion

Q. If someone attends the new rite in Latin under the impression that it is a Tridentine Mass, does this not mean that they do not know what is going on?

A. The external differences can be very few. This is as it should be. Liturgical development ideally proceeds gradually and imperceptibly and thereby causes no trauma. Differences would of course emerge over a stretch of some years.

Q. What pastoral value has Latin in connection with ordinary life?

A. By pointing beyond present appearances, Latin helps the faithful to grasp the invisible reality of God. It puts a brake on the current erosion of belief and attunes individuals to what lies beyond here and now. Faith so fortified will then contribute greatly to ordinary life.

Q. There seems a good case for the use of Latin musical items, but surely the eucharistic prayer is better in English.

A. There are good psychological reasons for having the constantly recurring parts of the Mass in Latin since constant repetition in English leads to a situation of diminishing returns, impact continually lessening with familiarity. Suitable liturgical Mass aids are indeed necessary, and the Association brought out its own bilingual edition of the Ordo Missae to do this, publishers having declined to do so until the Association had shown them that sales would be forthcoming. One of the crying scandals of the post-Conciliar era is that liturgical books are published in view of sales forecasts, not primarily to meet current spiritual needs. It is also the case that many of the ICEL translations are ugly, while the Latin text, though not in the style of the classical authors, has excellences all of its own.

Q. It seems likely that publishers rejected the Association's edition of the Ordo Missae in view of its unofficial English translation.

A. Publishers declined to bring out a bilingual Ordo Missae long before Professor Bennett made the translation. It was only after the hopelessness of inducing publishers to act had been realized that the Association decided to have a special translation that would faithfully and exactly render the Latin.

Q. First, why should Latin not suffer the same effect of diminishing returns as English? Second, the case presented for Latin is too heavy, since it fails to provide justification for the use of English.

A. Latin is less liable to the effects of diminishing returns on two counts. There are almost unlimited musical settings of the recurring texts, which can be used to vary their impact. Also, the relative unfamiliarity of Latin itself puts a brake on the diminishing returns associated with excess familiarity. The mixed language situation, some Latin, some English, has some theoretical attractions, but practice has shown that each language makes its maximum impact when least intermixed. Since Mass in the vernacular is in universal use, the justification for so doing is most appropriately made by its own advocates. The excellence of much of the Latin text, for instance the Gloria in excelsis, prevents its palling over a lifetime, and the effect of the unfamiliar in containing the effect of diminishing returns can be seen in English too, as with the Elizabethan collects and Authorized Version.

Q. First, is it being implied that the gospel message is suffering from effects of diminishing returns? Second, should it not be possible to use English musical settings of the ordinary to avoid this?

A. It is the function of the homily, an essential element of the liturgy, to relate the gospel to the contemporary situation and thereby to preserve its original dynamism. In theory, a fine set of English musical settings of the ordinary should be effective in countering diminishing returns, but a high proportion of those in actual use are poor compositions.

Q. How do you account for the recent upsurge of interest in plainchant as evidenced by the popularity of Dr. Berry's courses?

A. Plainchant is popular because of its intrinsic excellence, increasingly recognized with the spread of musical education. Part of its popularity seems to be a reaction from what is felt to be an arid vernacular liturgy. Its appropriateness for liturgical use is indisputable, but one must guard against a tendency to erect it into a cult divorced from the liturgy.

Q. Does not the Catholic Herald poll show that support for Latin is largely nostalgia for the past?

A. For some elderly Catholics, this is undoubtedly so. Some of these assert a specific preference for the Tridentine rite, but, as has been said, many attend solemn celebrations of the new rite in Latin under the impression that it is the Tridentine rite. People in fact appreciate what they think they have, not what they actually have. The case is otherwise with the many young supporters of Mass in Latin. They have no nostalgic past, and the Tridentine issue is of no particular interest for most of them. Actual antagonism to Mass in Latin is largely a clerical phenomenon, especially among clergy of middle age.

Q. Seminary students today are largely ignorant of Latin. Is it practical to press for Latin in this situation with timetables already overloaded?

A. Latin is needed in seminaries, not only for the liturgy, but also to enable students to have direct contact with theological sources. It should be entirely feasible to give students some capacity for reading and understanding Latin (translation from English into Latin is not needed) using modern crash-course teaching methods and suitably designed teaching aids. These should not take up more than a small part of teaching time.

Q. The liturgical reform was about getting people involved, not just hanging around as bench-fodder.

A. The presumption that very few know or can know any Latin is unproven. Existing English translations are liable to mislead, as in the translation of beati as happy. It is unfortunate that Rome should have adopted the fallacious view that the English-speaking world is a linguistic unity.

Q. Is there not a danger that the Latin Mass will breed elitism, with support from such groups as university students?

A. An association between Latinist sympathies and aristocratic sympathies is accepted in France. The situation is quite different here. There is no correlation between attachment to Latin and any socio-economic class. The Catholic aristocracy as such does not give any particular support to Mass in Latin; if one can generalize, it seems rather that the instincts of this group are to conform with majority approved practice. Student elitism is much more evident in way-out experimental vernacular liturgy.

Q. What can be expected at the practical level from a seminary in which only a minority of students have even O-level Latin?

A. It is a mistake to suppose that if people are ignorant of Latin, they necessarily understand English. The Our Father in English is largely incomprehensible to many children. The direct impact of words and music, apart from conceptual communication, should not be underrated. Hindu visitors unacquainted with Latin have registered religious impact at Latin Vespers greater than in any other Christian service in this country.

Q. Should not liturgy reflect contemporary situations rather than, as with the Latin liturgy, the situation many hundred years back?

A. Liturgy must relate to the present, but this does not mean it must use contemporary forms. A modern gardener can lay out his garden in rococo style without divorcing himself from contemporary reality. The contemporary Church has its roots in the Roman Empire under which early Christians lived. We water these roots by using Latin and thereby strengthen our identity with the early Church.

Q. Do you see an analogy between Latin in Catholic liturgy and Hebrew in Jewish liturgy?

A. This is a strong and important analogy and a bond between Catholics and Jews; it is the theme of Werner's important study The Sacred Bridge.