

La LATIN LITURGY ASSOCIATION

Newsletter Number 8

February 1980

Chairman's Letter

This organization is, of course, primarily concerned with promoting the use of the Latin liturgy in this country. It is, however, probably fair to assume that most of our members have a general interest in liturgical questions.

Besides the use of Latin itself, it should also be of concern to us what kind of vernacular liturgy we have. I have noticed in the past year or so that fewer and fewer people seem willing to defend the present I.C.F.L. translation with any apparent degree of conviction. It is interesting that some of the criticisms of the translation (which have now reached the floor of the annual bishops' meeting) come from people on the "left" as well as from traditionalists.

In general the criticisms can probably be lumped into four categories: a) inaccurate translations, b) orthodoxy, c) style, d) relevance.

Let us dispose of the last first. This is the criticism from the "left" by those who say that the language of the liturgy is archaic and simply does not speak to modern man. People who say this want an entirely American liturgical idiom. I doubt whether very many of us share this desire. In any case it is unlikely to be entertained seriously by the bishops or the Holy See.

The first criticism is, in my opinion, the most serious. Anyone with an elementary knowledge of Latin, and who compares the I.C.E.L. translation with the Latin original, notices discrepancies. An English committee has pointed out more than 400 such, some rather trivial but some important.

This immediately leads into the question of orthodoxy. A pattern of mistranslation does seem to emerge - a deemphasis of the objectively sacrificial character of the Mass and a general toning down of all references to the sacred or the holy. Extremists have tried to claim that this makes the "new" Mass invalid, a claim which is absurd, because it is the teaching authority of the Church which guarantees the Mass's validity, not the words themselves. For whatever reason, however, the I.C.E.L. translators have given us a Mass which tends to obscure the true character of that sacrifice more than it should.

Defenders of I.C.E.L. point out that translations, to be truly faithful, cannot be slavishly literal. But that is not the point. No one is asking for a word-by-word translation of the Latin. What we are saying is that certain important ideas are present in the Latin which have been omitted in the English.

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Finally, there is the matter of style. No one that I know of is willing to dispute the premise that the I.C.E.L. style is flat, undistinguished, and dull. It does not inspire. Perhaps the haste with which the work had to be done explains this. But it is not unrelated to the deficiencies of content already noted. The people who translated our liturgy for us seem simply to have been insensitive to many things within it.

In discussions of the "new liturgy" it is worthwhile pointing out that the point is not only Latin versus the vernacular (a false dichotomy) but the adequacy of the vernacular itself.

James Hitchcock

Local News

Rockville Centre, New York - There is a Latin Mass at St. Agnes Cathedral, 22 Quealy Place, on the third Sunday of every month at 11:45 A. M.

Indian Head, Maryland - The assistant pastor at St. Mary's Star of the Sea Church celebrated a Sunday Latin Mass in both December and January and hopes to continue approximately once a month in the future. He also celebrates occasional weekday Latin Masses when requested.

All members are requested to send items of local news to the editor. The following items are particularly needed:

1. Schedules of Latin Masses not previously published in the newsletter.
2. Changes in schedules previously published.
3. Exhortations by Bishops to their clergy to preserve the use of Latin.
4. Items in Parish bulletins concerning Latin.

Latin Liturgy Association: Editorial material for the newsletter should be sent to Charles G. Mills IV, editor, 4-5 Granada Crescent, White Plains, New York 10603. Changes of Address should be sent to Albert N. Garland, 5 Forestwood Court, Columbus, Georgia 31907. Dues should be sent to James Hitchcock, 6158 Kingsbuy Avenue, Saint Louis, Missouri 63112. Dr. Hitchcock is Chairman and Treasurer; Mr. Garland is Secretary of the Association.

Notes from Rome

In two previous newsletters we have reported exhortations of the Holy Father to young people to keep up the study of Latin. There has been a marked decline in this study recently. For example in the fifty year period between 1923 and 1973 the Italian school system required the study of Latin from the sixth to the thirteenth year of the education of all potential University students. In the early 1970's all Latin was eliminated before the ninth year. Many European scholars regard the collapse of their secondary schools as one of the great tragedies of the 1970's.

In Newsletter No. 7 we reported on Father Ernest Piacentini's July 16, 1979 Vatican Radio talk, including his proposals for television in Latin and that Latin be made the language of the united European Community. Father Piacentini is the author of "Potesne lingua latina in communitate europea restitui?" published by the Vatican Foundation Latinitas of which he is Secretary. Latinitas is the foundation which sponsors the Certamen Vaticanum, to the participants in which the Holy Father delivered his first exhortation to study Latin.

The Holy Father's words of November 27, 1978 (quoted in Newsletter No. 6) were the inspiration for an article by Professor Dino Pieraccioni in the January 14, 1979 Vatican weekly l'Osservatore della Domenica. Professor Pieraccioni deplors the state of the study of Latin in "our superficial modern culture" but does not urge a return to the universal Latin education of Fascist Italy. He seems to believe that the study of Latin is flourishing in certain unnamed European countries. He also points out that in addition to the Certamen Vaticanum two other Latin composition contests have recently come into being, one in Rome and another in Florence.

After discussing the Second Vatican Council and Pope Paul VI's statements requiring the preservation of Latin in the Mass, professor Pieraccioni says, "Let us hope that, after the modernist and in a certain sense desacralizing wave of the sixties, without in any way abandoning whatever was wise and useful in the introduction of the vernacular, we can return to a greater fidelity to the Council and a more precise application of it. The German bishops, West and East, set an example two years ago, publishing their Missal in German, with, however, the Latin text on facing pages."

In the July 8, 1979 Osservatore della Domenica Professor Pieraccioni published a front page pessimistic article about the end of a Dutch Latin composition contest which began in 1844. On July 12 he published another article in the Liberal papers of Florence and Bologna, La Nazione and Il Resto del Carlino, which was also later reprinted in Il Popolo. This article displayed the same pessimism and criticizes the proposals of Father Piacentini.

On September 9, 1979 Father Piacentini responded in the pages of the Osservatore della Domenica. He pointed out that the Dutch certamen had been revived in Germany. As to the criticism of his European proposals he pointed out that Professor Pieraccioni

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had praised Senegal for introducing into its schools the teaching of Latin in Latin as a living language. Why can Africa treat Latin as a living language and Europe not be able to?

It is in this context that one must understand the words of the Holy Father on November 25, 1979, when he spoke to this year's winners of the Certamen Vaticanum, one year less a day after his exhortation to continue the study of Latin. He praised the work of Latinitas and pointed out the requirement of adequate knowledge of Latin in Sapientia Christiana for students of the Sacred Sciences. He then turned to the question of Latin's use in describing modern inventions and changes and said, "If therefore in our times we want to see Latin revived not only as a private exercise of men of letters, but also and above all - although within prescribed limits - used by men of culture and thus become a certain bond of unity, it must be made a suitable instrument to express adequately the thought, the sentiments and the behavior of the people of our times."

The Holy Father concluded, "Continue the good work, making use of your talents. Carefully cultivate Latin which is known for its Roman dignity and succinctness. It is suitable to express what is true and right. It stimulates one to think logically. When you have thought out your plans, advance in all directions. Following the guidelines of the ancients, strive always to speak and write Latin clearly, and when the matter requires it, with style, with harmony and fitted to the occasion."

"Finally, whilst asking God to assist you, we impart with affection the Apostolic Blessing."

The permanent quarters of Latinitas were a gift from the Holy See and were opened June 7, 1979 in the presence of Cardinal Pericle Felici.

There are encouraging developments on the purely liturgical scene. In the course of 1979 three articles on the importance of preserving Gregorian chant by Teodoro Onofri were published in the Osservatore della Domenica. Although the author gives ample and fair treatment to the opinion of many that Gregorian chant must always be in Latin, he rejects this conclusion. He does, however, hold that Latin is the perfect form of Gregorian chant and calls for its preservation in Latin along side its vernacular forms.

The Papal Nuncio to the German Federal Republic wrote the following to the Bishop of Augsburg in response to his decree requiring a Sunday or holyday Latin Mass every month in every parish, "I have learned with great satisfaction of the decree regarding the use of the Latin language at Holy Mass, with which Your Excellency has pointed out to the liturgical celebrations in your diocese the path desired by the Church Universal. I express my sincere thanks for this exemplary instruction."

Charles G. Mills IV

Texts

The following is the full text of the talks of Pope John Paul II to the Certamen Vaticanum on November 27, 1978 and November 25, 1979:

*Venerabilis Frater Noster ac dilecti filii,
Libenter vos salutamus, qui linguae Latinae
excolendae et provehendae operam datis: no-*

*minatim Venerabilem Fratrem
Nostrum Periclem Cardinalem
Felici, qui Romani huius ser-
monis cultor peritissimus esse
cognoscitur, moderatores et so-
cios Operis Fundati, quod, « La-
tinitas » appellatum, a Paulo VI,
Decessore Nostro bonae memo-
riae, provido consilio est con-
ditum; ex quibus nonnulli in
Nostra Sacretaria Status docu-
mentis Latinis componendis in-
sistunt; necnon victores Certami-
nis Vaticani vicesimi primi.*

*Quod quidem Certamen, Pio
XII probante et iuvante olim
institutum, valde laudamus,
cum linguae Latinae studiosos
excitet ad impensiores eius-
dem sermonis cognitionem et
usum.*

*Non est qui ignoret haec tem-
pora studiis Latinis minus fa-
vere, cum homines, qui nunc
sunt, in artes technicas sint
procliviores et sermones vulga-
res habeant potiores. Verumtam-
en nolumus a gravibus docu-
mentis Decessorum Nostrorum
discedere, qui momentum lin-
guae Latinae, hac etiam aetate,
maxime quod ad Ecclesiam atti-
net, saepius in luce posuerunt.
Est enim sermo Latinus lingua
quaedam universalis, nationum
fines transcendens atque talis,
ut Sedes Apostolica in litteris
et actis, ad universam Fami-
liam catholicam spectantibus,
eo adhuc firmiter utatur.*

*Est etiam animadvertendum
fontes disciplinarum ecclesia-
sticarum maximam partem lin-
gua Latina esse conscriptos.
Quid vero dicendum de prae-
claris operibus Patrum alio-
rumque magni nominis scripto-
rum, qui hunc ipsum sermo-
nem adhibuerunt? Verae qui-
dem scientiae compos non est
putandus, qui linguam eiusmo-
di descriptionum mente non com-
prehendit, sed solum versionibus,
si quae sunt, niti debet;
quae tamen raro plenum sen-
sus textus primigenii prae-
bent. Hac de causa Concilium*

*Vaticanum Secundum sacro-
rum alumnos merito monuit:
« eam linguae Latinae cognitio-
nem acquirant qua tot scientia-
rum fontes et Ecclesiae docu-
menta intelligere possint »
(Decr. Optatum totius, 13).*

*Ad iuvenes ergo imprimis
convertimur, qui hac aetate,
qua litterae Latinae et humani-
tatis studia multis locis, ut no-
tum est, iacent, hoc veluti La-
tinitatis patrimonium, quod
Ecclesia magni aestimat, ala-
ces accipiant oportet et actuo-
si frugiferum reddant. Nove-
rint ii hoc Ciceronis effatum
ad se quodam modo referri:
« Non... tam praeclarum est sci-
re Latine, quam turpe nescire »
(Brutus, 37, 140).*

*Omnes autem vos, qui hic
adestis, et socios, qui vobis opi-
tulantur, adhortamur, ut perga-
tis nobilem laborem et attola-
tis facem Latinitatis, quae est
etiam, licet arctioribus quam
antea finibus circumscriptum,
vinculum quoddam inter ho-
mines sermone diversos. Scito-
te beati Petri in summo mini-
sterio apostolico successorem
incepti vestri felices exitus pre-
cari, vobis adesse, vos confir-
mare. Cuius rei auspex sit Apo-
stolica Benedictio, quam vobis
singulis universis libentissime
in Domino impertimus.*

*Venerabilis Frater Noster ac
dilecti Fratres et Sorores,*

*Iucunda Nobis sunt ea, quae
Pericles Cardinalis Felici mo-
do, verbis usque humanissimis,
dixit, atque in memoriam tem-
pus revocamus, quo eum, cum
esset Secretarius Concilii Oe-
cumenici Vaticani Secundi, in
Basilica Sancti Petri ex tempo-
re ac profluenter Latine lo-
quentem audivimus.*

*Post annum elapsum gaude-
mus vos iterum salutare, mo-
deratores et socios Operis Fun-*

dati, cui nomen Latinitas, atque victores Certaminis Vaticani, quibus ex animo gratulamur; salutamus vos, qui hisce temporibus ignem Latinitatis vigilanter custoditis, sollerter alitis, intrepide defenditis.

Scitote Nos favore et benevolentia vos et operam prosequi vestram. Nosmet ipsi, ut scitis, hoc anno Constitutionem Apostolicam edidimus, Latine, ut moris est, conscriptam et a verbis « Sapiencia Christiana » incipientem, qua studiorum Universitates et Facultates ecclesiasticae novo quodam ordine componerentur. Ei Constitutioni additae sunt Ordinationes Sacrae Congregationis pro Institutione Catholica, in quibus haec norma continetur: « Congrua linguae Latinae cognitio in Facultatibus scientiarum sacrarum requiritur, ut studentes harum scientiarum fontes et Ecclesiae documenta intellegere atque adhibere possint » (IV, art. 24 par. 3; AAS LXXI, 1979, p. 507). Itaque ergo alumni, qui ad altiorum studiorum ecclesiasticorum sedes accedunt, nisi linguae Latinae curriculum antea absolverint, eandem linguam, praetermissa quasi compensando, discant oportet, quemadmodum in Pontificiis Universitatibus et Athenaeis Romanis, ut exemplum afferamus, iam fieri contingit.

Novimus equidem Operi Fundato, quod Latinitas appellatur, propositum esse studium et usum linguae Latinae promovere. Si mentem in usum ipsum intendimus, ponitur quaestio utrum lingua Latina — quae a non paucis iam seiuncta aestimatur ab hominum consuetudine, quasi sermo quidam antiquus et, ut aiunt, mortuus — adhuc possit reapse vigere. Ecclesia, quae Latina vocatur, quamvis propter utilitates pastorales in Liturgiis etiam sermones vulgares induxerit, tamen a principio, ex quo lingua eius propria est Latina, non discedit. Potiora quidem documenta Apostolicae Sedis eadem lingua pergunt conscribi. Verumtamen possuntne omnes notiones, omnia inventa, quibus haec aetas, tot mutationibus obnoxia, utitur, verbis reddi Lati-

nis? Haec quaestio non facilis esse videtur.

Re quidem vera per totum medium aevum et etiam postea linguae Latinae usus satis communis erat in scholis, in libris conscribendis, in actis publicis conficiendis: quapropter is sermo ad res novas significandas flectebatur aut verba nova recipiebat. Si ergo temporibus nostris volumus, ut lingua Latina reflorescat non solum ut umbratilis exercitatio litteratorum, sed etiam, ac quidem maxime, licet intra fines circumscriptos, in usu hominum doctrina excultorum et sic vinculum quoddam unitatis evadat, oportet aptum fiat instrumentum ad ea omnia interpretanda, quae aequales nostri cogitatione exprimunt, animi affectione enuntiant, operatione efficiunt. Iam venerandus Decessor Noster Paulus VI id sensit, cum quaereret, an sperandum esset atque agendum, ut lingua Latina pristinas possessiones servare posset et amplificare. Respondit ipse: « Non infitandum est rem esse gravem, laboriosam ac magnis difficultatibus obseptam. Sed saltem ex parte et communi cum utilitate ad effectum deducetur, si in id incumbatur, ut quemadmodum vetera, ita nova scripta maioris momenti Latinis vocabulis significantur » (Alloc. d. 16 m. Apr. 1966 habita; AAS LVIII, 1966, p. 361). En campus late patens, in quem industria vestra excurrat. Accepimus quidem vos eiusmodi negotium, operam inter vos sociantes, iam esse aggressos. Optamus ergo, ut res ex sententia procedat.

Macte virtute et ingenio estote! Linguam Latinam, Romana maiestate et brevilloquentia insignem, quasi ad sculpendum verum et rectum idoneam, ad acriter et logice cogitandum impellentem, diligenter colite et meditatiis consiliis quoque versus provehite! Contendite, ut, antiquorum praecepta secuti, semper dilucide et plane et, cum res fert, ornate et numerose, apte et congruenter dicatis Latine atque scribatis.

Denique divina auxilia vobis precantes, Benedictionem Apostolicam amantissime impertimus.

Today's Hymnals

Growing numbers of Catholic hymnals are being published for use in American Catholic parishes. And more and more parishes are considering the purchase of such hymnals to replace leaflet missals currently in use. Those interested in Latin liturgies should be concerned with what these hymnals have to offer in the way of Latin hymns and ordinaries.

Perhaps the most widely used American Catholic hymnal is Worship II (G.I.A., Chicago, 1975). This comprehensive work includes a Latin ordinary (Asperges Me, Kyrie XVI, Gloria VIII, Credo III, Sanctus XVIII, Pater Noster, Agnus Dei XVIII) and 18 hymns ranging - alphabetically - from "Adoro te" to the sequence "Victimae paschali laudes". There is also a "cantus missae" section, chants which follow the readings, the prefatory dialogue, dismissal, etc.

If 18 hymns in Latin would appear to be a sparse selection, the Catholic Liturgy Book (Helicon, Baltimore, 1975) presents even fewer. This otherwise excellent publication includes only 8 Latin hymns along with a Latin ordinary (6 different Kyrie settings, Gloria VIII, Credo III, Sanctus VIII, Pater Noster, Agnus Dei VIII). English-speaking Canadian Catholics have a similar situation with their Catholic Book of Worship (Gordon V. Thompson, Toronto, 1972). The 1972 edition of this "officially approved hymnal for English-speaking Canada" contains only 12 Latin hymns and Mass VIII (De Angelis).

Two English publications which we have examined - New Catholic Hymnal (Faber, London, 1971) and Praise the Lord (Chapman, London, 1972) - offer virtually nothing for those interested in Latin singing. The New Catholic Hymnal, which was available in the United States through St. Martin's Press, makes a "rule" of including only English texts, the only exception being "Adeste fideles". Praise the Lord, which is currently available through Liturgical Press, includes a Latin ordinary (Kyrie XVI, Gloria XV, Credo III, Sanctus XVIII, Agnus Dei XVIII) but no additional Latin material. This general exclusion of Latin in these two publications is unfortunate since, in other respects, they may be considered among the finest Catholic publications of their kind to date.

The expectation that Catholics "know how to sing at least some parts of the Ordinary of Mass in Latin" (No. 19, General Instruction of the Roman Missal) can hardly be well served by publications such as these. The inclusion of a single Latin ordinary provides no opportunity for choice or variety. The prospect for other singing in Latin is perhaps no less dismal. Even where the selection of material is comparatively generous (e. g. Worship II), the realistic expectation should be for future publications to include fewer and fewer Latin hymns.

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It is obvious, therefore, that those interested in singing in Latin will generally have to look towards special publications such as Iubilate Deo and the Liber Cantualis. This fact, unfortunately, tends to isolate even further Latin singing from normal congregational activity. The hope that some of our Latin heritage could be preserved in the average Catholic parish is certainly fading very rapidly.

Vincent A. Lenti

A Note on Style

One of the rules of style which your editor has imposed on this newsletter is that the expression "Novus Ordo" is never used. Instead we use expressions such as "Ordo", "Ordo Missae", "1970 Ordinary", "revised Ordinary" etc. The reason for this is that the expression "Novus Ordo" does not appear in the documents promulgating the 1970 Missal and the 1969 text of the Ordinary do not use this term. Your editor is convinced that the term "Novus Ordo" is an invention which has acquired wide use in traditional Catholic circles in the United States because it sounds familiar; after all it is on the great seal of the United States and the one Dollar bill. Your editor also objects to the implied idea that the Roman Missal of 1970 is a new rite. The Roman Rite remains the Roman Rite despite revisions in it. It is not new.

Another word which your editor has banned from these pages is "Missalette". The word "Missal" came into English directly from Latin. The use of a French suffix with it is at least arguably a barbarism. In any event the ear protests that Missal is too strong a word for that suffix. "Missalette" is an addition the English language can do without.

CGM

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