THE PRIEST

the journal of Australian Confraternity of Catholic Clergy

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Ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia.
Where Peter is, there is the Church.

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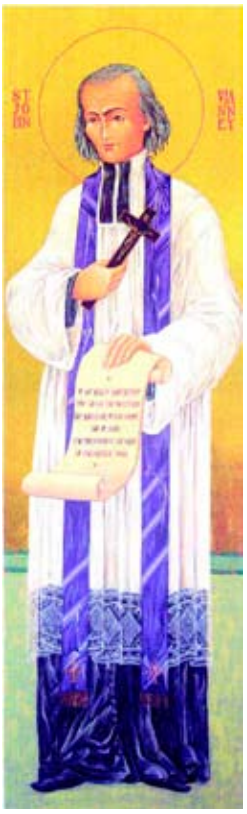


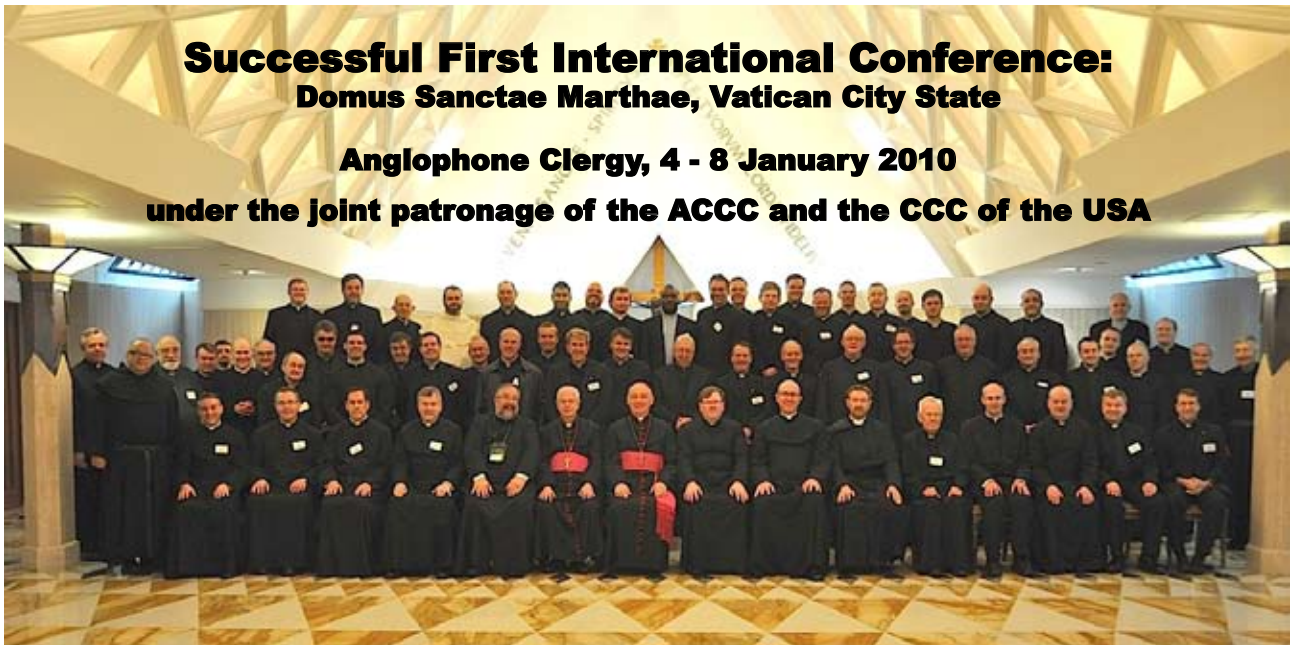
"I think of all those priests who quietly present Christ's words and actions each day to the faithful and to the whole world, striving to be one with the Lord in their throughts and their will, their sentiments and their style of life ... [remaining] faithful to their vocation as 'Friends of Christ'."
(Holy Father in Instuting the Year for Priests)

Picture of the icon commissioned by the Bishops of New Zealand for the Year for Priests: **copy courtesy of NZ Catholic and The Catholic Weekly.**

Saint John Mary Vianney, Patron Saint of Priests and "patron" of our 2010 International Conference, Rome, for the Year for Priests.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ISSUE
Australian and USA Confraternities of Catholic Clergy, Rome, January 2010

Successful First International Conference:
Domus Sanctae Marthae, Vatican City State
Anglophone Clergy, 4 - 8 January 2010
under the joint patronage of the ACCC and the CCC of the USA



THE PRIEST

the journal of the Australian Confraternity of Catholic Clergy

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Ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia.
Where Peter is, there is the Church.

Chairmen's Word

Pope Benedict XVI afforded us the opportunity to accomplish our long held hope of holding an International Conference for anglophone clergy. In calling the "Year for Priests", the Holy Father pushed us to put aside all the practical and logistical obstacles that seemed before us and to realise the long held hope!

And what a time we had! Over 80 priests from Australia, USA, New Zealand, Ireland, England, Scotland and Nigeria gathered in the shadow of St Peter's Basilica to celebrate the gift of the Sacred Priesthood, to hear talks of the highest calibre that will assist our priestly ministry, to spend time in fraternal conversation and above all to celebrate the Sacred Mysteries.

The two Confraternities of Catholic Clergy of the USA and of Australia met together and encouraged our priestly brothers from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales to form their own confraternity. Please God, this new confraternity will emerge in the coming months.

The Conference was a real "shot in the arm" for those who attended. The celebration of the Sacred Liturgy was dignified, noble and beautiful. We were privileged to have magnificent churches and basilicas, gracious and erudite celebrants and preachers, and magnificent music provided by the "Lassus Scholars" of Dublin. We wish to record the debt of gratitude that we owe to our benefactors and sponsors: His Eminence George Cardinal Pell, The Sovereign Order of the Knights of Malta and Granda Liturgical Arts.

Over the years we have been attending Confraternity conferences we have been blessed with some excellent speakers. We have never experienced, however, a conference where every talk and speaker was excellent. On this occasion we did. We were truly graced by the depth, scholarship and practical application of all of our talks. Those who did not attend will have the benefit of reading these talks as they are reproduced in this Special Issue of *The Priest*.

The Conference was a success because so many people put hours of work and dedication into the preparation. We wish to express the thanks of all to the following who contributed so much: Fr Mark Withoos, our man in Rome; Fr Glen Tattersall, the major organiser from the Australian end; Mrs Carmel Negline, our indefatigable administrative officer of our Secretariat; and Dr Chris Steward, for his IT expertise and assistance with photography and with booklets (with Hugh Henry).

The special website developed by Dr Chris Steward to publicise the Conference was a great success and contributed to so many priests from diverse parts of the English-speaking world attending.

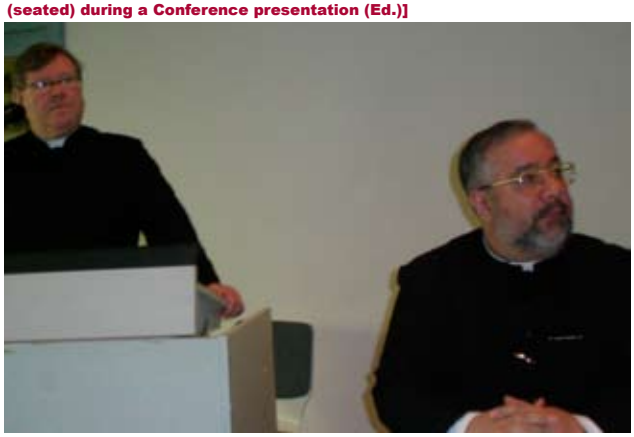
We are particularly grateful for this Special International Conference issue of *The Priest*, so timely produced by our Editor, and under difficult conditions during his Seminary teaching assignment in Ethiopia.

My hope is that the bonds forged during those great days in Rome will continue to bear fruit for the Church and for the health and vitality of the ministerial priesthood.

The only adequate response that one can make to days such as those we spent together in Rome is: **DEO GRATIAS**

Rev John Walshe, National Chairman, ACCC
Rev Dr John Trigilio, President, CCC, USA

[Pictured below are the Australian Chairman (standing) and the USA President (seated) during a Conference presentation (Ed.)]



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Glimpses of our First International Conference

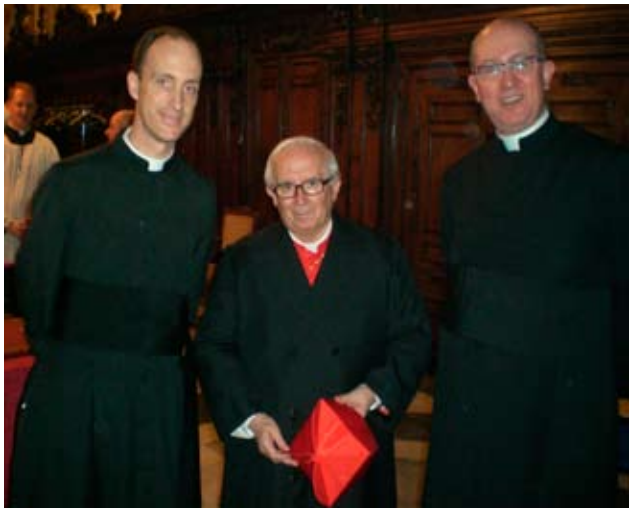
Conferences do not just "happen"

Conferences do not just "happen": they have to be organised. Some one remarked that organising priests is like herding cats! Add to this the fact that the Conference occurred in Rome, where "pazienza" is the watchword, and it is amazing that the Conference "happened"! and happened with efficiency!

The selection of speakers was dazzling; the selection of principal celebrants for the liturgies was dazzling; the music for the liturgies was wonderful; the venues amazing – and all the hard work from our Secretariat (which means Mrs Carmel Negline!), the work in internet promotion (which means Dr Chris Steward) bore fruit! From the Australian end, Father Glen Tattersall of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, was the primary mover. And from the Rome end, another Melbourne priest, now working in the Congregation for Divine Worship, Father Mark Withoos, was the primary mover. The last also bore the biggest burden for "making things happen" during the Conference itself.

There are other names who deserve to be remembered and who should be specifically mentioned (our hard-working Treasurer, Father Andrew Wise, for example), but in all fairness, the faces in the top righthand photo deserve the greatest prominance, and the greatest thanks for all that they did for the bishops, priests and deacons who were so blessed by the hard and generous work undertaken for the Conference.

We were extremely fortunate in having the Domus Sanctae Marthae in the Vatican City as our main venue, and nearby Casa Pastor Bonus, conducted by the Vicariate of Rome, for additional accommodation, and are grateful to the Directors and staff of these venues for their kind attention to our hospitality. The bottom right hand photo was taken during our first gathering at "the Domus". We also were extremely fortunate in having the use of a lecture room and gathering space at the nearby Pontifical Teutonic College in the Vatican for most of our Conference lectures. The different presenters to whom we are specially indebted are acknowledged with the presentation of their papers in this special Conference Issue of our journal. A selected photographic record of this our first International Conference is presented at pages 25-26 of this issue, and remarks by the Chairmen of the two Confraternities are found at the opposite page. **(Ed.)**



His Eminence Antonio Cardinal Canizares Llovera, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, following his celebration of Holy Mass according to the Extraordinary Form for the Conference at St John Lateran Basilica on Thursday 7 January 2010. The Cardinal is flanked (left) by Father Mark Withoos and (right) by Father Glen Tattersall (see text to the left of photo).

Lassus Scholars from Dublin, Ireland, provided the vocal music for the Conference (supported by a local orchestra for the St John Lateran Mass), and Father Nicholas Dillon of the Diocese of Dunedin, NZ (presently working in the Archdiocese of Melbourne) as organist.

The above photo was taken after the Mass of the Chair of St Peter at the Altar of the Chair in St Peter's Basilica on Friday 8 January 2010, at which the Most Rev. Raymond Burke, Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura, was the Principal Celebrant.

(Photo at left) His Excellency, the Honourable Tim Fisher, Ambassador for Australia to the Holy See, with the President of the CCC in the USA and the National Chairman of the ACCC, during the Commencement Dinner at Domus Sanctae Marthae, in the Vatican City, Monday, 4 January 2010.

Priestly Identity: truth and charity

Dario Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos

Rabbi: You are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel *(Jn 1:49)*

Introduction. This brief but resounding confession of faith by the apostle Nathaniel gives us the basis for Christ's mission: his divine sonship. He is the Word Incarnate. This is one of the two hinges on which today's liturgy swings: the revealed truth about the Son of God. The other hinge is charity: God loves us so much that he pours himself into us, and because of the dynamics of his love, he asks us for a similar response of self-giving. The full accomplishment of charity in truth − *caritas in veritate* − is the goal of God's plan of salvation; that is, participation in God's life in Christ Jesus.

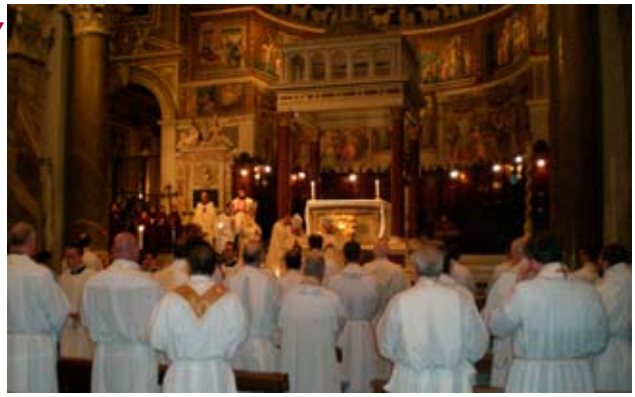
In his latest encyclical, the Holy Father reminds us that "in Christ, charity in truth becomes the Face of his Person" (*Caritas Veritate* n. 1). Thus Our Lord is the fulcrum of all salvation history and the source of holiness.

In the context of the Year for Priests, I want to reflect with you, my dear brothers in the priesthood, on the priestly identity, which in an analogous way also swings on those two hinges: the truth that we are ministers of the Lord, and the charity that must inspire all we do as priests.

The truth of our priestly ordination

In the Gospel we heard the vocation of two of the Apostles; we see how Our Lord sets some men apart for a very specific calling. The author of the Letter ot the Hebrews tells us that "every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that pertain to God" (Heb. 5:1). Now this expresses the nature of priesthood as mediation, an aspect of the ministry formally established by the sacrament of Orders. Therefore those who are configured as partakers in Christ's priesthood "can act in the person of Christ the Head" (Vat. II, *Pres. Ord.* n. 2).[1] And so the words Saint Paul addresses to the Corinthians regarding the shepherds of the community enter into their full meaning: "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God." (1Cor 4:1) A priest's identity, then, goes through sacramental identification with

[1] *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, "Decree on the ministyr and life of priests".



His Eminence Dario Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos, Emeritus most recently of Pontifical Commission "Ecclesia Dei", honoured us as Principal Celbrant at a celebration of the Ordinary Form of the Roman rite during our Conference. The photo was taken on this occasion in the glorious setting of Santa Maria in Trastevere, Rome.

Christ. It is an ontological identification, but it is meant to acquire perfection in the ordained minister when he truly and lovingly lives this gift in obedience to God's will. The Incarnate Word did not shun this aspect of human nature; he too was faithful and obedient to the Father's will, and so, "he became, to all that obey him, the cause of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9). Following his Master's lead, a priest perfects the gift he has received by lovingly fulfilling the will of God that the duties of his state, the regulations of the Church, his Bishop, and private prayer make known to him.

While seeking God's will, a priest knows that it is always absolutely necessary to keep in mind that his calling is a gift from God. Jesus has called us, his priests, from all eternity to be united in his one priesthood, since he alone is Ruler, Teacher, and Sanctifier. This does not change, it is the essence. Union with Christ is the core of a priest's identity and mission, as the Lord himself warned before ending his mission among us: "He that abides in me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit: for without me you can do nothing." (Jn 15:5) Without this union we are dried-up branches, with nothing to offer today's world.

Castrillón Hoyos, continued at page 48, below.

Burke, continued from page 4, opposite.

As we contemplate the mystery of the Birth of our Lord and of His Epiphany, may we come to a deeper knowledge and love of the irreplaceable ministry of the ordained priest in our lives. May we come to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the essential priestly ministry of proclaiming the truth.

May our celebration of Christmas and Epiphany inspire us to be renewed in our daily prayer for priests, so that they may be of one heart with the Heart of Jesus, the Most Sacred Heart which he received under the Immaculate Heart of Mary and which was pierced by the Roman soldier's spear after His death on the Cross, the glorious pierced Heart of Jesus from which the bounty of God's love for us in the Church flows immeasurably and unceasingly. May we pray especially for priests in our time, that they may preach and teach from the Heart of Jesus, with deepest respect for the truth and with courage in the face of misunderstanding and rejection.

Celebrating, dear brothers, our priestly vocation and mission during these days of Christmas and the Epiphany, you are witnesses, in a pre-eminent way, to the truth that God has indeed fulfilled the promise which he made to our ancestors in the faith, the promise of eternal salvation through the outpouring of His life for us and for all men.

May the offering of the Holy Mass, today, fill you with new enthusiasm and new energy in responding to your vocation and mission in Christ Head and Shepherd of the flock in every time and place. May it strengthen you, in a special way, for your mission of proclaiming the truth of the Gospel with wisdom and courage. We contemplate the mystery of Redemptive Incarnation in the Birth and Epiphany of the Lord in time. We contemplate the mystery in our Lord's abiding presence with us in the Sacrament of His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. May the celebration of the mystery of the Birth and Epiphany of the Lord fill us today and always with deepest trust in God's promise of salvation. May it fill us now and always with joy and peace in the company of Christ Who dwells with us in the Church, Who gives Himself to us through the ministry of His priests.

Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, have mercy on us.

Holy Mother of God, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, Foster-father of the Son of God, pray for us.

Saint John Mary Vianney, pray for us.

Jesus Christ our Priest

Archbishop Raymond Burke

This International Conference Special Issue of this journal does not have much by way of "light" pieces, for the conference papers were generally of a learned tone. Homilies are generally more widely accessible, as is this one, and, moreover, as its topic is so central to our Conference theme, "The last shall be first", and the last "presentation" comes toward the front in this Special Issue. (Editor)

The Most Rev. Raymond Burke, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, was Principal Celebrant and Homilist at a Holy Mass in the Ordinary Form at the Altar of the Chair in St Peter's Basilica on Friday 8 January 2010.

He afterwards gave Conference participants a guided tour of the Apostolic Signatura, and kindly answered questions put to him.

Praised be Jesus Christ, now and for ever. Amen.

[Lections for this Votive Mass of the Chair of St Peter:
1 Pt 5:1-4; Ps 23:1-3a, 4, 5, 6; Mt 16:13-19.]

The great and abiding cause of the joy of the Nativity of the Lord and of His Epiphany to the nations through the Three Kings is clearly expressed in the First Letter of John. The cause of our joy is the testimony given by the Holy Spirit Himself:

God gave us eternal life,
and this life is in his Son (1 Jn 5:11).

Through the Birth of Jesus Who is God the Son conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, God the Father has indeed given us a share in His own divine life; He has chosen us as His beloved sons and daughters, without boundary, even as He manifested His unconditional love of all men through His manifestation to the Three Kings.

During the Year for Priests, our thoughts turn, in a special way, to the significance of the Nativity and Epiphany of the Lord for those called to be configured to Christ, "head of His Body, Shepherd of His flock, High Priest of the Redemptive Sacrifice, Teacher of Truth" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n.1548). By the grace given in priestly ordination, the priest truly acts "in the person of Christ the Head" (*in persona Christi Capitis*) (*ibid*.). Contemplating the image of the Infant Saviour and of His manifestation to the Three Kings, we come to understand what it means to be a priest. The priest, like the Infant Jesus, God the Son made man, is called to empty himself totally for the sake of saving all souls, without limit and without cease. Contemplating the mystery of the Redemptive Incarnation, we come to understand that, if the priest is to offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice for the salvation of the world, if he is to forgive man's sins in the Sacrament of Penance; if, in short, he is to act in the person of Christ, then he must first be made "another Christ". His whole being must be marked by God with the indelible character of Christ the High Priest, so that he may belong totally to Christ in the exercise of the Shepherd's love of all men, in the exercise of pastoral charity.

Saint John Mary Vianney, patron saint of parish priests, the 150th anniversary of whose death we are celebrating by observing the Year for Priests, declared that we will only understand well the priest in Heaven and that, if we understood him on earth we would die, not of fright, but of love ("Le prêtre ne se comprendra bien que dans le ciel. Si on le comprenait sur la terre, on mourrait non de frayeur mais d'amour" (A. Monnin, *Esprit du Curé d'Ars, Saint J.-B.-M. Vianney dans ses Catéchismes, ses Homélies et sa Conversation*: Librairie Pierre Téqui, Paris, 2007, p. 97). He taught about the priesthood with these words:

> All of the other benefits of God would be of no good to us at all without the priest. Of what good would be a house full of gold, if you would have no one who could open the door for you? The priest holds the key of the heavenly treasures; it is he who opens the door. He is the steward of the Good God, the dispenser of His goods.
>
> (Les autres bienfaits de Dieu ne nous serviraient de rien sans le prêtre. À quoi servirait une maison remplie d'or, si vous n'aviez personne pour vous ouvrir la porte? Le prêtre a la clef des trésors célestes: c'est lui qui ouvre la porte; il est l'économe du Bon Dieu, l'administrateur de ses biens [*ibid*., p. 88]).

One only understands the ordained priesthood in the light of the total humility of the Infant Jesus, God the Son giving Himself totally to the salvific will of the Father. To the degree that the seminarian empties himself of himself in response to the call of Christ, he is disposed to receive the grace of priestly ordination. To the degree that the priest continues to empty himself of himself, as the humble steward of divine graces, he fulfills faithfully and generously the call of Christ. The Year for Priests is a time of grace for the whole Church. For priests, it is a particular time to recognise anew the tremendous grace of ordination, the great gift of a life given completely to Christ the High Priest for the shepherding of the flock.

Celebrating Mass at the Basilica of Saint Peter, at the altar of the Chair of Saint Peter, we are deeply conscious of the unbroken line of apostolic succession by which the grace of priesthood is conferred by Christ Himself through the hands of a successor of the Apostles. In a particular way, we reflect upon the grace of proclaiming the truth of faith – taught, safeguarded and sustained by the Chair of Peter – , which is given to the Bishops, in communion with the Roman Pontiff, and the priests, their coworkers. Our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI, in his address at the General Audience following the inauguration of the Year for Priests on the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, reflected upon the priesthood in the light of the mystery of the Incarnation, which we celebrate with greatest joy in these days. Regarding the priest's proclamation of the Word of God, he declared:

> As an *alter Christus*, the priest is profoundly united to the Word of the Father who, in becoming incarnate took the form of a servant, he became a servant (Phil 2:5-11). The priest is a servant of Christ, in the sense that his existence, configured to Christ ontologically, acquires an essentially relational character: he is *in* Christ, *for* Christ and *with* Christ, at the service of humankind.
>
> Because he belongs to Christ, the priest is radically at the service of all people: he is the minister of their salvation, their happiness and their authentic liberation, developing, in this gradual assumption of Christ's will, in prayer, in "being heart to heart" with him. Therefore this is the indispensable condition for every proclamation, which entails participation in the sacramental offering of the Eucharist and docile obedience to the Church

(*L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly Edition in English, 1 July 2009, p. 11).

Burke, continued at page 3, opposite.

Perspectives on the Priesthood in Recent Times

Monsignor J. Anthony McDaid

Rev. Mgr J. Anthony McDaid, DCL, is a priest of the Archdiocese of Denver, USA, and is Office Head in the Congregation for Clergy. He is pictured during his opening address to the Conference following our commencement dinner in Domus Sanctae Marthae in the Vatican City. The views here expressed are his, not those of the Congregation for Clergy. (Ed.)

Introductory remarks. Having had the honour of previously addressing some members of this august body in Perth, Australia, a number of years ago, it is a distinct privilege to address you, in a more international grouping, "sub umbra Petri", here in the Eternal City of Rome.

Year for Priests. We meet during the "Year for Priests" established by the Holy Father to help us, as priests wherever we may be, to refurbish our personal contact with the spiritual realities that guide us through this world, to help us persevere in our vocations and to, one might say, recalibrate our navigational instruments setting them clearly on the *Persona* of Christ and emulate His Faithfulness so that we may truly represent Him in this, our moment of History and thus be faithful ministers of His Gospel to His Holy People.

If such a year is necessary, are we in trouble then, as priests, have we lost our way? A question to be pondered.

Constant need for reform. I rather like to think of us as being a part of the "Ecclesia semper reformanda" and thus the constant need for recalibration is seen as being part and parcel of the "normal" priesthood – not a response to a specific crisis, *per se*. This view would be "trashed", of course, as ecclesiastical double-speak by those who wish to portray a bewildered, befuddled priesthood, in a world of diminishing returns regarding priestly vocations, where the priest is seen merely as a bureaucratic functionary who can be just as easily replaced by a lay person. In fact such a solution is seen as probably better and would result in a saner Church as the lay person would not be saddled by that which is seen as a constricting, even perverting discipline – I refer of course to celibacy – to which the priest is bound. Needless to say, I do not share the "world view" I just enunciated, but, it is the view of many who would like nothing better than to do away with us and our Church.

And into this moment of history, God has sent us as His priests.

When one views the state of the priesthood world wide, the pre-eminent impression is that the Church is well served by many faithful, loyal and dedicated priests who labour, sometimes under intolerable circumstances, and who with an increasing regularity find themselves, in some counties, in peril of their very lives. Yet priests continue to serve the Church, and young men continue to answer the call to priesthood, despite the challenging realities of our times.

Priests of the Mystical Body of Christ. We can sometimes get locked into our parochial and national circumstances and forget that, as Catholics, we are not an arm of the Social Services of our national governments, nor are we civil servants, nor are we responsible to the media, but we are part of the Mystical Body of Christ that is Catholic/Universal and numbers over 1 billion adherents, and we are responsible to God, because it is He Who has placed us in a leadership position in His Church and no one else. We Catholics are one sixth of the world's total population, constantly growing and are the largest organised body of any world religion.

That there are problems to be found on both sides of the sanctuary is not to wondered at and neither is this "news". Moses murdered, Noah and his daughters, least said the better, David and the generation of King Solomon… that's before we even get into the Christian era. Puritans we are not. Catholics we are who rejoice that God does not seek the death of the sinner but that he be reformed and live.

Original Sin does not discriminate nor is it rendered immediately powerless by Holy Orders or by Baptism. It's effects are washed away for the Chosen Ones, but, in this "vale of tears", we all cry to God for forgiveness, especially over our own personal faults and failings that diminish the vitality of the Church's face in society and provide excuses for those who wish to render us absolutely unseen and unheard and use our foibles as the reason for their own lack of religious response.

All of that being said, our priests serve well wherever they are called. They are in the front line of being the presence of Christ to His People as the People of God live their lives and deaths in this world. This is true in such far flung and disparate places as China, Ireland, Viet Nam, Turkey, the Middle East, America, Australasia – the list encircles the globe… priests and people are united in God's service and the believers know it, and we should not forget this. As for the rest, they are the rest, nothing more, nothing less. We would like to have them with us, but it is their choice. In this day and age, I really think we must care for our own family of faith and evangelise by example, especially in the so called First World and not allow ourselves to lose that hope that is central to the Good News simply because our peccadilloes are trumpeted from the heights as though we had the monopoly on sin!

A "health" approach that is not "the world's". That being said, "How do we keep ourselves on the right track in this confused moment of History so as to be who we are called to be?" On the personal level we must listen to sage voices, eat the right foods and take exercise. See, our formulae are not so different from "health" crowd! At least, at first glance.

In the multi-racial, multi-national "corpus" that makes up

McDaid, continued at page 39, below.

A Patristic and Pastoral Trilogy:

De Fuga of Gregory of Nazianzus, De Sacertotio of John Chrysostom, and Regula Pastoralis of Gregory the Great

Father Joseph Carola, SJ

Rev. Joseph Carola is a Priest of the New Orleans Province of the Society of Jesus. He has a doctorate in Patristic Sciences from the Augustinium in Rome and teaches at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

Introduction

From the vast patristic literary corpus, three works stand out as classic texts on the priesthood: Gregory of Nazianzus' *Second Oration*, otherwise known as the *De fuga*; John Chrysostom's *De sacerdotio*; and Gregory the Great's *Regula Pastoralis*. These three works are in fact related. Gregory of Nazianzus' *De fuga* inspired John Chrysostom's treatise on the priesthood, and Pope Gregory explicitly cites the Cappadocian Gregory's oration on one occasion while clearly alluding to it on another. Indeed, the tenor of the Roman Pontiff's *Regula Pastoralis* closely resembles the respective works of the two Greek Fathers. While each treatise represents a distinct literary genre (the *De fuga* is an *apologia* preached before a liturgical assembly; the *De sacerdotio* recounts a dialogue between two friends; and the *Regula Pastoralis* is ostensibly a letter to John, the Bishop of Ravenna), all three treat a similar theme: flight before the office of priest and bishop. Each author defends his reluctance to accept ordination on the grounds that the sacerdotal office entails such great responsibilities and involves tremendous risks. Each Church Father likewise expresses his deep appreciation for the contemplative life from which he had been called in order to assume the pastoral care of souls. Gregory of Nazianzus pines for the banks of the river Iris in the province of Pontus where he once shared the companionship of Basil the Great in monastic seclusion. John Chrysostom recalls the tranquillity of the monastic hermitage which he had previously enjoyed. Gregory the Great has only to look across the rooftops of the Eternal City to the Caelian hill where stands the monastery dedicated to Saint Andrew which he founded on the grounds of his family's estate. While a strongly contemplative dimension is present in these works, in no way does it detract from their masterful elaboration of the pastoral life. Indeed, these three treatises form what one scholar has rightly called a "pastoral trilogy".[1]

Dating these works. Gregory of Nazianzus preached his *apologia* shortly after Easter of 362, having only recently returned from the monastic setting to which he had fled the year before after his "forced" ordination to the priesthood at the hands of his father, the Bishop of Nazianzus. While the dating of Chrysostom's *De sacerdotio* remains an open question, modern scholarship generally attributes the treatise to the early years of his priestly ministry in Antioch; that is, between the years 388 and 390. Gregory the Great wrote the *Regula Pastoralis* at the very beginning of his pontificate during the months between September of 590 and February of 591. Today, we might be tempted to call it his first Encyclical Letter. In the dedicatory preface to part one, Gregory frames his opus as a response to John of Ravenna who had rebuked the Roman Pontiff for his initial hesitation in assuming episcopal office.

Content of these texts. Our three patristic texts contain numerous themes: the demands of the pastoral life, the art of preaching, the tremendous responsibility of the ordained, the condemnation of clerical ambition, the scandalous behaviour of some members of the clergy, and the extraordinary virtue of the ideal priest. Each text merits a close reading. With you this morning, I wish simply to consider three overarching themes: priestly ministry, priestly life and priestly witness. Our three Church Fathers hold that effective ministry flows from a life of priestly virtue which, given the priest's public witness, must be exemplary. Without the latter, they argue, the former is greatly impaired. Although the Augustinian notion given medieval expression in the phrase *ex opere operato* is not explicitly found in these texts, neither is it necessarily contradicted. But given the authors' implicit aim to present an exalted image of the priesthood in order to counteract clerical mediocrity and sinfulness, the emphasis is squarely placed upon the priest himself and the tremendous responsibility of his sacred office.

Priestly Ministry

Munus regendi. We find in these three patristic texts the triple *munera* of the priestly office: the *munus regendi*, the *munus docendi* and the *munus sanctificandi*. Gregory of Nazianzus calls the *munus regendi*, or duty of pastoral governance, "the art of arts and the science of sciences."[2] This art entails a ministry of healing. The priest governs in order to cure souls. Indeed, for Gregory, the *munus regendi* is explicitly at the service of the *munus sanctificandi*. Inasmuch as the soul is superior to the body, the priestly physician is superior to the ordinary medical doctor. He is likewise superior to those whom he governs. Right order and the beauty of the Church demand such. Before the priest can engage in his ministry of spiritual healing for the good of others, he himself must first have recovered from his own spiritual malaise. It is not so much a matter of "Physician, heal thyself", as it is one of "Be healed before attempting to heal." "The scope of our art", Gregory explains,

> is to provide the soul with wings, to rescue it from the world and give it to God, and to watch over that which is in His image, if it abides, to take it by the hand, if it is in danger, or restore it, if ruined, to make Christ to dwell in the heart by the Spirit: and in short, to deify, and bestow heavenly bliss upon, one who belongs to the heavenly host.[3]

Thus the priest's pastoral governance hierarchically ordained by God stands at the service of the flock's salvation.

For his part John Chrysostom envisions the priesthood as an angelic ministry exercised by men on earth for the good of souls. He specifically notes that "The divine law excluded

women from this ministry"[4] and he insists that – given the magnitude of the task – most men should stand aside as well. The Holy Spirit and he alone has ordained the priestly succession, persuading "men, while still in the flesh to represent the ministry of angels".[5] But the priestly authority to bind and loose sinners exceeds even the powers granted to the angelic host. Indeed, no greater authority on earth has been given to man. For, by it the priest opens the gates of heaven to the sinner.[6]

Echoing Gregory of Nazianzus, Pope Gregory the Great instructs that *ars est artium regimen animarum*, "the government of souls is the art of arts".[7] Duly rebuked by John of Ravenna, the Roman Pontiff humbly embraces the Divine Will made manifest to him in his election to the papacy, noting that genuine humility "is not obstinate in declining to undertake what is enjoined to be profitably undertaken."[8] The first to adopt the papal title *servus servorum Dei*, Gregory envisions the ecclesiastical hierarchy in terms of pastoral service for the sake of preaching and fraternal correction. While all men enjoy equality on account of a common human nature, they differ in terms of vice. "Wherefore," Gregory admonishes, "all who are superiors should not regard in themselves the power of their rank, but the equality of their nature; and they should find their joy not in ruling over men, but in helping them…. Supreme rank is, therefore, well-administered, when the superior lords it over vices rather than over brethren."[9] To this end, the *munus regendi* employs the *munus docendi*.

Munus docendi. The priest serves the people, the Cappadocian Gregory acknowledges, by instructing them in the faith and defending the truth. John Chrysostom insists that the preacher be simultaneously skilful in speech and humble in spirit. He should possess the force of eloquence all the while holding praise in contempt. He should seek God's glory and not his own before men. "It will be sufficient encouragement for his efforts," John explains, "and one much better than anything else, if his conscience tells him that he is organising and regulating his teaching to please God."[10]

Pope Gregory teaches that the pastor should preach virtue and, as we have already observed, attack vice. He should begin by preaching to himself, as it were, and reforming his own life. In this way he will first proclaim by his deeds what he intends to preach to the people.[11] Concomitant with the ministry of preaching stands a ministry of compassion. The pastor lovingly transfers to himself the infirmities of others. Just as by means of contemplation he comes to aspire to heavenly things, so too by means of compassion he comes to share in the burdens of the weak. In this way he makes himself accessible to sinners, enabling them to approach him and to open their consciences to him without fear. Preaching thus leads to the *munus sanctificandi*.

Munus sanctificandi. The priest exercises the *munus sanctificandi* above all through his administration of the Sacraments, which could not be performed without him. Thus, Gregory of Nazianzus rhetorically inquiries, "where, and by whom would God be worshipped among us in those mystic and elevating rites which are our greatest and most precious privilege, if there were neither king, nor governor, nor priesthood, nor sacrifice, nor all those highest offices?"[12] By Baptism the priest renews the human creature, sets forth the divine image and creates inhabitants for the world above. Ministering the divinizing gift of salvation, he "make[s] others to be God."[13] His cultic role at the Eucharist especially reveals his share in Christ's priesthood. Serving at the Altar he stands alongside angels and archangels and causes "the sacrifice to ascend to the altar on high."[14] His is an awesome responsibility to say the least, and it requires the greatest virtue. "When [the priest] invokes the Holy Spirit and offers that awful sacrifice and keeps on touching the common Master of us all, tell me, where shall we rank him?" the Golden-mouth Preacher asks:

> What purity and what piety shall we demand of him? Consider how spotless should the hands be that administer these things, how holy the tongue that utters these words. Ought anyone to have a purer and holier soul than one who is to welcome this great Spirit? At that moment angels attend the priest, and the whole dais and the sanctuary are thronged with heavenly powers in honour of Him who lies there.[15]

Priestly Life

Personal purification. Given the priest's awesome responsibility to "make others to be God"[16] through his administration of the Sacraments, Gregory of Nazianzus insists that the priest must above all else be God, as it were, in order to do what God alone can truly do. Such divine conformity ought to reveal itself in a life of exemplary virtue. On this account, the priest's personal purification necessarily precedes his priestly ministry. As the Cappadocian Father counsels:

> A man must himself be cleansed before cleansing others: himself become wise, that he may make others wise; become light, and then give light; draw near to God, and so bring others near; be hallowed, then hallow them; be possessed of hands to lead others by the hand, of wisdom to give advice.[17]

Gregory effectively argues that the priest can only give what he himself first possesses. In this light, Gregory appeals to Romans 12:1-2 and Psalm 51, the *Miserere*. If the priest wishes to serve God worthily, especially in offering the Holy Sacrifice, then, he must first offer himself as a holy living sacrifice truly pleasing to God. Only with a humble and contrite heart can the priest hope to offer a fitting sacrifice of praise. For "how could I dare to offer Him," Gregory queries, "the external sacrifice, the antitype of the great mysteries, or clothe myself with the garb and name of priest, before my hands had been consecrated by holy works?"[18]

Pre-eminence in virtue. Not simply free from sin, the priest must also be preeminent in virtue for the sake of his ministry in the service of souls. As Gregory explains:

> In the case of a ruler or leader it is a fault not to attain to the highest possible excellence, and always make progress in goodness, if indeed he is, by his high degree of virtue, to draw his people to an ordinary degree, not by the force of authority, but by the influence of persuasion.[19]

In this regard, priestly virtue has an explicitly apostolic dimension. Gregory illustrates his point with an allusion to Christ who, in instructing his disciples, insisted that "the gospel should make its way, no less by their character than by their preaching."[20] Similarly, the priest exhorts more by means of his deeds than by his words. Thus by his own personal example does he raise high the bar of virtue after which the members of his flock should strive. In sum, the priest is called to a higher standard of virtue for the sake of those whom he serves.

In the *De sacerdotio* John Chrysostom juxtaposes the virtue of the priest with that of the monk. Recall that monastic life in the fourth century was primarily a lay reality. Monks were generally not priests. While not utterly incompatible with the monastic vocation, priesthood with its concomitant apostolic duties was seen to impede the purely contemplative character of monastic life. The monks of the Egyptian desert did not look all that favourably upon a confrere's sacerdotal ordination. In some respects they viewed it as a betrayal of his monastic vocation, for it entailed a certain return to the world – worse yet, if it arose from his own worldly ambitions. Pining for the safe harbour of the monastic cell, which he had enjoyed for some years, John depicts his own personal struggles with a call to the priesthood which came to him through the local Church. He is dramatically aware of the challenges, not to mention, dangers, which it entails. Whereas the monk need only be concerned for his own salvation, the priest is also accountable for the ecclesial community entrusted to his care. Given the priest's greater responsibility, failure in his pastoral duty merits a commensurate punishment.

Priestly discipline. Because the priest must face so many temptations while both being in the world and striving not to be of it, he must be even more vigilant than the hermit in his hermitage who, John notes, is, in fact, extremely vigilant. In order to combat such worldly temptations, the priest has need of even greater purity than the monk. He must engage in unremitting self-denial and strict self-discipline. In contrast to the monk, however, he more properly mortifies his will rather than his body. While the monk may engage in various external ascetical practices, the priest does best to temper his heart: "For it would not harm the common life of the Church if a prelate should neither starve himself of food, nor go barefoot. But a furious temper causes great disasters both to its possessor and to his neighbours."[21] A holy priest in the world, that is, a true contemplative-in-action, ultimately merits John's highest praise. Such priests are "those who mix and associate with all sorts of people and still manage to preserve more untarnished and steadfast than the monks themselves their purity and poise, their devoutness, patience, and frugality, and the other good qualities that belong to monks."[22]

Echoing again Gregory of Nazianzus, Pope Gregory the Great insists that a prelate's conduct should far surpass that of his flock: "he should be pure in thought, exemplary in conduct, discreet in keeping silence, profitable in speech, in sympathy a near neighbour to everyone, in contemplation exalted above all others, a humble companion to those who lead good lives, erect in his zeal for righteousness against the vices of sinners."[23] His sacramental ministry of reconciliation requires that he be pure if he hopes to purify others. "A man who is debased by his own guilt," the Roman Pontiff admonishes, "must not intercede for the faults of others."[24] "No impurity should stain one who has undertaken the duty of cleansing the stains of defilement from the hearts of others as well as from his own."[25] The same holds true for the celebration of the Eucharist inasmuch as it, too, is a sacrament of forgiveness: "Whosoever, then, is subject to any of the aforesaid defects [namely; pride, avarice and lust], is forbidden to offer loaves of bread to the Lord. The reason is obvious: a man who is still ravaged by his own sins, cannot expiate the sins of others."[26] Yet the Pope concludes elsewhere that spiritual perfection is providentially beyond the grasp of the man called to rule others. God, in fact, leaves the minds of such men imperfect so that "when they are resplendent with extraordinary attainments, they may grieve with disgust for their imperfections, and, least of all, exalt themselves for great things, when they have to labour and struggle against very small matters."[27] Humility on account of small yet persistent failings prevents one from taking pride in great accomplishments.

Pope Gregory exhorts priests to live model lives, and by their lives to set the standard for love. Theirs is to be a well-ordered interior life. Having died to all sinful passions, they should be spiritually inspired men. While not coveting the goods of others, they should be generous in giving of their own. The compassionate heart of the priest should be prompt to forgive yet balanced in forgiving. He should deplore unlawful acts while being sympathetic to the frailties of others. "In all that he does," Pope Gregory concludes,

> he sets an example so inspiring to all others, that in their regard he has no cause to be ashamed of his past. He so studies to live as to be able to water the dry hearts of others with the streams of instruction imparted. By his practice and experience of prayer he has learned already that he can obtain from the Lord what he asks for, as though it were already said to him, in particular, by the voice of experience: *When thou art yet speaking, I will say, "Here I am."*[28]

Priestly Witness

Gregory Nazianzus. The priestly image, which our three Church Fathers present us, is acknowledgedly an ideal. Gregory of Nazianzus is quick to point out that such a priest is not formed overnight. Indeed, such idealism sent shivers down his own sacerdotal spine. Filled with a profound sense of unworthiness upon his ordination to the priesthood, he immediately fled from his pastoral duties and returned to the monastic retreat which he had shared with his friend and fellow Cappadocian, Basil the Great. But Gregory fled not only because of his own sense of personal unworthiness, but also because of the woefully scandalous behaviour of some priests. Their notable lack of virtue filled him with dread. "I was ashamed of all those others," he writes,

> who, without being better than ordinary people, nay, it is a great thing if they be not worse, with unwashen hands, as the saying runs, and uninitiated souls, intrude into the most sacred offices; and, before becoming worthy to approach the temples, they lay claim to the sanctuary, and they push and thrust around the holy table, as if they thought this order to be a means of livelihood, instead of a pattern of virtue, or an absolute authority, instead of a ministry of which we must give account. In fact they are almost more in number than those whom they govern; pitiable as regards piety and unfortunate in their dignity.[29]

Gregory criticises those who degrade priestly ministry by reducing it a form of secular employment. Failing to recognise the sanctifying service which priesthood entails, such worldly priests exercise their ministry in an authoritarian manner. Sadly, their own vice quickly infects their subjects as well. Alluding to the prophet Ezekiel's diatribe against unfaithful shepherds, Gregory decries not only those among the clergy who sin, but also those leaders who whitewash the sins committed by others. According to Gregory, Ezekiel "threatens that [God] will consume both the wall [that is, the sin which divides] and them that daubed it (cf. *Ezek.* 13:14); that is, those who sin and those who throw a cloak over them; as the evil rulers and priests have done."[30]

John Chrystostrom. Priestly scandal brings home that obvious fact which is best never forgotten: the priest is a public figure. He cannot escape notice. "The priest's shortcomings simply cannot be concealed," John Chrysostom insists,

> On the contrary, even the most trivial soon get known…. The sins of ordinary men are committed in the dark, so to speak, and ruin only those who commit them. But when a man becomes famous and is known to many, his misdeeds inflict a common injury on all.[31]

There are those, John observes, who will never tire of searching the lives of priests for even the slightest impropriety:

> For as long as the priest's life is well regulated in every particular point, their intrigues cannot hurt him. But if he should overlook some small detail, as is likely for a human being on his journey across the devious ocean of this life, all the rest of his good deeds are of no avail to enable him to escape the words of his accusers. That small offence casts a shadow over all the rest of his life. Everyone wants to judge the priest, not as one clothed in flesh, not as one possessing a human nature, but as an angel exempt from the frailty of others.[32]

Gregory the Great. The priest's public persona arises from both his sacred duties and the earthly affairs to which his ministry inevitably calls him. Drawing upon his own experience, Pope Gregory the Great observes that the prelate in particular cannot wholly escape worldly affairs. He warns, nonetheless, that the priest must be attentive not to resign himself totally to such secular matters, for they tend to diminish his holiness and the reverence that others have for him. Secularly minded clerics prove to be stumbling blocks for the spiritual growth of their subjects. "Indeed," the Pope poetically observes, "the stones of the sanctuary lie scattered through the streets, when persons in Sacred Orders, given over to the laxity of their pleasures, cling to earthly affairs."[33] Gregory proposes a properly balanced approach to earthly affairs. To illustrate his point, he describes the moderation to be exercised in sacerdotal coiffures:

> Since … all who are placed over others should, indeed, have a care of external matters, but without being excessively occupied with them, priests are rightly forbidden to shave the head, or let the hair grow long, that so they may not wholly discard all consideration for the flesh on behalf of the lives of their subjects, nor again, allow it to engross them too much … hairs on the head of the priest are kept to cover the skin, but are cut away, so as not to veil the eyes.[34]

Conclusion

Agere sequitur esse – acting follows being. According to this Thomistic axiom, being is the cause of acting, and acting is the effect of being. At the risk of sounding anachronistic, I wish to venture that this Scholastic axiom summaries well the patristic vision of priesthood found in the pastoral trilogy which we have been considering. Priestly ministry follows priestly life.

While the Cappadocian and Roman Gregories, along with the Antiochene Preacher John, do not address the question of a sacrament's validity when it is administered by a sinful cleric, they do place great emphasis upon the need for priestly virtue in a coherent priestly ministry. They are quick to condemn in the preacher the pharisaical attitude of "do what I say, but not what I do." They recognise that the priest must first *be* the priest who he has been ordained to be before engaging in pastoral ministry. His living an extraordinarily virtuous life greatly enhances his sacerdotal service of the faithful, and in some respects is essential to it. For, a contrary witness on the part of the priest effectively undermines the good of his ministry. As we are all too well aware in our own day, priestly scandal places an immense stumbling block on the faithful's path towards the Lord.

Rather than despair before the priestly ideal which this patristic pastoral trilogy presents us, I propose that we priests can benefit from it in at least three respects. Firstly, it rightly calls us before all else to confess our own sinfulness and to seek the Lord's mercy in our lives so that our proclamation of Christ's mercy to others may not, itself lacking love, clang in their ears like mere pious platitudes, but rather arise directly from our own immediate experience of Christ's saving grace. Secondly, we should never cease with the help of Christ's grace to strive after perfection not for our own sake, which would egotistically threaten to undermine the very perfection we seek, but rather for the sake of those whom we serve. For we realise that our deeds do, in fact, preach louder than our words. The faithful have need of holy priests faithful in their own lives to the Gospel which they preach. By their holy witness such priests serve God's people best. Finally, in an age that has tended to reduce the priesthood to a merely functional reality, it is paramount to reclaim a properly ontological understanding of priestly life – an ontology underlying all priestly ministry. For, as Gregory of Nazianzus, John Chrysostom and Gregory the Great rightly acknowledge, effective priestly ministry does indeed flow forth most graciously from a life of priestly virtue.

Notes

[1] Cf. B. H. Vandenberghe, Introduction à Saint Jean Chrysostome, *Dialogue sur le sacerdoce* (les *Écrits des saints*), Namur 1958, p. 25; see also: Bruno Judic, "Introduction," *Grégoire le Grand: Règle Pastorale*, vol. 1, Sources Chrétiennes 381, p. 34.

[2] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration* 2, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, vol. VII, trans. Charles Gordon Browne & James Edward Swallow (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), *De fuga* 16 (Sources Chrétiennes (= SC) v. 247, p. 110).

[3] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 22 (SC 247, 118-120).

[4] John Chrysostom, *Six Books on the Priesthood*, trans. Graham Neville (Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984), *De sacerdotio* 3.9, p. 78 (SC 272, 162); NB Given a discrepancy in the numerical classification between the critical edition and the English translation, the book and chapter numbers follow Sources Chrétiennes, and the page numbers indicate where the text can be found in the St Vladimir Seminary Press' English translation.

[5] John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio* 3.4, p. 70 (SC 272, 142).

[6] John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio* 3.5, pp. 71-74 (SC 272, 146-150).

[7] Gregory the Great, Pastoral Care, trans. Henry Davis, SJ, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 11 (New York: Newman Press, 1950), *Regula Pastoralis* 1.1 (SC 381, 128).

[8] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 1.6 (SC 381, 148).

[9] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 2.6 (SC 381, 204; 210).

[10] John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio* 5.7, p. 133 (SC 272, 298).

[11] Cf. Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 3.40 (SC 382, 530-532).

[12] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 4 (SC 247, 92).

[13] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 73 (SC 247, 186).

[14] Ibid.

[15] John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio* 6.4 (SC 272, 316), pp. 140-141.

Carola notes, cont. at page 15, below.

The Genius of the Roman Rite and the Identity of the Priest

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Introduction

In recent years, the notion of the *Genius* of the Roman Rite has seen resurgence. That the Oratorian, Fr Michael Lang, and the Jesuit, Fr Keith Pecklers, have both published books called *The Genius of the Roman Rite* testifies to the usefulness of this turn of phrase. In the wake of such resurgence, the name of Edmund Bishop, liturgiologist and historian, has, once again, become better known and normally in the context of his illustrious essay, "The Genius of the Roman Rite". This paper will seek to address three questions. What is to be understood by the term "Genius"? How do we distinguish the presence of the Genius of the Roman Rite in the Liturgy we celebrate? Where does the Genius of the Roman Rite influence the identity of the priest? Much of the first part of the paper is etymological in nature, and is here presented at page 11 as a text box that may be read apart from the paper.

How do we distinguish the presence of the "genius" of the Roman rite in the Liturgy we celebrate?

As outlined in the text box, there is in the Roman rite an attendant spirit, distinctive characteristics of structure and method, prevalence of particular sentiments, and – in its purity of form – a native intellectual power. The meaning of these perceptions is now amplified by considering the subsequent use and relevance of "genius" as so perceptively identified by Edmund Bishop.

On the Wednesday subsequent to the reading of "The Genius of the Roman Rite" in May 1899, Bishop's paper was printed in *The Weekly Register* and later published as an offprint, about which F.E. Brightmann in *The Journal of Theological Studies* in 1900 reported,

> The *Genius of the Roman Rite* (1899) and *Kyrie eleison: a Liturgical Consultation* (1900) are two interesting pamphlets by Mr Edmund Bishop. The first is a more or less popular exposition of the "soberness and sense" of the Roman genius as illustrated by the original simplicity of the Roman rite and the contrast between the pure Roman element and the imported Gallican element, which together make up the present composite rite. [1]

Whereas, Bishop's view of what he wrote about was printed in *Liturgica Historica*.

> It indicated the conditions determining the development of the Western Mass in the critical period, the seventh century to the tenth, in which the fusion of the two great types of religiousness, the Roman and the Hispano-Gallican, took place. [2]

Bishop had not been a Catholic when Catholic life was being reasserted in England and much of what he saw as Catholic practice had not so long previously been comparatively unknown in the English Catholic experience. Bishop illustrated that many practices as observed were not of the essence of the Roman Rite. He strove to reveal that the Roman liturgy had known considerable development and that accretions from other cultures had been grafted onto it with the effect that the normally presented experience was not in fact the pure liturgy of the classic period.[3] Bishop worked to separate those parts of the Missal that were truly Roman and those that were not. Obviously, Bishop was working with what is now identified as the extraordinary form of the Roman rite. He lists firstly, the non-Roman elements as including the Psalm *Iudica Me* together with the confession that followed, the offertory prayers and the priest's private preparation before communion. The Roman parts he described as the collect, the epistle and the Gospel, the "proper" prayer over the offerings, from the preface to the communion, the post-communion prayer and the dismissal.[4] Bishop distinguishes the direct approach of the Roman texts which say in a few lines what is necessary, from the non-Roman sources which are much longer and more elaborate. This set of distinctions led Bishop to describe the genius of the Roman rite as "simplicity, practicality, a great sobriety and self control, gravity and dignity".[5]

How people of a different mood find unsatisfactoriness in the Roman liturgy. Bishop showed himself attuned to a possible disappointment that could be felt when people are faced with the facts about the genesis of the Roman liturgy when he wrote, "It may be urged by some persons, in a different mood, that the Roman expression of the sense of the relation between man and his Maker, found in the Roman liturgy, is an inadequate or unsatisfactory expression of the aspirations of the soul."[6] This sadness would stem from the discovery that the "sensuousness of the Roman Catholic ritual",[7] ... forms the part of the Mass that is not of Roman origin. What continually interests me is the reason why these sumptuous elements have been "gradually borrowed, imported, [and] adopted in the course of the ages."[8]

An answer to this question would be a significant step towards an understanding of why the integrity of the liturgy in itself is rarely adequate for popular needs. It is also to be noted that the addition to the liturgy of practices taken from elsewhere is not a phenomenon peculiar to our own day. Besides, every age expresses its needs with its own contemporary voice which in turn articulates its affective needs accordingly and guides the choices made.

Simplicity, sobriety and self-control, gravity and dignity. Bishop offers no demurral in his belief that "the general position [is] unassailable; namely, that the genius of the native Roman rite is marked by simplicity, practicality, a great sobriety and self-control, gravity and dignity; but there it stops."[9] He reminds us that the Roman spirit is not quenched or enhanced by its Christianity or lack of it because "at bottom in his instincts, in his powers, in his limitations, he is the same." These two statements form the heart of this essay. They illustrate that the Roman spirit is intrinsic to its local nature and is not defined by religious confession. The adjectives with which Bishop describes the Roman rite suggest a particular temperament of restraint which would come to the fore with the choices made by later liturgical reforms. If the Roman rite

Gunter: Box 1: "Genius": an etymological note:

In the fifty years since Nigel Abercrombie published "The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop",[1] despite a number of articles, no new book has been published that treats one or other aspect of Bishop's contribution to liturgical science and its subsequent understanding. Consequently, some historical background is necessary in order to appreciate the setting in which there arose the term "genius" in its application to the Liturgy.

The episode of 'The genius' was a lecture that Bishop delivered on 8 May 1899 at Archbishop's House, Westminster. In seeking to discover the formative influences on Bishop's unique contribution to liturgical science, my research fell into three categories. The first concerned the context in which Bishop worked. The second consisted in Bishop's papers and his marginalia in books, both of which are largely unpublished. The third category involved what others wrote and said of him both in related correspondence of the period and in academic reviews.

If Edmund Bishop has presented as a comparatively well-kept secret in the history of liturgical research within Great Britain, it is because the contemporary context of the Catholic Church in England was not yet ripe enough to respond to his findings. Edmund Bishop was born near Totnes in Devon into a family of a Low Church Tradition within the Church of England on 17 May 1846, a mere seventeen years after the Act of Catholic Emancipation.

Bishop profited abundantly from his schooling at Totnes Grammar School and at the age of thirteen was sent to Villevorde in Belgium for two years. There he learnt French and immersed himself into local culture. The Catholicism he experienced probably helped, subsequently, to direct him from the Low Church tradition of his earlier days, towards High Anglicanism and eventually into the Catholic Church in 1867. Early traces of influences upon Bishop were evident when, a sidesman in one of the Belgian churches had given him Chateaubriand's *Le Génie du Christianisme*. It is likely that this was the very first context in which Bishop came across the word *Génie* as applied to religion. The effect of the power of this choice of word to describe the truth of everything for which the young Bishop was already painstakingly searching became the power he later recognised in the Roman rite. Thus, it would have not seemed strange for him to entitle his famous essay, written some forty years later, 'The Genius of the Roman Rite'. It is hard to imagine that he had not been struck by Chateaubriand's description of religious genius in Book III of *Le Génie du Christianisme* under the title, 'Of Christianity as it relates to the manner of writing history.'

> Religion seems to lead to the explanation of the most incomprehensible facts in history. There is, moreover, in the name of God something sublime, which imparts to the style a certain power, so that the most religious writer is invariably the most eloquent. Without religion, it is possible to have wit, but very difficult to possess genius.[2]

Bishop certainly considered Chateaubriand seminal to his even precocious development as he subsequently wrote himself:

But it was Chateaubriand that fascinated me: 'The Martyrs, the *Génie du Christianisme*, the *Voyage de Paris à Jerusalem* and the *Leçons de l'histoire de France* particularly influenced me, and opened up whole regions of unknown literature.' The *Leçons* were Bishop's introduction to the Maurists, the Bollandists, Tillemont, Fleury and Adrien de Valois. Bishop wrote that at that time he had no notion of Jesuits or Benedictines but that the Bollandists had captivated him. Bishop wrote about the Maurists, 'Le Cointe, Le Long & Fevret de Fontette & the *ordonnances* of de Laurière all fixed themselves in my mind as auxiliary troops, so to speak; and above all Du Cange. This was by the time I was 15.'[3]

So it is to be seen that the concept of genius according to the mind of Chateaubriand inspired Bishop and underpinned his breadth of liturgical research which continued until his death in 1917.

During the year 1899, in preparation for the reading of his paper, "The Genius of the Roman Rite", Edmund Bishop collected characteristics peculiar to that rite and in their description called those particularities the "Genius" of the Roman rite. Bishop's use of the word 'Genius' paved his way towards the interpretation of the historical facts about liturgical development that he had encountered in his study of French and German sources. The subsequent influence of Bishop on future writers opens a possibility of the 'genius' being quoted either with little connection to what Bishop might have meant by the term or even as a liturgical catchphrase reinterpreted to meet modern categories of thought. While it is highly unlikely that Edmund Bishop would have perceived that he had any monopoly over the ancient concept of genius, he applied it to the liturgy in a way that has never lost its dynamism. It is, therefore, necessary to ask, when Edmund Bishop used the word 'Genius' to describe the Roman Rite, 'to what might he have been referring'? It is my intention to consider, not only the classical roots of the word 'Genius' but their applications as well, as a glimpse at the meanings that might have supported Bishop in his choice of word.

The word 'Genius' can be employed to suggest someone deemed to be inspiring of wonder. In a colloquial sense, the word is often used in modern English to describe a person who exudes excellence in what he does and less frequently to denote the particularity of the talent itself in a quest for further classification. Edmund Bishop was accustomed to considering the dynamism of the word 'Genius' because he referred to different 'geniuses'. Etymologically, the root of *genius* is from the Latin word *gignere*, to beget, and from the Greek word, *gignesthai*, to be born or to come into being. The Oxford English Dictionary gives as its first definition "With reference to classical pagan belief: The tutelary god or attendant spirit allotted to every person at his birth, to govern his fortunes and determine his character, and finally to conduct him out of the world; also, the tutelary and controlling spirit similarly connected with a place, an institution, etc."[4] 'Genius' is used also to denote a person's good or bad genius by which he influences the life of another for good or ill. A 'genius' can be a "demon or spiritual being in general", good or evil.[5] "With reference to a nation or [a particular institution of] age, this 'genius', is a distinctive character or spirit."[6] "It comprises a prevalent feeling, opinion, sentiment, or taste".[7] "Of a language, law or institution [the 'genius' is a] prevailing character or spirit, general drift, characteristic method or procedure."[8] "With reference to a place: [it is] The body of associations connected with, or inspirations that may be derived from it."[9] There is even the "*genius loci*"[10] who is a presiding spirit or even a deity providing a place with inspiration and associations. "[The 'genius' is a] natural ability or capacity; [a] quality of mind; the special endowments which fit a man for his peculiar work."[11] It is a "natural aptitude, coupled with more or less of inclination to or for something."[12] It is a "native intellectual power of an exalted type, such as is attributed to those who are esteemed greatest in any department of art, speculation or practice; instinctive and extraordinary capacity for imaginative creation, original thought, invention, or discovery. [It is] often contrasted with 'talent'."[13]

The wider contexts in which the word *genius* was specifically used make clear the weight that such a word carries. Whatever Bishop's personal preferences might have been within its span, Bishop chose the word to encompass the exalted material that he understood to be the Roman rite. Bishop did not concern himself with the question of whether of not the Roman Rite was perfect, flawed or both. He was interested in identifying its *genius* and its particularity. In: Box 1that significance, like those before him who had sought contact with a particular *genius*, Bishop saw in the Roman Rite an attendant spirit, distinctive characteristics of structure and method, prevalence of particular sentiments and, in its purity of form, a native intellectual power.

is essentially mortified, as much in its physical presentation as in its given structure of form, such an authentic manifestation will free it from encumbrances of excess. This freedom guards jealously the genius of the Roman rite which Bishop described more succinctly as "soberness and sense".[10]

It was a matter of immense importance to Bishop to find the facts about any particular matter so as to participate in historical realities. Nonetheless, this was no retraction of the self-abandonment with which he had come into the Catholic Church. Rather, it was a kenotic [self-emptying] desire for God through the unadorned truth of his Church. The "Genius" was Bishop's way of moving this process into action in his life, where he could be, reverent yet clear, or reticent and quiet.

Need for objective study of the liturgy. As late as 31 March 1909, Bishop wrote stridently[11] about the need to study liturgy objectively:

> What would become of the Craft,[12] if people, if the lay people, began to study these subjects in a *rational* manner? I saw above I wish, I *want* to say a few things if I can "before I go hence" &c. Do you remember that I said to you years ago about the "Genius of the R.R" – that is only a beginning; that only deals with the husk; what I care about is the kernel: that is only the externality of forms, I want to get at the realities of the spirit.
>
> I wonder whether anything will be done as I should wish, "before" – I am inclined to hope so. Yet it is very difficult. I need only to look at the concluding words of the article you enclose… "at the supposed moment of the consecration". What do you know about it? What do I? I am sure *I know nothing*; and I have no doubt that you (or any other layman) are just in the same advantageous plight.… [13]

It needs to be remembered that "The Genius of the Roman Rite" was written to be read aloud which determined its more colloquial style. Perhaps this enabled more people to understand that what Bishop was offering was radical. The key to the paper was in understanding Bishop's use of the word "genius". In stating that there were different "geniuses", the Roman "genius" could be identified by its style which was so different from a Gallican "genius", a Celtic "genius" or even a "genius" from the East such as that which provided the source of the threefold *Kyrie* at Mass. Bishop described a variety of attributes that together form the "Genius" of the Roman Rite.

An element of surprise in 1899 in what Bishop was arguing was contained in what he considered "sober". If the Roman rite was sober then it was not towards its more sober parts that criticisms were generally directed. Bishop could show that different parts of the Missal dated from different periods. This variety revealed that the *Missale Romanum* was a collection of parts of differing merit and that as a consequence not everything that was in the Missal was necessarily of a fine quality. Bishop showed these different traits that formed the Missal to reveal different "geniuses" applicable to particular churches but that the quieter expressions within the Mass were the parts of the ritual that were essentially Roman. Bishop identified the English spirit in the Roman liturgical form. England had been faithful to the Roman rite for centuries. The sense of emotional reserve in the Roman rite was more akin to an English temperament which, externally at least, can appear glacial and stoic. Bishop saw a new way of linking liturgy and culture and, from his own context, identified why England would so naturally respond to the Roman rite. However, the French "Genius" was Gallican which resulted in a dynamic between the cultural and the liturgical that would be very different.

It is amazing to think that Bishop would have been content to accept that the Roman parts of the Mass were the less exciting and less elaborate parts and that the more interesting moments had come from elsewhere. Bishop's paper does not fight that assertion. Bishop would have been only too aware of the Gnostic influences on the Romans which would have drained out of Rome its disposition to be either superstitious or particularly reverent. If Bishop was suggesting that the Roman "Genius" was cold, which is a very strong affirmation, he would, by definition, have been contrasting Roman genius from those of other nations. Alternatively, Bishop might have meant that the Roman "Genius" was a striving for a pure form. Such purity would not have envisaged dispensations from stricter liturgical form, in order to accommodate the weak. Bishop would have considered the English "Genius" to offer a calmness, to be temperate, controlled, moderate, reasonable, mild, measured, peaceable and formal. This would mean that whatever feeling there might have been would have been checked by any or all of the above adjectives. Bishop summarised, what for him were the hallmarks of the Roman Liturgy. "If I had to indicate in two or three words only the main characteristics that go up to make the Roman rite, I should say those characteristics were essentially soberness and sense."

What should the Roman rite look like when celebrated? Thus it can be seen that a series of adjectives not only explain the native power of the Roman rite but indicate what the Roman rite should look like when it is celebrated. It is well for us, in the constant search for both balance and beauty, to consider the extent to which these adjectives reflect the realities of the liturgies we celebrate as priests. Is the tone of the liturgy sober, as opposed to dull, or, from time to time, exhaustingly exuberant? Is it simple or overwhelmed by complexities? Does inherent dignity within the celebration protect an emotional reserve that encourages respect or does the celebrant promote the cult of his personality? Is the rite as celebrated redolent of its pure form or is it filled with accretions or diminished by omis-

End Notes to Gunter: Box 1:

[1] ABERCROMBIE N., *The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop*, Longmans, Green and Co Ltd, London 1959.

[2] CHATEAUBRIAND F., «*The Genius of Christianity; or the Spirit and Beauty of the Christian Religion*» tr. C.White, John Murphy & Co, Baltimore, 1856, 419.

[3] BISHOP, E, *in* EDMUND BISHOP LIBRARY, F6, 1190,«On idea of E.B. to begin Library», April 1900, 2. F6 refers to the cupboard number of archives kept at Downside Abbey.

[4] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. 20 vol., «Genius», in vol 6 Fellow - Haswed, ed. J.A.Simpson - E.S.C. Weiner, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1989, 444, 1.

[5] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, «Genius», vol 6, 444, 1c.

[6] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, «Genius», vol 6, 444, 2b.

[7] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, «Genius», vol 6, 444, 3b.

[8] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, «Genius», vol 6, 444, 3c.

[9] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, «Genius», vol 6, 444, 3d.

[10] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, «Genius», vol 6, 445, 7

[11] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, «Genius», vol 6, 444, 4.

[12] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, «Genius», vol 6, 444, 4b.

[13] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, «Genius», vol 6, 444 – 445, 5.

sions? Is the approach of the celebrant calm or characterised by anxiety? Is he temperate in the delivery of his speech? Are his gestures controlled or even exaggerated? Are the movements around the sanctuary moderate rather than protracted or rushed? Is the general atmosphere peaceable or is the level of noise or confusion such that it is hard for the liturgy to lead people in prayer? Are liturgical celebrations dignified in their style and instinctively formal through reverence?

Characteristics that should be present in both forms of the Roman rite. Since we have two forms that comprise the Roman rite, these are the qualities that need to be present in both. The structure of rubrics contained within the extraordinary form protects its native qualities. The ordinary form calls for no less care despite there being fewer indications. Priests that have grasped the structure and mentality of the extraordinary form will be well placed to celebrate the ordinary form better, allowing for its idiomatic differences while promoting the sense of the sacred. The rubrics of the extraordinary form draw attention to the indispensable need for liturgical discipline in order to celebrate well. The genius of the Roman rite eschews what is impractical yet shuns what is sloppy. The attendant spirit in the liturgy of Roman "genius", wonderfully recognises what is human, and to humans, recommends what is divine.

Where does the Genius of the Roman Rite influence the identity of the priest?

Priestly recollection. The Genius of the Roman Rite will not influence the identity of the priest if he is not recollected before he celebrates Mass. As a parish priest for some years, I knew how difficult that was to achieve but that when it was made possible, a spirit of receptivity in the liturgy was markedly different. Romano Guardini describes the need to be "inwardly present" which, I suppose, stands in contrast to being present in a merely physical sense. He writes: "[Composure] frees his mind from many tempting claims and focuses it on one, the all-important. It calls the soul that is dispersed over myriad thoughts and desires, plans and intentions back to itself, re-establishing its depth."[14] Guardini expands this idea: "Once composure has been established, the liturgy is possible. Not before. It is not much use to discuss Holy Scripture, the deep significance of symbols, and the vitality of the liturgical renewal if the prerequisite of earnestness is lacking. Without it, even the liturgy deteriorates into something 'interesting', a passing vogue. To participate in the Liturgy seriously we must be mentally composed."[15]

The Missal envisages this essential preparation even if few priests find time to do it. A brief and silent recollection is infinitely better than none at all. The private preparation in the Extraordinary Form gives a selection of psalms and devotional prayers whereas the preparation in the ordinary form has both reduced the quantity and excluded the psalmody. I highlight the distinction between the two forms because between them they form the current usage of the Roman rite and they compliment each other in their aims, as *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 1 describes, "to impart an ever increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful; to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change; [and] to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ."[16] The *Praeparatio ad Missam* of both forms share in common a prayer of St Ambrose, a prayer of St Thomas Aquinas and a prayer of Our Lady.[17] The Formula of Intention reminds the priest that he confects the Body and Blood of Christ for the benefit of the whole Church and for any who have commended themselves to his prayers. Since this formula pertains to both forms, it can be seen that both forms protect the ecclesiological dimension of the Mass.[18] The priest who celebrates even privately does not celebrate Mass for himself alone. The GIRM 93 explains this and alongside describes the dispositions that shall occupy the celebrating priest:

> A priest who possesses within the Church the power of Holy Orders to offer sacrifice in the person of Christ,[19] stands for this reason at the head of the faithful people gathered together […], presides over their prayer, proclaims the message of salvation to them, associates the people with himself in the offering of sacrifice through Christ in the Holy Spirit to God the Father, gives his brothers and sisters the bread of eternal life, and partakes of it with them. When he celebrates the Eucharist, therefore, he must serve God and the people with dignity and humility, and by his bearing and by the way he says the divine words he must convey to the faithful the living presence of Christ.[20]

Interplay of priestly life and priestly celebration of the rite. We will be influenced by the "Genius" of the Roman Rite to the extent to which we allow its genius to inform our lives and motivate our choices. In the recently published *Liturgia fonte di vita*, don Mauro Gagliardi cites three categories that will encourage the particular *genus* of the Sacred Liturgy. "Liturgy and Ethics", "Liturgy and Devotion" and Liturgy and "Liturgical Formation".[21] Pope Benedict XVI states in his post-synodal exhortation, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, "Worship pleasing to God can never be a purely private matter, without consequences for our relationships with others: it demands a public witness to our faith."[22] The partnership that exists between morality and the Eucharist bears the force for positive change and genuine conversion, though the Eucharist can never be perceived as a reward for being good. Rather, as St Paul exhorted the Romans, "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."[23] It is as if scales fall from our eyes when the geniuses of morality and liturgy converge. Chateaubriand referred to such as "moral harmonies".[24] That is, when, as exhorted Justin Martyr, we "live according to the Logos", *katà logon*.[25]

Liturgy and devotion and aesthetics. Liturgy and Devotion are intrinsically linked. If music is the handmaid of the liturgy, devotion is its most loyal servant. That liturgical life needs to be sustained by personal prayer is no secret. What forms the liturgy will expound what the liturgy teaches, though the genius of liturgy cannot be assessed without a similar consideration of its anthropology. Fidelity in personal devotion and space for public devotions adds a vividly affective compliment to the *Lex Orandi*. The support-system of the Liturgy illustrated, for example, in the veneration of images and in the encouragement of beauty, foster reverence for liturgical mystery. It is this sacral warmth that transforms an empty assembly hall into a church. Unsatisfactory church re-orderings indicate how true this is. Instances of many Victorian churches that have been emptied of their beauty, have exchanged their once inherent warmth for a kind of emotional anorexia. Simplicity does not imply that liturgy and its attendant artefacts should be bare. The exhortation for simplicity in the Constitution of the Liturgy

also bore the adjective "noble".[26] The noble is not typified by the utilitarian or common-place and it is never banal.

Whilst the Mass in vernacular languages is appreciated by the majority of people in our churches today, sight of our Latin heritage should not be lost. It should form part of the ordinary experience of worship in parishes in such a way that its beauty and facility are handed down to future generations with the avoidance of ideological polarisation. The Latin language is not only the native language of the Roman liturgy but contributes to its dignified and sober atmosphere. To promote a greater sense of the universality of the Catholic Church within the local church, one need not be afraid to reintroduce neither Latin in the Mass nor Gregorian chant into the repertoire of liturgical music and both with supporting formation. Gregorian chant is the music, *par excellence*, of the Roman rite and calls for ongoing training and perseverance to affirm its rightful place.

The purpose of liturgy is, in the first place, to worship God. Chateaubriand could have seemed even to have been prophetic in his observations written some 160 years before the Second Vatican Council. "It is objected against the Catholic Church that she employs in her liturgy an unknown tongue; as if clergy preached in Latin, or the service were not translated in our prayer-books. If Religion had changed her language according to the caprice or customs of men, how could we have known the works of antiquity? Such is the inconsistency of our nature that we censure the very practices to which we are indebted for a portion of our knowledge and pleasure."[27]

Reclaiming what Vatican II actually said. The need for liturgical formation remains as great as when the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council identified its priority. Considering the need to lead the People of God to a "fully conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations", the document added, "Yet it would be futile to entertain any hopes of realising this unless the pastors themselves, in the first place, become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy, and undertake to give instruction about it. A prime need, therefore, is that attention be directed, first of all, to the liturgical instruction of the clergy."[28] It has become clear that if a priest does not understand the *ars celebrandi* of the Roman rite he will obscure priestly identity and not be equipped to instruct others in a true understanding of the *actuosa participatio*.

As recently as 2007, the Post-Synodal Exhortation, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, considered the *Ars Celebrandi* of the Roman rite which is the central means whereby the Genius of the Roman rite influences the identity of the priest. The second part of this exhortation deals with the *Ars Celebrandi*, especially from #38-42. The Exhortation at #36 states that the Eucharistic celebration manifests the beautiful intricacy of the liturgy which had come to be, not by mere aestheticism, but by the truth of the love of Christ into which the liturgy draws, captures and enfolds us. Thus, the beauty of Christ manifests itself in the beauty of the liturgy. So, a perception of the aesthetic of liturgy becomes a perception of Christ as we enter more deeply into the mystery of salvation. This perception leads to eschatological participation in the heavenly liturgy.

The *ars celebrandi* encourages a sense of the sacred and all that enhances it. Without that sense of the sacred, the liturgy and especially the Eucharist, loses its authentic identity. The Western tendency towards a liturgical minimalism in its celebrations risks losing sight of its heritage and of its tradition of reverence. As the exhortation states, "The *ars celebrandi* is the best condition for the *actuosa participatio*."[29] The dignified celebration of the liturgy enables every Christian, in accordance with his particular ministry, to enter into contact with the Paschal mystery according to the mind of the Church in her living and offering of that mystery.

The *ars celebrandi* comprises profound respect of the liturgical norms which lead us to a true sense of the celebration. Obedience to the proper structure of the rite, on the part of the minister, defers to an awareness of the Eucharist as an ineffable gift. It shows fidelity to the Church.

Application of "ars celebrandi". The third part of the Apostolic Exhortation, while containing aspects of doctrine, emphasises Eucharistic discipline. Meanwhile, indications are given to us by the papal liturgies that express the mind of the Holy Father and which reveal Roman genius *in actu*, with special concern for both celebration and adoration of the Sacrament of the altar. Clearly, there is only one St Peter's and not every church has the same architectural support for the dignity called for by the liturgy. We should not be discouraged in striving after the "art of the possible" in our particular realities.

Nonetheless there are certain aspects in which we can all engage to ensure that the beauty and dignity of the liturgy prevail. The placing of the Cross on the altar for the celebration of Mass, far from creating a barrier between the celebrant and the assembly, serves as a support to remind everyone that God is the subject of the liturgy. The community has assembled to worship and give glory to God. Priest and people are oriented in the same direction in prayer, namely, towards Christ. In our love for the Eucharist, we will strive to be faithful to the norms of the particular forms within the rite and avoid the misplaced zeal of subjectivism that can accompany personal preferences. In the letter that accompanied the *Motu Proprio*, *Summorum Pontificum*, of 2007, Pope Benedict wrote: "There is no contradiction between the two editions of the Roman Missal. In the history of the liturgy there is growth and progress, but no rupture. What earlier generations held as sacred, remains sacred and great for us too, and it cannot be all of a sudden entirely forbidden or even considered harmful. It behoves all of us to preserve the riches which have developed in the Church's faith and prayer, and to give them their proper place."[30] And so it is, in the paschal mystery of Christ, that through the centuries, we continue to celebrate the Eucharist that brings us salvation.

Enduring quality of Bishop's identification of "genius". *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and subsequent liturgical documents have reflected Edmund Bishop's identification of liturgical geniuses, Roman and otherwise. The history of the Church's Roman Liturgy, has been marked by adaptation to contemporary circumstances which can be seen in the French and German effects on that liturgy particularly in the second millennium. Within the Liturgical Movement of the twentieth century, the pendulum swung towards a retrieval of the aspect of simplicity that is contained within Roman genius. However, true Roman simplicity is measured rather than bleak. It is not to be forgotten that the priest's going to the altar of God should enliven so profound a joy that it incites in the priest, no matter what, a vivid awareness of, and a longing for, the eternal fervours of priestly youth.

While the Liturgy manifests, *par excellence*, the identity of the priest and the attendant spirit of the Roman rite upholds

Gunter, cont. at page 15, below.

Gunter, cont. from page 14, above.

his dignity, the "genius" of the Liturgy is always Christ. The Mass is God's great and ongoing gift of love to his Church to be loved and celebrated until he comes again at the end of time. It is for us – schooled in its liturgical genius – to emulate the sacred and revealed character of the Mass which, while anticipating the liturgy of heaven, embraces, above all, the spirit of sacrifice, particularly in the way we celebrate it. For, in the beauty of the Mass, which, at once celebr31ates the work of the Lord and calls us to conversion, "our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking"[31]

Notes

[1] F.E. BRIGHTMANN, «Chronicle», *The Journal of Theological Studies* 1 (1900) 632.

[2] JOHNSON - WARD, «Edmund Bishop's "The Genius of the Roman Rite" », viii.

[3] JOHNSON - WARD, «Edmund Bishop's "The Genius of the Roman Rite" », 401

[4] CRICHTON, *Lights in the Darkness: Forerunners of the Liturgical Movement*, Columba Press, Co Dublin 1996, 107.

[5] BISHOP, *Liturgica Historica*, 12.

[6] BISHOP, *Liturgica Historica*, 19.

[7] BISHOP, *Liturgica Historica*, 12.

[8] BISHOP, *Liturgica Historica*, 12.

[9] BISHOP, *Liturgica Historica*, 12.

[10] BISHOP, *Liturgica Historica*, 19.

[11] To his friend, J.Wickham Legg of the Henry Bradshaw Society

[12] The 'Craft' refers to the liturgical craft.

[13] DOWNSIDE ABBEY ARCHIVES, Letter from Edmund Bishop to J. Wickham Legg, 31 March 1909.

[14] GUARDINI., *Meditations before Mass*, tr. E.Castendyk Briefs, Newman Press, Westminster, Md 1956, reprinted Matthias Grünewald Verlag, Mainz 1993, 21-22.

[15] GUARDINI., *Meditations before Mass*, 23-24.

[16] Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* #1

[17] The *Preparatio* in the Missale Romanum 1962 is more extensive.

[18] Missale Romanum, Editio Typica Tertia, Typis Vaticanis 2002, 1289-1291.

[19] Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Lumen Gentium* #28

[20] Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani #93

[21] M.GAGLIARDI., *Liturgia fonte di vita: Prospettive teologiche*, Fede e Cultura, Verona 2009.

[22] BENEDICT XVI P.P., Post-Synodal Exhortation, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 83, AAS 99 (2007) 169.

[23] Romans 12:1-2 RSV

[24] CHATEAUBRIAND., «*The Genius of Christianity; or the Spirit and Beauty of the Christian Religion*», 473.

[25] Justin Martyr, II *Apologia*, 8,2, in D.MINNS - P.PARVIS, *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies*, ed. H. Chadwick, Oxford Early Christian texts, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2009, 271ff.

[26] *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 34.

[27] CHATEAUBRIAND., «*The Genius of Christianity; or the Spirit and Beauty of the Christian Religion*», 483.

[28] *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 14.

[29] *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 38, AAS 99 (2007)

[30] Letter of Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishops on the occasion of the publication of the Apostolic Letter '*Motu Proprio Data*', *Summorum Pontificum*, on the use of the Roman Liturgy prior to the reform of 1970, paragraph 11.

[31] CCC 1327

Carola footnotes cont. from page 9, above.

[16] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 73 (SC 247, 186).

[17] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 71 (SC 247, 184).

[18] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 95 (SC 247, 212-214).

[19] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 15 (SC 247, 110).

[20] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 69 (SC 247, 182).

[21] John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio* 3.10 (SC 272, 176), p. 83.

[22] John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio* 6.8 (SC 272, 330), p. 146.

[23] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 2.1 (SC 381, 174).

[24] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 1.11 (SC 381, 164).

[25] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 2.2 (SC 381, 176).

[26] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 1.11 (SC 381, 172).

[27] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 4.1 (SC 382, 538-540).

[28] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 1.10 (SC 381, 162).

[29] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 8 (SC 247, 98-100).

[30] Gregory of Nazianzus, *De fuga* 65 (SC 247, 178).

[31] John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio* 3.10 (SC 272, 180-182), p. 85.

[32] John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio* 3.10 (SC 272, 182-184), p. 86.

[33] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 2.7 (SC 381, 224).

[34] Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 2.7 (SC 381, 230).

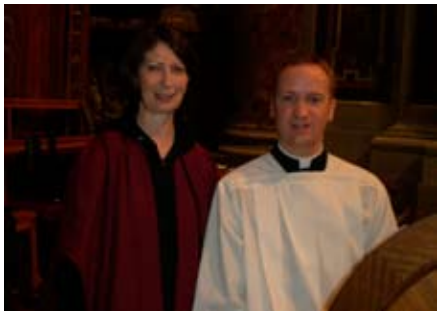
Feichtinger, cont. from page 19, below.

d. As much as this will be possible, we should seek to take into account **the different theological disciplines, schools, Orders, nations, age groups** which exist in the Church.

e. Both the culture and the procedural organisation of doctrinal assessment in the Church should be characterised by **collegial work, consultation and decision making,** aiming, if at all possible, to a consensus.

f. Of course, all procedures have to respect that **hierarchical order**, which comes out most clearly in our filial devotion to and reliance on the Supreme Pontiff himself, who is himself the living voice of Tradition in the Church of Christ.

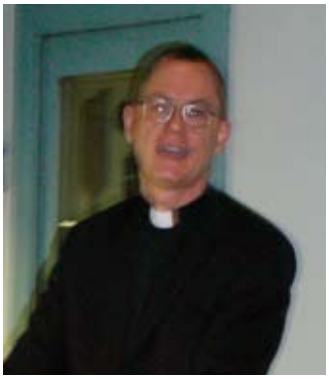
Catholic theology, on all levels, from the heights of academe to first communion classes in our parishes, is in need of a renewal that respects the fundamental rules of hermeneutics in general and as they apply specifically to the Catholic faith. This will require historical, but also philosophical awareness which are indeed the pillars on which rests all theological progress and which will lead us to a fuller appreciation of the Church as the horizon in which all true understanding has it place, a horizon that is much wider than any other for "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (*1John* 3:20).



Music leaders for the Conference: Helen O'Donovan of Lassus Scholars and Rev. Nicholas Dillon of Dunedin, NZ (Melbourne) at the organ of St Peter's Basilica.

The Hermeneutics of Inquisition

Monsignor Hans Feichtinger



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Introduction

The title of this presentation has already created some surprise, so I have to clarify from the start that, in actual fact, it will not deal with the Roman Inquisition as a historical institution, but rather with the right method of [theological] inquisition; that is, as the search for truth – which, in turn, becomes fundamental for the work of the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* (CDF) today. This surprise, however, itself offers a practical demonstration of the *need* for proper hermeneutics: in the sense of acknowledging the existence of one's, more or less useful, prejudices and expectations.

Identifying a hermeneutic. All attempts at promoting and defending the Catholic Faith presuppose an understanding of the faith in a way coherent with both the faith itself and human reason or nature. On the one hand, the debate about hermeneutical questions has been going on for many decades, but certainly it is to the great merit of Benedict XVI that it has been brought back to the forefront of ecclesial and theological discussions today. I dare say it is a good thing that such discussions should continue not only in the "celestial" blogosphere, but also within academic theology, otherwise a suspicion grows amongst those who prefer to avoid it, that such a discussion is banned.

How do we "do theology"? In my view, the debate about proper methodology and a hermeneutic of Catholic theology is far from over. Our contemporary situation, both in the Church at large and in theology in general seems, rather, to have reached the limits of mutual understanding. Large groups within the Church (and its theological elite) seem to disagree not only about certain theological matters but also about *how* one should go about understanding – how to "*do* theology". This kind of schism is more profound, and much more complex, than the usual issue in which one party might disagree about an article of the faith or about certain principles of discipline.

A "Hermeneutic of Renewal in Continuity"

As the Holy Father pointed out in his first Christmas address, the decades after Vatican II were dominated by what he calls a ***hermeneutic of reform in the sense of "discontinuity" or even "rupture"***,[1] a breaking away from considered traditional views and practices merely according to the principle: "what we did once, we shall now do differently. This will be obviously better, because we *know* better."

It was little wonder, that after some time a reaction did arise against precisely such positions, for a response was indeed necessary – a response that would force a rediscovery of the treasures that have often been discarded all to easily. This response intended to follow what has become known as a "**Hermeneutic of continuity**" consciously opposing, and even provoking, the dominant theological establishment. It is fair to say, however, that even this reaction is itself part of a hermeneutical process, and can only be useful if it is able to follow a truly catholic hermeneutic; namely, that hermeneutic briefly alluded to in the Pope's 2005 Christmas address – a text that I consider to be among the most significant pronouncements of Benedict, if not the most significant.

Precise formulations. We should pay attention, therefore, to the precise formulations used by the Supreme Pontiff when he spoke of the "Hermeneutic of reform… [the hermeneutic] of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given to us".[2] And when, thirteen months later, he returns to this same topic, he remains faithful to his original choice of words, when he spoke again about a ***"Hermeneutic of renewal in continuity"*** that also must be followed also in juridical practice.[3] These exact words are not accidental and should indeed challenge not only those to whom the Holy Father was referring – that is, the adherers of a [modernist] reform-hermeneutics –, but also to those who declare themselves to be followers of his "hermeneutic of continuity". It is very often this latter group who seem regularly to forget that the Pope, and indeed the Council, have called for a reform, for an authentic renewal within the continuity of the One Chruch which however needs to be purified by authetic reform and renewal preciesly because the Church always remains identical with herself.

I think it is legitimate, at this point, to name some of what I regard as the main expressions of such a "renewal in continuity". It should be noted too that the Holy Father has contributed to most of them: the *Code of Canon Law* of 1983 (and its Oriental counterpart of 1990); the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992); and the major Papal teaching documents and those of the CDF which have been promulgated since the Council. As "Papa Ratzinger" has pointed out in numerous occasions: these texts are the guidelines for a proper, legitimate, authentic and honest reading, and living of, the conciliar legacy.

Those theologians who have been impressed, either by the arguments themselves, or by the authority of the Pope, have hardly ever rejected Pope Benedict's program of "renewal in continuity" as such. But it is true that many have either interpreted it in their own way (another hermeneutically interesting move) or they have proposed other, alternative, hermeneutics said to counterbalance that of the Pope. In this way while they have been appreciative of his particular hermeneutic, they have nevertheless considered it requiring further development and completion. In other words for some of them, the papal hermeneutic of reform in continuity

[1] Benedict XVI, *Address to the Roman Curia* (22 December 2005).

[2] Benedict XVI, *Address to the Roman Curia* (22 December 2005).

[3] Benedict XVI, *Address to the Members of the Tribunal of the Roman Rota* (27 January 2007).

is *one* legitimate form but only *one* among various others.

This position, while seemingly respectful of the Roman Pontiff, and, moreover, seemingly academically presentable, is, I will argue, actually quite untenable. To see this it will be necessary to look at the philosophical background that is, as I claim, that on which the Holy Father's approach rests. Catholic hermeneutics as we will see must indeed include historical, philosophical and theological horizons.

Philosophical Hermeneutics and the work of Gadamer

"Philosophical Hermeneutics" as a discipline is mainly the work of Hans Georg Gadamer (1900-2002), whose foundational book entitled *Wahrheit und Methode* was first published in 1960. Still referring to this his first publication, many years later, Gadamer wrote:

> We are standing in traditions, whether we know these traditions or not, whether we are conscious of them or are as haughty as to think we are beginning without prerequisites – that changes nothing with regard to the effect of traditions on us and on our understanding.[4]

Gadamer, from the beginning, developed his hermeneutical project critical of an exaggerated concept of the capacities of the [individual] human being. This concept he considered to be the result of misguided Enlightenment thought. Gadamer instead wished to identify that there was no human understanding without [historical] preconditions. The human subject never enjoys absolute neutrality vis-à-vis those realities which surround it. Understanding always happens within a "hermeneutical circle", that consists of pre-existing concepts and traditions and previous personal experiences, both conscious and not. This circle is inescapable and necessary, and its "pre-judices" are to be viewed not as psychological problems or obstacles in the way of understanding, but as the essential and useful starting points for all human understanding. Naturally enough in the course of human understanding room is left for a necessary revision and perfection of these prejudices.

Gadamer thus came to say (provocatively since one need only think briefly about German professors and their history of scientific neutrality!):

a) "In truth, history does not belong to us, but we belong to it"[5]. History, as Gadamer perceives it, is not separated from us, but through tradition we are connected to the past and to whatever we try to understand.

b) "The anticipation of meaning, which guides our understanding of texts… is determined by the togetherness which connects us to tradition".[6] This 'connection' does not refer only to the material of tradition, but it also defines the method (*how* we understand) and, even more profoundly, it communicates to us the very desire and *possibility* of understanding and gives us access to, or even belief in, meaning.

c) "Understanding is inserting yourself into the happening of tradition, in which past and present are continually mediated"[7]. For the individual, understanding means respecting "my (humble) place" in history and within tradition, and it requires starting from that place – anything else will only lead to confusion.

For Gadamer, the human condition is inescapably historical; therefore, the rules developed for understanding the past are valid for all forms of understanding. Attempts to deny this existential fact are, for him, destined to fail:

d) "Being historical means never arriving at complete self-knowledge. All self-knowledge arises from historical preconditions"[8]. There is a limit to self-understanding, which needs to be respected in order to get to any form or degree of self-knowledge. This limit gives human (self-) understanding its proper form – which is essentially a Platonic concept. This idea can easily be transposed onto human knowledge of the other and of God, as both start from nothing and never come to an end, at least not in this world.

e) While Gadamer cherishes the fruitful role of (traditional) prejudices, he also insists on another prerequisite for human understanding: **"Whoever wishes to understand a text, is… ready to be told something by it. Therefore, the hermeneutical mind must be open for the otherness of the text from the beginning. Such openness however does not mean objective neutrality or self-extinction, but includes a conscious owning of one's own pre-concepts and prejudices"**[9]. Again, this is a hermeneutical circle: knowing myself, my preconcepts and prejudices, becomes the condition for knowing *anything*, and thus for developing these concepts, and subsequently, deepening my self-knowledge. Gadamer's way of thinking can rightly be compared to a game, a play that has different players, myself included, objects and rules; but which you cannot really understand unless you are in the game, part of it.

It comes as no real surprise, then, that Gadamer's thought did not remain uncontradicted, even though many Catholics welcomed it, though sometimes perhaps somewhat naively. It was not long before Gadamer himself was suspected as a reactionary. As *Wahrheit und Methode* was published in 1960, the years following were not, shall we say, a period particularly open to receive his teaching.

Gadamer's opponents. The main opponent to the thought of Gadamer was/is Jürgen Habermas (born 1929) and his position of *Ideologiekritik*. His criticism of Gadamer's positions can be summed up in the following points[10]:

a) "Enlightened thought" does not allow for an unbroken relationship with tradition. Numerous historians claim that we can never really overcome the deep abyss that separates us from the past. Habermas sees the crucial divide in Enlightenment, having effected a kind of "total transformation" of the human: shattering once-and-for-all its relationship of trust in history and tradition. While this assertion is not free from a certain contradiction and itself would need to be criticised, we cannot deny the phenomenal

[4] Hans-Georg Gadamer – Carsten Dutt, *Hermeneutik - Ästhetik - Praktische Philosophie: Hans-Georg Gadamer im Gespräch*, Heidelberg 1995, p. 21 [trans. from German by the author].
[5] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, Tübingen 1960, [4]1975, p. 281.
[6] *Wahrheit und Methode*, p. 277.
[7] *Wahrheit und Methode*, p. 275.
[8] *Wahrheit und Methode*, p. 307.
[9] *Wahrheit und Methode*, p. 273f.
[10] For an overview of the discussion between Gadamer and Habermas see Jean Grondin, *Einführung in die philosophische Hermeneutik*, Darmstadt [2]2001, 178-185.

success of precisely such a standpoint, even today.

b) The second critical point Habermas raised was: **Tradition is obfuscated by open or hidden structures of domination and ideologies**. This remark, while *per se* odious to the good traditional catholic, is regarded in a much more positive manner, when applied to theologians and who theologies that have appeared and dominated in more recent decades

c) Thirdly, according to Habermas, there are **unconscious barriers of communication and understanding: consensus and assent are the consequence of pseudo-communication**: Habermas may have said this in order to disprove Gadamer's seemingly blind trust in tradition. If we apply his thought merely to the political and media "reality" of our times, I find little with which to disagree.

Habermas' points appear to be, at least partially, legitimate criticisms. Certainly, Gadamer's views do contain several inherent problems, of which the main one seems to be that:

d) According to Gadamer: **the individual disappears into the historical process.**[11] When we look at how he defines the relation of the individual to tradition, we have to ask: **Who *is* the understanding subject?** Is there a kind of universal tendency towards higher understanding? Under whose direction? And how do we deal with historical setbacks? It would certainly be fascinating to investigate the medieval debate about the agent intellect (and its unity – or not) from a specifically hermeneutical interest, should there be someone here looking for a topic for a PhD!

Gadamer's responses. Gadamer himself seems to have been quite unimpressed by such criticisms. He did not see them as contradictions to his theory, but rather as useful for understanding it correctly. According to Gadamer's famous "Replik" – or "reply" – to this critics:

> Tradition is never only that which someone knows as his own origin or of what he is conscious, so that tradition can never be exhausted in an adequate historical consciousness. Changing the existing realities is no less a form of being connected to tradition than defending what exists. Tradition in itself exists only in continual becoming other.[12]

And really, from both philosophical, and theological, points of view it is hardly possible simply to deny Gadamer's fundamental intuitions, which can indeed be integrated usefully into a Catholic vision.

Gadamer saw tradition as the bond between us and the past, the context in which all understanding happens. For ecclesial and Catholic hermeneutics, this is certainly quite a valid intuition, but it needs to be applied to the Church and developed according to St John's words: **"See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you"** (*1 John* 2:24).[13]

Principles to be noted. In order to do this correctly, a few principles need to be borne in mind:

a) Catholic faith requires and provides not only for a connection to the past, but for a presence: **Tradition keeps the beginnings present and alive for contemporary understanding**. For all historical work in theology is aimed at bringing out the truth for today. Catholic theology holds on to the concept of an unchanging core-content of the Faith, which is not opposed to a development of doctrine, but rather necessary in order to be able to speak rightly of a "development" rather than a mere "substitution". The Ven. John Henry Cardinal Newman's contribution in this field is still enlightening. Indeed, I am sure he would agree with the following statement that:

b) Identity can be maintained only in faithfulness to those beginnings. The Apostolic Faith remains normative; the preceding Councils are normative for the following ones, which, in turn, limit and determine the meaning of the earlier ones. In the end, it is Christ himself who remains the prevailing norm, to whom we are connected by means of the tradition, which represents His own teaching and example to us in the present.

c) Recourse to the beginning confronts us with the criticism of the history of effects. We go back to the beginning through the steps of tradition, not in a kind of "jump over all things" between us and Jesus! The effects, the traces that the Gospel has left in human and Church history must not be overlooked for they have an inescapable, be it hidden, influence on our own thinking.

d) Understanding happens within a continuity that corresponds to the human being whose freedom is not constrained but rather enabled by that continuity. Such a realistic, modest and, at the same time, demanding concept of human understanding is constructive from a Catholic point of view, recognising both the capacities and the limits of the human being, and of the believer specifically. We *can* understand/know something about ourselves, and even about God; but in order to do so we need to follow the rules – that is, we need to respect our human nature (and reason) – as both God's creation and one which exists in a fallen state. This is indeed the hermeneutical *a priori* as formulated by Catholic doctrine.

A Catechetical summation. Allow me, then, the luxury of a long, but essential quote from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (§§ 36-38) which says:

> "Our holy mother, the Church, holds and teaches that God, the first principle and last end of all things, can be known with certainty from the created world by the natural light of human reason" (Vatican I, *Dei Filius*, cited in Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*). Without this capacity, man would not be able to welcome God's revelation. Man has this capacity because he is created "in the image of God" (Gen 1:24).
>
> In the historical conditions in which he finds himself, however, man experiences many difficulties in coming to know God by the light of reason alone … "So it happens that men in such matters easily persuade themselves that what they would not like to be true is false or at least doubtful" (Pius XII).
>
> This is why man stands in need of being enlightened by God's revelation, not only about those things that exceed his understanding, but also "about those religious and moral truths which of themselves are not beyond the grasp of human reason, so that even in the present condition of the human race, they can be known by all men with ease, with firm certainty and with no admixture of error" (Pius XII).

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[11] Cf.. *Wahrheit und Methode*, p. 261.

[12] Cfr. Hans-Georg Gadamer, Replik zu 'Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik' (1971): *Wahrheit und Methode. Ergänzungen, Register* (Gesammelte Werke II), 251-275, 268.

[13] Still very helpful on Catholic hermeneutics and itself an interesting contribution to its history is Franz Mußner, *Geschichte der Hermeneutik von Schleiermacher bis zur Gegenwart*. Freiburg ²1976. (HDG I,3c). Mußner, now a retired Canon of Passau Cathedral, was the Professor of New Testament at Regensburg University at the time when the then Joseph Ratzinger was the professor of dogmatic theology. Benedict XVI recently named him Apostolic Protonotary.

And further exemplification. To give only one example: The Church's teaching on abortion is *per se* reasonable, accessible to non-believers, grounded in natural law; but we must not underestimate how difficult it is, in the precise variables of the modern world, to accept such a teaching without the Faith. Here too, however, Revelation cannot truly be superfluous, and thus much work needs to be done by Christians to ensure the richness of this teaching, based on the natural law, can be sufficiently discovered and appreciated.

On "hierarchies" in truths and in hermeneutics. The consequences of proper hermeneutics, however, do not touch only the Church's working *ad extra*, but also apply *ad intra*. We need to pay attention to the rules and the contexts laid out by both of these "workings". In this sense, I would like to speak of a "**hierarchical hermeneutics**", in accordance, essentially, with what which Vatican II taught about the "Hierarchy of Truths":

> Moreover, in ecumenical dialogue, Catholic theologians standing fast by the teaching of the Church and investigating the divine mysteries with the separated brethren must proceed with love for the truth, with charity, and with humility. When comparing doctrines with one another, they should remember that in Catholic doctrine there exists a "hierarchy" of truths, since they vary in their relation to the fundamental Christian faith. Thus the way will be opened by which through fraternal rivalry all will be stirred to a deeper understanding and a clearer presentation of the unfathomable riches of Christ (*Unitatis redintegratio* 11).

Not only ecumenical dialogue, but all theology needs to pay attention to that systematic cohesion which exists within and between Catholic doctrine(s). The term "hierarchy of truths" has frequently been abused of late, and it certainly does not propose a distinction between more or less important truths, such as might allow us to dispose of, or glance over, some or all Catholic teachings. Instead, the notion of "Hierarchy" speaks of the logical and catechetical order demanded not only at the point of explaining the faith, but which must equally apply already in the understanding of it.

The Catholic "et - et" principle. Card. Leo Scheffzyk (1920-2005) has explained this **Catholic way of thinking as the system of the "*et – et*"**.[14] It is relatively simple then to come up with a whole list of couplets illustrating this idea:

- Word and Sacrament
- Faith and Works
- Scripture and Tradition
- Lex orandi and Lex credendi
- Nature and Grace
- Reason and Mystery
- History and Idea
- Office and Charism
- Objectivity and Subjectivity
- Universalism and Unity
- Continuity and Progress
- Tolerance and Discipline
- Community and Person
- Supernatural and Incarnation

The unity principle. The Faith can *not* be reduced to a single principle (such as the doctrine of justification), but rather must rest on the Creed, and thus on Trinitarian and Christological doctrine. The principle of Unity, therefore, is itself Christological: **God and Man** in Jesus Christ.[15]

According to this **principle of Unity**, we must :

a) ***Never* follow the (heretical) paradigm of the ellipse or the "two columns" (Scripture-Tradition, Word-Sacrament, Clergy-Laity),** as if they could be unconnected;

b) always remember that **the relation between God and Man/World stands in God himself**.

Conclusions

Theology as faith seeking understanding, therefore, starts from that fundamental relationship – traditionally called the Analogy of Being, ***Analogia entis*** – according to which, the dissimilarity between God and the World is greater than any similarity between them: ***Deus semper maior***. This relationship is the basis on which rests the mystery of the Incarnation of **Jesus Christ** and our capacity of being connected to and knowing it – and Him.

For these reasons, theologians and preachers must realise the (wider and narrower) contexts in which they stand and "read together" the various sources and authorities of our faith, which are not all on the same level and between which we are not seeking a compromise but a harmony.

To properly understand these various sources requires:

a) discovering the **concordance of the different authorities, witnesses and expressions of the Faith**,

b) seeing between them a **Complementarity** or a mutual **Correction** (in the sense of avoiding misleading, unilateral exegesis) or a spelling out the **Consequences**.

c) In putting together our personal picture of catholic theology, we will necessarily "do theology" and thus be part of a theological school or tradition. We always have to bear in mind that on the level of theology there is no *absolute* normativity, but instead a **relativity of theological schools**. **Certainty** belongs to doctrine only, yet understanding the divine mysteries never comes to an end, certainly not in this world, and this **infinity** is not so much caused by our own sinful weaknesses as it is due to our limited, created being.

Based on these philosophical and theological foundations, for all forms of proclamation of the Gospel and teaching the Faith, we need to be aware of the inevitable laws and, consequently, the requirements of a proper, and properly Catholic**,** Hermeneutics:

a. Our understanding the Faith needs to take on board that it is itself only possible within the **horizon of the Church**. This horizon is wider than any other, but still will realise we are unable to exhaust the divine mysteries.

b. There must always be systematic respect for the **Competence** of the Church –according to the categories of **Teaching,** of the **Judiciary**, or of offering advice and **consultation.**

c. In reading texts, and in speaking or writing about theological issues, scholars should follow a strict **Distinction between the obligatory Doctrine of the Church and theology**. In this work the traditional **degrees of certainty/ assent** are still helpful, and historical precedents and examples, even analogous ones, should be studied and followed.

Feichtinger, cont. at page 16, above.

[14] Cf. Leo Scheffczyk, *Katholische Glaubenswelt. Wahrheit und Gestalt*, Paderborn [3]2008, 37-39.

[15] Cf. Scheffczyk, *Katholische Glaubenswelt* 39-52.

Found in Translation:

The "sacral vernacular" of the new English translation of the Roman Missal

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide some considerations that may help priests and everyone else involved in pastoral ministry with the introduction of the new English translation of the third *editio typica* of the *Missale Romanum* (2002, reprinted 2008), the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite. This new, completely revised translation represents an important step in the process of liturgical reform inaugurated by the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. It may even be said to constitute a far-reaching contribution to what then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI happily reigning, called "reform of the reform".[1]

It is not yet clear when exactly this new translation will be introduced in the countless parishes and communities of the English-speaking Catholic world. The translation is in its final stages; all the texts have been approved by the various Conferences of Bishops in a long and sometimes arduous process. The recognition (*recognitio*) of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments is expected to be given some time after Easter 2010. How long it will then take to have the Missals ready for use is not certain; Advent 2010, the date preferred by the Congregation, is probably too early. A more realistic estimate would be some time in the year 2011.[2] It is a fair guess to say that the introduction of this revised translation will not happen without complications and requires an effort on the part of the Church's Pastors, above all her Bishops, but also her priests, especially Parish Priests, because there are many changes in the liturgical texts that concern not only the celebrant priests themselves, but all the faithful, most notably the people's response to the liturgical greeting "The Lord be with you" (for *Dominus vobiscum*), which will no longer be "And also with you", but "And with your spirit" (for *Et cum spiritu tuo*). Moreover, far-reaching modifications have been made in the translation of the *Ordo Missae*, including the Confiteor, the Gloria, the Creed, and the Sanctus.

In order to appreciate this new translation, it will be useful, first to reflect in more general terms on the use of "sacred language" in divine worship;[3] secondly, I shall briefly sketch the role of Latin and of the vernacular in the liturgy since the Second Vatican Council; thirdly, I shall explain with the help of a few examples how the revised English translation achieves its aim at providing a "sacral vernacular" for the Church's liturgy.

1. Sacred Language

Languages do not exist in a vacuum, but in the context of a structured system that is determined by a variety of factors (social, cultural, psychological, etc.). The languages used in the Church's solemn public worship have obviously developed under certain specific conditions and circumstances that need to be considered to understand its particular characteristics. The Dutch scholar Christine Mohrmann, whose studies on the Latin used by early Christians are still indispensable, referred to the theory developed by Ferdinand de Saussure and other exponents of the Geneva school of linguistics, which claims that language should not only be seen as a means of social communication in ordinary life, but also as a medium of expression of persons in a comprehensive sense. Human speech is not just a utilitarian instrument that serves to communicate facts, and should do so in the most simple and efficient manner; it also provides the forms of expressing and interpreting the rich and subtle workings of the human mind, including the arts, philosophy and religion.[4]

Language is also the medium in which we express religious thoughts and experiences. We are conscious of the transcendence of the divine and, at the same time, of its presence – a presence that is both real and incomprehensible. There are extreme forms of expressing this experience: "speaking in tongues", or *glossalia*, a phenomenon familiar to us from St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, and "mystical silence", as experienced, for instance, by Saint Augustine and his mother Saint Monica at Ostia.[5] "Sacred language" does not go as far as glossolalia and mystical silence in excluding human communication completely, or at least attempting to do so. However, it reduces the element of comprehensibility in favour of other elements, notably that of expression. Mohrmann proposes to see in sacred or, as she also says, "hieratic" language, and in particular in its vocabulary, a specific way of organising religious experience. She also argues that every form of belief in the supernatural, in the existence of a transcendent being, leads necessarily to adopting a form of sacred language in worship – just as a consistent secularism leads to rejecting any form of it.

Characteristics of sacred language: stability in liturgical texts. The characteristics of sacred language emerge from the early history of the Christian Eucharistic prayers. It is generally agreed that these were relatively fluid in the first three centuries. Their exact wording was not yet fixed, and the celebrant had some room to improvise. However, as Allan Bouley notes, "Conventions governing the structure and content of improvised anaphoras are ascertainable in the second century and indicate that extempore prayer was not left merely to the whim of the minister. In the third century, and possibly even before, some anaphoral texts already existed in writing". Bouley speaks of an "atmosphere of controlled freedom",[6] because concerns for orthodoxy limited the celebrant's liberty to vary the texts of the prayer. This need became particularly pressing during the doctrinal struggles of the fourth century; hence this era saw the emergence of fixed Eucharistic prayers, such as the Roman Canon, the Anaphora of St John Chrysostom and others.

There is another important aspect of this development: the freedom to improvise existed only in a framework of fixed elements of content and style, which was, above all, biblically inspired. In a recent study on improvisation in prayer, Achim Budde analyses three oriental anaphoras used over a considerable geographical area, the Egyptian version of the Anaphora of St Basil, the West Syrian Anaphora of St James and the East Syrian Anaphora of Nestorius. With his comparative method, the German liturgist identifies common features of structure, style and rhetoric. Budde argues that these patterns and stable elements go back to the pre-literary history of these Eucharistic prayers and that they was studied and even memorised by priests in the early Church.[7] As noted by the Norwegian exegete Sigmund Mowinckel, known especially for his work on the Psalms, rapid development of fixed forms of prayer corresponds to an essential need and constitutes a fundamental law of religion.[8] Budde's methodological approach is an important supplement and corrective to that of Bouley, who would appear to underestimate the significance of memorisation in an oral culture.[9] The formation of stable liturgical texts can thus be ascertained from early on as a strong force in the process of handing on the Christian faith.

In the Western tradition, the freedom to improvise remained for a longer time than in the East, especially in certain liturgical prayers, such as the introductory part of the Eucharistic prayer we now call "preface".[10] This is the reason why there is such a great variety of prefaces in the early Roman sacramentaries. Mohrmann concludes that it is "this system which leads to a marked traditional prayer style".[11] A similar phenomenon can be observed in the earliest Greek epos: the freedom of individual singers to improvise on the given material led to a stylised language. In the liturgy, the early tradition of oral improvisation in prayer helped to create a sacred style.

Stylistic features of sacred language. Mohrmann introduces a useful distinction between sacred languages of a "primary" and a "secondary" kind. "Primary" sacred languages were formed as such from the beginning; for example, the language of the Greek oracles that was close to the stylised language of the Homeric epos. "Secondary" sacred languages have come to be experienced as such only in the course of time. The languages used in Christian worship would seem to fall under this category: Greek in the Byzantine tradition; Syriac in the Patriarchate of Antioch and the "Nestorian" Church of the East with its missions reaching to India and China; Old Armenian; Old Georgian; Coptic; Old Ethiopian (Ge'ez); Church Slavonic; not to forget the Elizabethan English of the *Book of Common Prayer*[12] and, of course, the Latin of the Roman Rite and other Western liturgical traditions.

There are stylistic features in all these liturgical languages that separate them from the ordinary languages of the people. In the first place, since the language of divine worship is the medium of expression not just of individuals, but of a community living according to certain traditions, it is handed down from generation to generation and shows tenacity in holding on to archaic linguistic forms. Secondly, foreign elements are introduced in order to associate with ancient religious tradition; a case in point is the Hebrew Biblical vocabulary in the Latin use of Christians. Augustine makes pertinent observations on this in his *De doctrina christiana:* "In some cases, although they could be translated, the original form is preserved for the sake of its solemn authority (*propter sanctiorem auctoritatem*)", such as "amen" and "alleluia". Other words "are said to be incapable of being translated into another language. … This is especially true of interjections, which signify emotion, rather than an element of clearly conceived meaning"; the example he provides "osanna" and "raca" (the expression of anger mentioned in Matthew 5:22).[13] Thirdly, sacred language uses rhetorical figures that are typical of oral style, such as parallelism and antithesis, rhythmic clausulae, rhyme, and alliteration.[14]

For these reasons, one cannot but describe as misleading the comments made three years ago by Donald Trautman, Bishop of Erie and then-Chairman of the United States Bishops' Conference Committee on Liturgy, at a liturgical conference that "scholars have pointed out that the celebration of the Eucharist always followed the language of the people. There was no such thing in East or West as a sacred language".[15]

In fact, already in Christian antiquity the language used in worship was at some distance from the language of the people. This distance was not just the result of linguistic developments in the common language that were not adopted in the liturgical language because of its conservative nature. The language of Christian worship was, above all, inspired by the Sacred Scriptures, which have their origins in a remote corner of the Roman Empire with a Semitic language and culture that had to be translated in order to evangelise the peoples of the Mediterranean. The Biblical idiom introduced first into Greek and then, even more so, into Latin contained many elements of vocabulary and syntax that were experienced by native speakers as unusual, remote or even arcane. Thus Biblical Greek and Biblical Latin helped to create a "hieratic" or "sacred" style that shaped the language of the liturgy.

2. Latin and the Vernacular since Vatican II

Early use of Latin. Originally, the Roman liturgy was mostly celebrated in Greek. The transition to Latin happened gradually and was largely completed by the middle of the fourth century. At the end of the fourth century, Saint Ambrose of Milan quotes extensively from the Eucharistic Prayer he uses, which is an earlier version of the Canon of the Mass.[16] In the centuries to follow, the great Sacramentaries were compiled, containing also the variable prayers of the Mass. It is clear from these sources that the prayer language of the Roman rite in late antiquity was already at some distance from the language of the people. In other words, the Romans did not speak in the style of the Canon or of the collects of the Mass. As soon as Greek was replaced by Latin in the Roman liturgy, a highly stylised medium of worship was created.

The Protestant challenge. In the course of the Middle Ages, Latin as the language of the liturgy became more and more removed from the language of the people, especially because of the formation of national languages and cultures in Europe. This problem became acute in the early modern period: the Protestant Reformers attacked the use of Latin in the liturgy; their idea of divine worship being essentially a proclamation of Word of God made them

conclude that using a language that was not intelligible to the assembly was contrary to the Gospel. Martin Luther was happy to allow for some Latin, as far as it was understood by the people, and this custom was followed for some time in Lutheran communities. John Calvin, on the other hand, categorically rejected the use of Latin in worship.[17]

The measured response of Trent. At the Council of Trent, the question of liturgical language was much debated, and the arguments produced by the Protestant Reformers were considered very seriously. The *Decree on the Sacrifice of the Mass* of the Council's 22nd Session in 1562 contains a carefully worded doctrinal exposition on the subject, stating that it did not seem expedient to the Fathers that the Holy Mass should be celebrated in the vernacular, although they recognise the value of the texts of the Mass for the instruction of the faithful. However, pastors should preach frequently about what is read at Mass, especially on Sundays and feast days.[18] Moreover, canon nine of the same Decree on the Sacrifice of the Mass declares anathema anyone who says that the vernacular language must be used in the celebration of Mass; again, the subtle wording of this conciliar text is to be noted.[19]

Liturgical Movement prior to Vatican II. The question of Latin and the vernacular in the Church's liturgy continued to be discussed in the centuries after Trent, and it came to the fore especially with the Liturgical Movement of the first half of the twentieth century. The process of liturgical reform initiated by Pope Pius XII included concessions for countries to use the vernacular for the proclamation of the readings at Mass and, to some extent, for the celebration of other sacraments.

Vatican II. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council Vatican addressed the question of the language of worship in a comprehensive way and granted a significant extension of the use of the vernacular in the Catholic liturgy. The primary motive for this was to promote "fully conscious and active participation" of the people in the liturgy.[20] The relevant article of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 36, strikes a balance that was reached after some debate on the Council floor, asserting in the first paragraph that "the use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rite" (§1), and then, secondly, granting that the use of the vernacular may be extended, which "will apply in the first place to the readings and directives, and to some of the prayers and chants" (§2). Thirdly, "the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority", which ordinarily would be the Conference of Bishops, is to decide "whether, and to what extent, the vernacular language is to be used" (§3). Article 54 of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* specifies that in "Masses which are celebrated with the people, a suitable place may be allotted to their mother tongue. This is to apply in the first place to the readings and 'the common prayer', but also, as local conditions may warrant, to those parts which pertain to the people". At the same time, however, "steps should be taken so that the faithful may also be able to say or to sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them".

It is obvious from the relevant articles of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* that the Fathers of Vatican II did not envisage a general introduction of the vernacular, let alone a replacement of Latin as the liturgical language of the Roman rite with the mother tongue. Regarding the Divine Office, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy stipulated in article 101 that the Latin language was to be retained by clerics, although exceptions were possible (§1), while nuns and other groups should pray the Liturgy of the Hours in their native tongue (§2). Moreover, when the Council approved the use of the mother tongue in the Roman liturgy, it made clear that vernacular texts had to be translations of the Latin liturgical books and that these translation had to be approved by the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority (art. 36 § 4).

Post-conciliar developments. The post-conciliar developments soon went beyond the limited scope of the Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. Among the landmarks in this process was Pope Paul VI's Motu proprio *Sacram Liturgiam* of 25 January 1964, just one and a half months after the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. With this Motu proprio, Paul VI permitted the use of the vernacular instead of Latin in the recitation of the hours. He defined the norm that the translated version should be drawn up and approved by the conferences of bishops and submitted to the Holy See for due approval, that is, confirmation.[21]

In the same year on 26 September, the Consilium for Implementing the Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, issued the Instruction *Inter Oecumenici*, which among other things provided criteria for vernacular translations. *Inter Oecumenici* made it clear that: (a) "the basis of the translations is the Latin liturgical text"; (b) the work of translations should involve institutes of liturgy or persons who are experts in Scripture, liturgy, the biblical languages, Latin, the vernacular, and music; (c) where applicable, "there should be consultation with bishops of neighbouring regions using the same language"; (d) "in nations of several languages there should be a translation for each language".[22]

"Vernacular expressions of the one Roman rite". In an address to translators of liturgical texts given on 10 November 1965, Pope Paul VI presents the basic principles of liturgical translations. The Pope emphasised that translations of liturgical texts "have become part of the rites themselves" and that for this reason they need the approval by the local authority and of the Holy See for liturgical use. The introduction of the mother tongue in worship does not mean that the Church has instituted new liturgical families. They are rather the vernacular expressions of the one Roman rite. Paul VI also declared that the type of language to be used in the liturgy "should always be worthy of the noble realities it signifies, set apart from the everyday speech of the street and the marketplace". This requires that translators "know both Christian Latin and their own modern language", and, given that the liturgy should above all be chanted, the translated prayers need to be constructed in such a way that they can be sung according to the rules of music that obtain in different cultures. The challenge for translators is to "make also clarity of language and dignity of expression shine forth in the vernacular translations of liturgical texts".[23]

The influence of the 1969 Consilium instruction: "dynamic equivalence". The most important document guiding the post-conciliar translations of liturgical texts was the Instruction of the Consilium *Comme le prévoit* of 25 January 1969. This document is in many ways an elaboration of Paul VI's address 1965, which I

have just quoted. However, *Comme le prévoit* has a number of irregularities: the document was published in six major languages, but not in Latin, the official language of the Holy See; moreover, it bears no official signature and it was not published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, the official organ of the Holy See.24

The Instruction *Comme le prévoit* endorsed a translation theory known as "dynamic equivalence". This methodology was developed by Eugene Nida for the purpose of Biblical translation and aims at rendering justice to the fact that a translation of a text is a difficult undertaking, because a text is a complex reality.[25] A word-by-word translation from the source language into the receptor language often does not make sense and fails to communicate the message of the text. This difficulty is felt particularly when it comes to translating Latin liturgical texts, many of which stem from late antiquity, into contemporary languages. Any translation must naturally aim at translating the spiritual and doctrinal content of these ancient prayers in a way that renders justice to the rules and conventions of the receptor language; that is, it must aim at producing "good English" or "good German".

However, the theory of "dynamic equivalence" goes much further, in that it abstracts the content of the text from its linguistic and cultural form and no longer aims at a translation that would reproduce the formal structure of the original as closely as could reasonably be done in a modern language. Rather, the purpose of this approach is to identify the message contained in the original text apart from its linguistic form, which is considered a mere vesture that can be changed according to different cultural contexts. In the process of translation, a new form is to be created that would possess equivalent qualities by means of which the original content can be adequately expressed. By means of this new form, the translation intends to create in a reader or audience of the receptor language the same informative and emotive effect that the text in its source language would have had in its original context. This was the main principle according to which the *Missale Romanum* of Pope Paul VI was translated by the International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL).

Displacing "dynamic equivalence". *Comme le prévoit* has now been replaced by the Instruction *Liturgiam authenticam*, issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in 2001 and published in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*.[26] The very title of this instruction indicates its official character: it is the "Fifth Instruction for the Right Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council" and thus stands on a par with the first of these instructions, *Inter Oecumenici* of 1964. *Liturgiam authenticam* refers on its title page to article 36 of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* on the use of the vernacular in the Roman liturgy, which has already been discussed. With this Instruction, all previous norms on liturgical translation are superseded, with the exception of those presented in the Fourth Instruction *Varietates legitimae* of 1994 concerning difficult questions on the Roman Liturgy and inculturation.[27] According to *Liturgiam authenticam*, all the translations of the liturgical books in use since Vatican II are to be examined and revised. In order to consider the revised translations as authentic, they need the recognition (*recognitio*) of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

Passing on the patrimony of the Roman rite. *Liturgiam authenticam* notes that the rich spiritual and doctrinal patrimony which is contained in the Latin liturgical texts of the Roman Rite is to be preserved and passed on through the centuries. In order to achieve this goal, "it is to be kept in mind from the beginning that the translation of the liturgical texts of the Roman Liturgy is not so much a work of creative innovation as it is of rendering the original texts faithfully and accurately into the vernacular language" (art. 20). The different methodology that this Instruction requires of translators is made very clear: "While it is permissible to arrange the wording, the syntax and the style in such a way as to prepare a flowing vernacular text suitable to the rhythm of popular prayer, the original text, insofar as possible, must be translated integrally and in the most exact manner, without omissions or additions in terms of their content, and without paraphrases or glosses. Any adaptation to the characteristics or the nature of the various vernacular languages is to be sober and discreet" (*ibid.*).

The contents of the liturgical texts should be "evident and comprehensible even to the faithful who lack any special intellectual formation"; for this reason "the translations should be characterised by a kind of language which is easily understandable". At the same time, however, liturgical translations need to preserve the "dignity, beauty, and doctrinal precision" of the original text. The aim set for liturgical translation is indeed a high one: "By means of words of praise and adoration that foster reverence and gratitude in the face of God's majesty, his power, his mercy and his transcendent nature, the translations will respond to the hunger and thirst for the living God that is experienced by the people of our own time, while contributing also to the dignity and beauty of the liturgical celebration itself" (art. 25).

Liturgical language and inculturation. *Liturgiam authenticam* also addresses the often poorly understood question of inculturation in a reflected and balanced way. Liturgical translation should communicate the Church's perennial treasury of prayer "by means of language understandable in the cultural context for which it is intended"; however, "it should also be guided by the conviction that liturgical prayer not only is formed by the genius of a culture, but itself contributes to the development of that culture. Consequently it should cause no surprise that such language differs somewhat from ordinary speech. Liturgical translation that takes due account of the authority and integral content of the original texts will facilitate the development of a sacral vernacular, characterised by a vocabulary, syntax and grammar that are proper to divine worship, even though it is not to be excluded that it may exercise an influence even on everyday speech, as has occurred in the languages of peoples evangelised long ago" (art. 47). This important passage shows an awareness of the complex relationship between faith and culture that takes account of the characteristics of "sacred language" in the Christian tradition.

When reading *Liturgiam authenticam*, one cannot but be impressed by the high standards that are demanded for the translation of liturgical texts. No doubt, translation is a difficult undertaking, and it is made even more arduous by the particular nature of the texts in question. The task of reproducing the beauty and dignity of the Canon of the Mass or the ancient orations of the *Missale Romanum* in the vernacular would require translators as gifted in their mother

tongue, as Miles Coverdale or Thomas Cranmer were in the sixteenth century. None other than Martin Luther wrote that one would need poets to create a popular liturgy.[28]

3. A Tale of Two Translations

In the third part of this paper, I shall compare the 1973 ICEL version of the *Roman Missal*, which is still in use, with the new translation that will be implemented before long. Parts of the Ordo Missae in English received the recognitio of the Congregation for Divine Worship in 2008 and are already available in their definitive form for study purposes.[29] Because of the limits of space, I have chosen to comment briefly on a few examples from on the First Eucharistic Prayer, the Roman Canon; I hope to treat this subject more extensively in the near future. The differences between the two translations emerge clearly from the table provided in Box 1, below.

Latin rules of composition and liturgical texts. Liturgical prayer is a form of public speech, and hence the Canon, as well as the collects of the Mass, was formed according to technical rules of composition. In Latin prose texts, the placing of the various parts of a sentence can be very significant. The Post-Sanctus part of the Canon begins with the striking form of address *Te igitur, clementissime Pater*. The 1973 version renders this rather blandly as "We come to you, Father"; thus the emphasis has already shifted from God the Father, to whom the prayer is addressed, to our action ("we come"). By contrast, the 2008 version attempts to reproduce the unusual beginning of the Latin prayer with "To you, therefore, most merciful Father". The force of the Latin *igitur* has long been debated among liturgists; it has been argued that this refers back to the preface, in which we thank and praise God for his wonderful work of salvation. Since the *Sanctus* came in at a later stage in the development of the liturgy, it would seem plausible that *igitur* originally connected the petition to make our offering acceptable to the initial act of praise; however, it can now be construed to take up the acclamation of the *Benedictus*: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosana in the highest.". Note that the 2008 version has the superlative "most merciful Father" as in the Latin. Moreover, while the 1973 version leaves out *Dominum nostrum*, the new version renders the phrase integrally: "through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord".

The choice of the 1973 version "We come to you ... with praise and thanksgiving ... we ask you" is curious, because the Latin Canon only reads "*supplices rogamus ac petimus*" at this point. Eamon Duffy suggested that the old ICEL translation would reflect an opinion current among liturgists in the post-conciliar period that the Roman Canon was somehow deficient because it gave priority to the elements of petition and intercession over those of praise and thanksgiving. The translators may have tried to remedy this by letting the prayer begin with the words they chose.[30] Be that as it may, the 1973 version does not take into account the formula *rogamus ac petimus*, which is characteristic of Roman euchological style. Here we observe the typical use of consecutive synonyms or near-synonyms. The doubling of the verb increases the force and intensity of the expression. In the 2008 version this is translated as "we make humble prayer and petition".

Cumulative language style in liturgical prayer. There are other examples of the use of near-synonyms, such as *accepta habeas et benedicas* (translated in both versions as "accept and bless") and *haec dona, haec munera, haec sancta sacrificia illibata*. In this latter phrase there is an impressive climax from the simple expression of "gifts" to a word that implies "what is due" and can literal mean "tributes", to "sacrifices". The 1973 version opts for a more paraphrasing translation "these gifts we offer you in sacrifice", not communicating the idea that these sacrifices are indeed *sancta* and *illibata*, whereas the 2008 version does justice to the three different terms and also renders the rhetorical movement of the phrase into English: "these gifts, these offerings, these holy and unblemished sacrifices".

In the anamnesis prayer after the consecration *Unde et memores* there are several outstanding stylistic features, above all in the clause *offerimus tibi* ... . The asyndeton *hostiam puram, hostiam sanctam, hostiam immaculatam*, with three near-synonymous adjectives is once again characteristic of Roman prayer style. Whereas the 1973 translation reduces

Box 1: Eucharist Prayer I (Roman Canon), Ordinary form of the Roman rite

Missale Romanum 2002 (2008)	ICEL 1973	ICEL 2008
Te igitur, clementissime Pater, per Iesum Christum, filium tuum, Dominum nostrum, supplices rogamus ac petimus, uti accepta habeas et benedicas, haec dona, haec munera, haec sancta sacrificia illibata.	**We come to you, Father, with praise and thanksgiving, through Jesus Christ your Son. Through him we ask you to accept and bless these gifts we offer you in sacrifice.**	**To you, therefore, most merciful Father, we make humble prayer and petition through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord: that you accept and bless these gifts, these offerings, these holy and unblemished sacrifices, ...**
Unde et memores, Domine, nos servi tui, sed et plebs tua sancta, eiusdem Christi Filii tui, Domini nostri, tam beatae passionis, nec non ab inferis resurrectionis, sed et in caelos gloriosae ascensionis: offerimus praeclarae maiestati tuae de tuis donis ac datis hostiam puram, hostiam sanctam, hostiam immaculatam, Panem sanctum vitae aeternae et Calicem salutis perpetuae.	**Father, we celebrate the memory of Christ, your Son. We, your people and your ministers, recall his passion, his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension into glory; and from the many gifts you have given us we offer to you, God of glory and majesty, this holy and perfect sacrifice: the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation.**	**Therefore, O Lord, as we celebrate the memorial of the blessed Passion, the Resurrection from the dead, and the glorious Ascension into heaven of Christ, your Son, our Lord, we, your servants and your holy people, offer to your glorious majesty from the gifts that you have given us, this pure victim, this holy victim, this spotless victim, the holy Bread of eternal life and the Chalice of everlasting salvation.**

Conference organisers and participants are deeply grateful to the Rector of the Pontifical Teutonic College within the Vatican City for the kind hospitality that allowed the use of their foyer, lecture theatre, and garden as a main venue for Conference presentations.

This photo captures the presentation of the first Conference lecture by Father Carola, SJ, of the Pontifical Gregorian University.

Retreat to Close theYear for Priests. ***The Australian Confraternity of Catholic Clergy entered the Year for Priests with a splendid Retreat conducted by the Eremitus Bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand, the Most Rev Basil Meeking. We had an International Conference in Rome, with this Special Issue providing a record. We now look to the close of this Year for Priests with a second Retreat directed by the Most Rev. Basil Meeking, Emeritus Bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand, on the priestly spirituality of St John Marie Vianney. In order that priests will not in two consecutive years be separated from their people for the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, it is timed for 19-23 July 2010.***

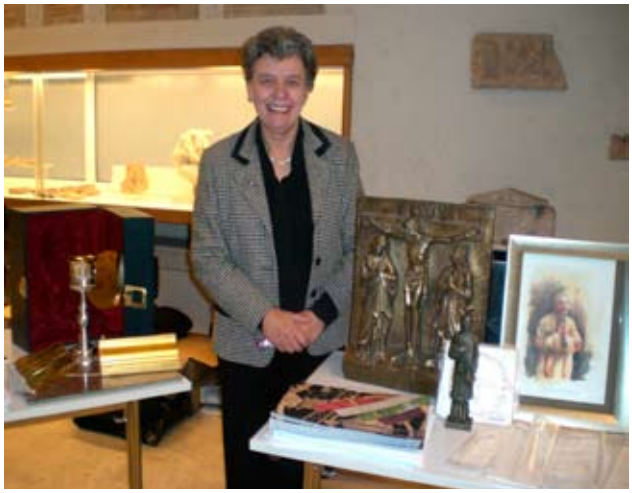
The venue is the same as last year, as illustrated in the photo below showing priests gathered during the Retreat at Galong Retreat Centre in the West of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, 2009.

A leaflet for 2010 Retreat registrations will soon be sent out by our Secretariat: please enter the dates in your diaries!

"A bright face in a public place":
Mrs Mary Roth at her Conference display.

In Rome, Conference participants again were cheered by the presence of Mrs Mary Roth, Australia representative for Granda Liturgical Arts, and her Spanish colleague, and by her fine products, and ACCC Conference finances "cheered" by Granda sponsorship!

Mary may be contacted on: mary.roth@bigpond.com and priests travelling in Spain are warmly invited to tour the Granda workshop (see website: www.artegranda.com). (Ed.)



Pictorial Record of International Conference, Vatican City, 4-8 Jan. 2010

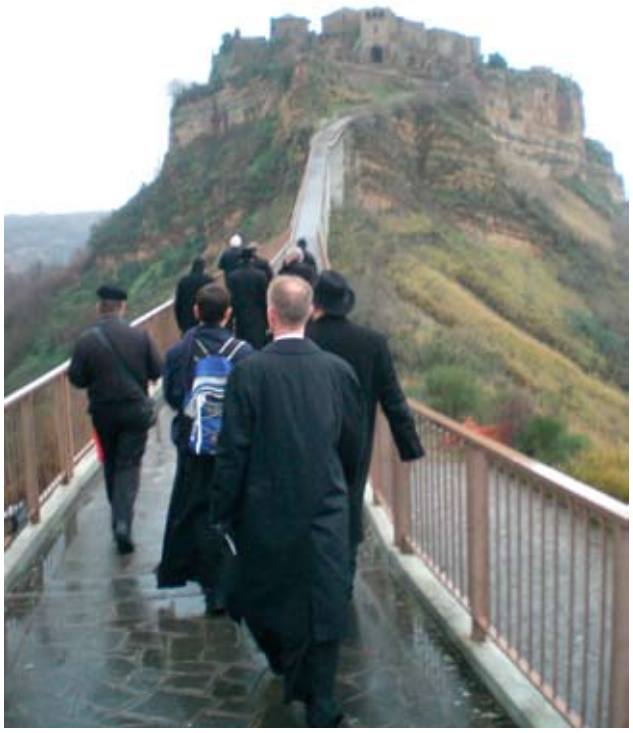
So many were the highlights of this Conference that the pictorial record here and at page 2 can capture only some of these, and also make acknowledgement of only some of those who so generously contributed to the success of the Conference. (Ed.)

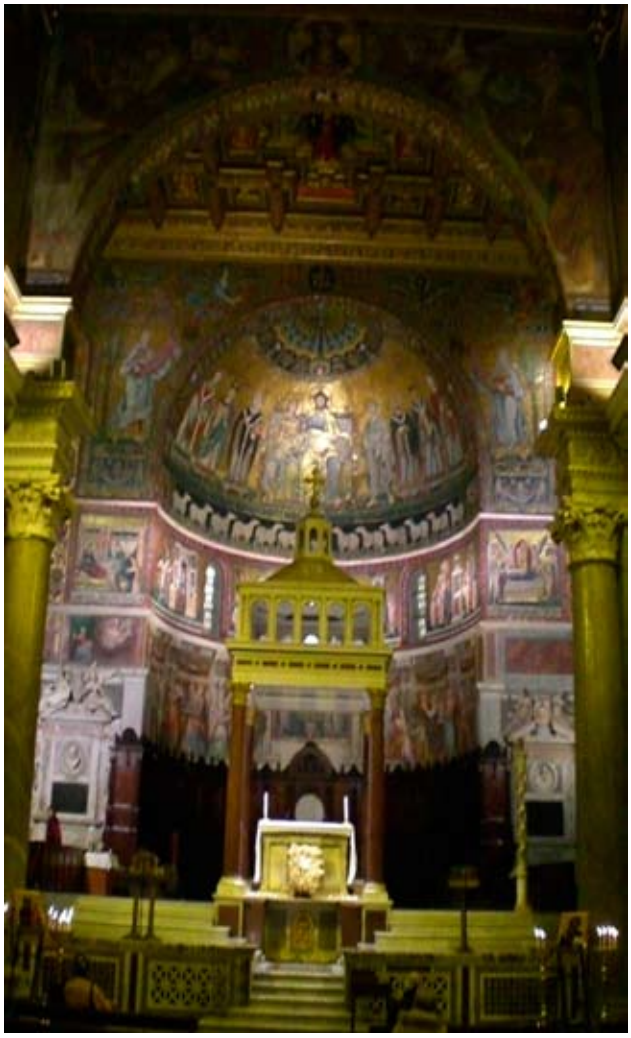
The most memorable liturgical venue was, of course, St Peter's Basilica (see picture, page 2). The photo to the right shows Ms Helen O'Donovan, directing the Lassus Scholars and a local orchestra during Haydon's Missa Cellensis in C Major at St John's Lateran Basilica. The Photograph below shows afterward the celebrant, Cardinal Canizares Llovera in the sacristy receiving a memento from the Bishop of Lismore (with Fathers Withoos and Tattersall assisting).

The glories of Rome! The Papal Mass of the Epiphany in St Peter's Basilica; Solemn Vespers of the Epiphany in Santa Trinità dei Pellegrini on the Solemnity of the Epiphany; Holy Mass in Santa Maria Trastevere, etc. - the last as seen below right.

Australian participants gathering during a Conference break, below left.

The "expedition" on our last day to Bagno Regio, the birthplace of St Bonadventure – below bottom left.





this to "this holy and perfect sacrifice", the 2008 version retains the original's rhetorical force: "this pure victim, this holy victim, this spotless victim". In the older version, there is a remarkable tendency to leave out certain qualifying adjectives: *beatae passionis* is rendered as "his passion" (new: "the blessed Passion"), *in caelos gloriosae ascensionis* as "his ascension into glory" (new: "the glorious Ascension into heaven"), *plebs tua sancta* as "your people" (new: "your holy people") and *Panem sanctum vitae aeternae* as "the bread of life" (new: "the holy Bread of eternal life"). In this prayer there is also an example of the earlier translators' decision to change the respective forms of addresses for God used in the prayers of the Roman rite (*Deus*; *Domine*; *Pater*; *Domine*, *Deus noster*; *Omnipotens aeterne Deus*, etc.). There are many examples of this decision in the collects of the Missal. In the *Unde et memores* prayer *Domine* was translated as "Father", no doubt to highlight the fact that this prayer is addressed to the God the Father, while shortly before in the Memorial Acclamation and shortly afterwards *Dominus* is used to refer to the Son. However, it would seem that in the original Canon *Dominus* is used deliberately for both the Father and the Son to underline that both are "Lord" and thus equal in divinity. Moreover, in the context of the prayer it is clear that the address *Domine* refers to the Father, whereas *Domini nostri* (which is left out in the 1973 version) means Christ, his Son.

4. Conclusion

From a historian's perspective, it would seem obvious that the introduction of the vernacular, especially in the Liturgy of the Word, was a necessary step of liturgical reform. However, I should also like to note that what the post-conciliar development has gone far beyond the provisions of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Today we find ourselves in the situation that many Catholics can hardly sing the Ordinary of the Mass in Latin or pray the *Pater noster* together. It is ironic that this should be the case in an era characterised by globalisation and unprecedented mobility. A common liturgical language provides a bond of unity between peoples and cultures. For that reason a *relecture* of the conciliar documents is required according to the "hermeneutic of continuity", which Pope Benedict XVI presented in his epochal discourse to the Roman Curia of 22 December 2005 and which he has since then put into practice in word and deed.

While every effort should be made to revive the unique spiritual and cultural heritage, which we have in the Latin liturgy, we must also work to develop a vernacular "sacred language" that is worthy of its name. The new English translation of the *Missale Romanum* of 2002 (2008) is a decisive step on this way. This new translation unlocks the treasury of the Latin liturgical tradition and priests should do everything they can to help the faithful entrusted to their pastoral care to become familiar with it and to appreciate its richness.

Notes

[1] See above all his résumé of the important 2001 Fontgombault meeting. "Bilan et Perspectives", in J. Ratzinger, *Theologie der Liturgie: Die sakramentale Begründung christlicher Existenz*, Gesammelte Schriften 11 (Freiburg: Herder 2008), pp. 657-682, at pp. 673-677.

[2] Current information on this is found in the newsletter and on the website (http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal/) of the Committee on Divine Worship of the United States' Conference of Catholic Bishops. See also the regular contributions on this topic in *Adoremus Bulletin*.

[3] These arguments are developed more fully in my article "Rhetoric of Salvation: The Origins of Latin as the Language of the Roman Liturgy", in U. M. Lang (ed.), *The Genius of the Roman Liturgy: Historical Diversity and Spiritual Reach: Proceedings of the 2006 Oxford CIEL Colloquium* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2010), pp. 22-44.

[4] Thus C. Mohrmann, *Liturgical Latin: Its Origins and Character. Three Lectures* (London: Burns & Oates, 1959), 1-26; cf. the same author's *Études sur le latin des chrétiens*, 4 vols, Storia e letteratura 65, 87, 103, 143 (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1961-1977).

[5] Augustine, *Confessions*, IX,10,25: ed. J. J. O'Donnell, *Augustine, Confessions. Introduction, Text, and Commentary*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), *ad loc*.

[6] A. Bouley, *From Freedom to Formula: The Evolution of the Eucharistic Prayer from Oral Improvisation to Written Texts*, Studies in Christian Antiquity 21 (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1981), p. xv.

[7] A. Budde, "Improvisation im Eucharistiegebet. Zur Technik freien Betens in der Alten Kirche", in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 44 (2001), pp. 127-144, esp. p. 138.

[8] S. Mowinckel, *Religion und Kultus*, trans. A. Schauer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953), p. 8.

[9] Cf. Budde, *Improvisation im Eucharistiegebet*, p. 137.

[10] Cf. C. Mohrmann, 'Sur l'histoire de Praefari-Praefatio', in *Études sur le latin des chrétiens*, vol. III, pp. 291-305 (originally published in *Vigiliae Christianae* 7 [1953], pp. 1-15).

[11] Mohrmann, *Liturgical Latin*, p. 24.

[12] Cf. F. E. Brightman, *The English Rite: Being a Synopsis of the Sources and Revisions of the Book of Common Prayer with an Introduction and an Appendix*, 2 vol. (second edition 1921, reprinted Farnborough: Gregg International, 1970).

[13] Augustine of Hippo, *De doctrina christiana* II,34-35 (xi,16): ed. and trans. R. P. H. Green, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 73. On the meaning of "*os(i)anna*" there is an interesting exchange of letters between Pope Damasus and Jerome: *Ep. XIX et XX*: CSEL 54, pp. 103-110.

[14] See C. Mohrmann, "The Ever-Recurring Problem of Language in the Church", in *Études sur le latin des chrétiens*, vol. IV, pp. 143-159, at pp. 151-152.

[15] D. Trautman, "A Pastoral Deficit", in *The Tablet* of 3 February 2007, pp. 8-9, at p. 8.

[16] Ambrose of Milan, *De Sacramentis* IV,5,21-22; 6,26-27: CSEL 73, pp. 55 and 57.

[17] H. A. P. Schmidt, *Liturgie et langue vulgaire. Le problème de la langue liturgique chez les premiers Réformateurs et au Concile de Trente* (Analecta Gregoriana 53), Romae: Apud Aedes Unversitatis Gregorianae, 1950.

[18] Council of Trent, 22nd Session (17 September 1562), *Decree on the Sacrifice of the Mass*, ch. 8: *Etsi missa magnam contineat populi fidelis eruditionem, non tamen expedire visum est patribus, ut vulgari passim lingua celebraretur. Quamobrem, retento ubique cuiusque ecclesiae antiquo et a sancta Romana ecclesia, omnium ecclesiarum matre et magistra, probato ritu, ne oves Christi esurient, neve parvuli panem petant et non sit, qui frangit eis* (Thren. IV,4): *mandat s. Synodus pastoribus et singulis curam animarum gerentibus, ut frequenter inter missarum celebrationum vel per se vel per alios, ex his, quae in missa leguntur, aliquid exponent atque inter cetera Smi. huius Sacrificii mysterium aliquod declarant, diebus praesertim Dominicis et festis*.

[19] Canon IX: *Si quis dixerit, Ecclesiae Romanae ritum, quo submissa voce pars canonis et verba consecrationis proferuntur, damnandum esse; aut lingua tantum vulgari Missam celebrari debere; aut aquam non miscendam esse vino in calice offerendo, eo quod sit contra Christi institutionem: anathema sit*.

[20] Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (4 December 1963), art. 14.

[21] Paul VI, Motu Prorio *Sacram Liturgiam* (25 January 1964), in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964), pp. 139-144, English translation in *Documents on the Liturgy 1963 – 1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts* (Collegeville,

Lang, continued at page 33, below.

"While every effort should be made to revive the unique spiritual and cultural heritage, which we have in the Latin liturgy, we must also work to develop a vernacular "sacred language" that is worthy of its name."

The Authentic Spirit of the Liturgy in Roman Usage

Monsignor Guido Marini

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Introduction

I propose to focus on some topics connected to the spirit of the liturgy and reflect on them with you; indeed, I intend to broach a subject which would require me to say much. Not only because it is a demanding and complex task to talk about the spirit of the liturgy, but also because many important works treating this subject have already been written by authors of unquestionably high calibre in theology and the liturgy. I'm thinking of two people in particular among the many: Romano Guardini and Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger.

Re-affirming an authentic spirit of the liturgy

On the other hand, it is now all the more necessary to speak about the spirit of the liturgy, especially for us members of the sacred priesthood. Moreover, there is an urgent need to reaffirm the "authentic" spirit of the liturgy, such as it is present in the uninterrupted tradition of the Church, and attested, in continuity with the past, in the most recent Magisterial teachings: starting from the second Vatican council up to the present pontificate. I purposefully used the word *continuity*, a word very dear to our present Holy Father. He has made it the only authoritative criterion whereby one can correctly interpret the life of the Church, and more specifically, the conciliar documents, including all the proposed reforms contained in them. How could it be any different? Can one truly speak of a Church of the past and a Church of the future as if some historical break in the Body of the Church had occurred? Could anyone say that the Bride of Christ had lived without the assistance ofthe Holy Spirit in a particular period of the past, so that its memory should be erased, purposefully forgotten?

Shedding partisan ways. Nevertheless at times it seems that some individuals are truly partisan to a way of thinking that is justly and properly defined as an ideology, or rather a preconceived notion applied to the history of the Church, which has nothing to do with the true faith.

An example of the fruit produced by that misleading ideology is the recurrent distinction between the pre-conciliar and the post-conciliar Church. Such a manner of speaking can be legitimate, but only on condition that two Churches are not understood by it: one, the pre-Conciliar Church, that has nothing more to say or to give because it has been surpassed, and a second, the post-conciliar church, a new reality born from the [Second Vatican] Council and, by its presumed spirit, not in continuity with its past. This manner of speaking and more so of thinking must not be our own. Apart from being incorrect, it is already superseded and outdated, perhaps understandable from a historical point of view, but nonetheless connected to a season in the Church's life by now concluded.

Authentic spirit of the liturgy. Does what we have discussed so far with respect to "continuity" have anything to do with the topic we have been asked to treat in this lecture? Yes, absolutely. The authentic spirit of the liturgy does not abide when it is not approached with serenity, leaving aside all polemics with respect to the recent or remote past. The liturgy cannot and must not be an opportunity for conflict between those who find good only in that which came before us, and those who, on the contrary, almost always find wrong in what came before. The only disposition which permits us to attain the authentic spirit of the liturgy, with joy and true spiritual relish, is to regard both the present and the past liturgy of the Church as one patrimony in continuous development. A spirit, accordingly, which we must receive from the Church, and is not a fruit of our own making. A spirit, I add, which leads to what is essential in the liturgy, or, more precisely, to prayer inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, in whom Christ continues to become present for us today, to burst forth into our lives. Truly, the spirit of the liturgy is the liturgy of the Holy Spirit.

Ars celebrandi and the Eucharist. I will not pretend to plumb the depths of the proposed subject matter, nor to treat all the different aspects necessary for a panoramic and comprehensive understanding of the question. I will limit myself by discussing only a few elements essential to the liturgy, specifically with reference to the celebration of the Eucharist, such as the Church proposes them, and in the manner I have learned to deepen my knowledge of them these past two years in service to our Holy Father, Benedict XVI. He is an authentic master of the spirit of the liturgy, whether by his teaching, or by the example he gives in the celebration of the sacred rites.

If, during the course of these reflections on the essence of the liturgy, I will find myself taking note of some behaviours that I do not consider in complete harmony with the authentic spirit of the liturgy, I will do so only as a small contribution to making this spirit stand out all the more in all its beauty and truth.

The Sacred Liturgy: God's great gift to the Church

We are all well aware how the second Vatican Council dedicated the entirety of its first document to the liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. It was labelled as the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.

I wish to underline the term *sacred* in its application to the liturgy, because of its importance. As a matter of fact, the council Fathers intended in this way to reinforce the sacred character of the liturgy.

What, then, do we mean by the sacred liturgy? The East would in this case speak of the divine dimension in the liturgy, or, to be more precise, of that dimension which is not left to the arbitrary will of man, because it is a gift which comes from on high. It refers, in other words, to the mystery of salvation in Christ, entrusted to the Church in order to make it available in every moment and in every place by means of the objective nature of the liturgical and sacramental rites. This is a reality surpassing us, which is to be received as gift, and which must be allowed to transform us. Indeed, the second Vatican Council affirms: "... every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing allothers..." (*Sacrosanctum concilium,* n.7).

Recovering from the distance of some practices from Vatican II norms. From this perspective it is not difficult to realise how far distant some modes of conduct are from the authentic spirit of the liturgy. In fact, some individuals have managed to upset the liturgy of the Church in various ways under the pretext of a wrongly devised creativity. This was done on the grounds of adapting to the local situation and the needs of the community, thus appropriating the right to remove from, add to, or modify the liturgical rite in pursuit of subjective and emotional ends. For this, we priests are largely responsible.

For this reason, already back in 2001, the former Cardinal Ratzinger asserted:

> There is need, at the very least, of a new liturgical awareness that might put a stop to the tendency to treat the liturgy as if it were an object open to manipulation. We have reached the point where liturgical groups stitch together the Sunday liturgy on their own authority. The result is certainly the imaginative product of a group of able and skilled individuals. But in this way the space where one may encounter the "totally other" is reduced, in which the Holy offers Himself as gift; what I come upon is only the skill of a group of people. It is then that we realise that we are looking for something else. It is too little, and at the same time, something different. The most important thing today is to acquire a new a respect for the liturgy, and an awareness that it is not open to manipulation. To learn once again to recognise in its nature a living creation that grows and has been given as gift, through which we participate in the heavenly liturgy. To renounce seeking in it our own self-realisation in order to see a gift instead. This, I believe, is of primary importance: to overcome the temptation of a despotic behaviour, which conceives the liturgy as an object, the property of man, and to re-awaken the interior sense of the holy. [from *God and the World*; translation from the Italian]

Core stability of the liturgy. To affirm, therefore, that the liturgy is sacred presupposes the fact that the liturgy does not exist subject to the sporadic modifications and arbitrary inventions of one individual or group. The liturgy is not a closed circle in which we decide to meet, perhaps to encourage one another, to feel we are the protagonists of some feast. The liturgy is God's summons to his people to be in His presence; it is the advent of God among us; it is God encountering us in this world.

A certain adaptation to particular local situations is foreseen and rightly so. The Missal itself indicates where adaptations may be made in some of its sections, yet only in these and not arbitrarily in others. The reason for this is important and it is good to reassert it: the liturgy is a gift which precedes us, a precious treasure which has been delivered by the age-old prayer of the Church, the place in which the faith has found its form in time and its expression in prayer. It is not made available to us in order to be subjected to our personal interpretation; rather, the liturgy is made available so as to be fully at the disposal of all, yesterday just as today and also tomorrow. "Our time, too," wrote Pope John Paul II in his Encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, "calls for a renewed awareness and appreciation of liturgical norms as a reflection of, and a witness to, the one universal Church made present in every celebration of the Eucharist." (n.52)

In the brilliant Encyclical *Mediator Dei*, which is so often quoted in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Pope Pius XII defines the liturgy as "... the public worship... the worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ in the entirety of its Head and members." (n. 20) As if to say, among other things, that in the liturgy, the Church "officially" identifies herself in the mystery of her union with Christ as spouse, and where she "officially" reveals herself. What casual folly it is indeed, to claim for ourselves the right to change in a subjective way the holy signs which time has sifted, through which the Church speaks about herself, her identity and her faith!

The people of God have a right that can never be ignored, in virtue of which, all must be allowed to approach what is not merely the poor fruit of human effort, but the work of God, and precisely because it is God's work, a saving font of new life.

The value of liturgical norms. I wish to prolong my reflection a moment longer on this point, which, I can testify, is very dear to the Holy Father, by sharing with you a passage from *Sacramentum Caritatis*, the Apostolic Exhortation of His Holiness, Benedict XVI, written after the Synod on the Holy Eucharist. "Emphasising the importance of the *ars celebrandi* ", the Holy Father writes, "also leads to an appreciation of the value of the liturgical norms... The Eucharistic celebration is enhanced when priests and liturgical leaders are committed to making known the current liturgical texts and norms... Perhaps we take it for granted that our ecclesial communities already know and appreciate these resources, but this is not always the case. These texts contain riches which have preserved and expressed the faith and experience of the People of God over its two-thousand-year history." (n. 40)

Orientation of liturgical prayer

Over and above the changes which have characterised, during the course of time, the architecture of churches and the places where the liturgy takes place, one conviction has always remained clear within the Christian community, almost down to the present day. I am referring to praying facing East, a tradition which goes back to the origins of Christianity.

What is understood by "praying facing East"? It refers to the orientation of the praying heart towards Christ, from whom comes salvation, and to whom it is directed as in the beginning so at the end of history. The sun rises in the East, and the sun is a symbol of Christ, the light rising in the Orient. The messianic passage in the *Benedictus* canticle comes readily to mind: "Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the Orient from on high hath visited us."

Very reliable and recent studies have by now proven effectively that, in every age of its past, the Christian community has found the way to express even in the external and visible liturgical sign, this fundamental orientation for the life of faith. This is why we find churches built in such a way that the apse was turned to the East. When such an orientation of the sacred space was no longer possible, the Church had recourse to the Crucifix placed upon the altar, on which everyone could focus. In the same vein many apses were decorated with resplendent representations of the Lord. All were invited to contemplate these images during the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy.

Without recourse to a detailed historical analysis of the development of Christian art, we would like to reaffirm that prayer facing east, more specifically, facing the Lord, is a characteristic expression of the authentic spirit of the liturgy. It is according to this sense that we are invited to turn our hearts to the Lord during the celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy, as the introductory dialogue to the Preface well reminds us. *Sursum corda,* "Lift up your hearts", exhorts the priest, and all respond: *Habemus ad Dominum,* "We lift them up unto the Lord." Now if such an orientation must always be adopted interiorly by the entire Christian community when it gathers in prayer, it should be possible to find this orientation expressed externally by means of signs also. The external sign, moreover, cannot but be true, insofar as it is through this sign that correct spiritual attitude is rendered visible.

Looking toward the Lord. Hence the reason for the proposal made by the then Cardinal Ratzinger, and presently reaffirmed during the course of his pontificate, to place the Crucifix on the center of the altar, in order that all, during the celebration of the liturgy, may concretely face and look upon Lord, in such a way as to orient also their prayer and hearts. Let us listen to the words of his Holiness, Benedict XVI, directly, who in the preface to the first book of his Complete Works, dedicated to the liturgy, writes the following:

> The idea that the priest and people should stare at one another during prayer was born only in modern Christianity, and is completely alien to the ancient Church. The priest and people most certainly do not pray one to the other, but to the one Lord. Therefore, they stare in the same direction during prayer: either towards the East as a cosmic symbol of the Lord who comes, or, where this is not possible, towards the image of Christ in the apse, towards a crucifix, or simply towards the heavens, as our Lord Himself did in his priestly prayer the night before His Passion (John 17:1). In the meantime the proposal made by me at the end of the chapter treating this question in my work *The Spirit of the Liturgy* is fortunately becoming more and more common: rather than proceeding with further [architectural] transformations, simply to place the crucifix at the center of the altar, which both priest and the faithful can face and be lead in this way towards the Lord, whom everyone addresses in prayer together. [trans. directly from the Italian.]

Let it not be said, moreover, that the image of our Lord crucified obstructs the sight of the faithful from that of the priest, for they are not to look to the celebrant at that point in the liturgy! They are to turn their gaze towards the Lord! In like manner, the presider of the celebration should also be able to turn towards the Lord. The crucifix does not obstruct our view; rather it expands our horizon to see the world of God; the crucifix brings us to meditate on the mystery; it introduces us to the heavens from where the only light capable of making sense of life on this earth comes. Our sight, in truth, would be blinded and obstructed were our eyes to remain fixed on those things that display only man and his works.

In this way one can come to understand why it is still possible today to celebrate the holy Mass upon the old altars, when the particular architectural and artistic features of our churches would advise it. Also in this, the Holy Father gives us an example when he celebrates the holy Eucharist at the ancient altar of the Sistine Chapel on the feast of the Baptism of our Lord.

"Ad populum". In our time, the expression "celebrating facing the people" has entered our common vocabulary. If one's intention in using this expression is to describe the location of the priest, who, due to the fact that today he often finds himself facing the congregation because of the placement of the altar, in this case such an expression is acceptable. Yet such an expression would be categorically unacceptable the moment it comes to express a theological proposition. Theologically speaking, the holy Mass, as a matter of fact, is always addressed to God through Christ our Lord, and it would be a grievous error to imagine that the principal orientation of the sacrificial action is the community. Such an orientation, therefore, of turning towards the Lord must animate the interior participation of each individual during the liturgy. It is likewise equally important that this orientation be quite visible in the liturgical sign as well.

Adoration and union with God

Adoration is the recognition, filled with wonder, we could even say ecstatic: because it makes us come out of ourselves and our small world – the recognition of the infinite might of God, of His incomprehensible majesty, and of His love without limit which he offers us absolutely gratuitously, of His omnipotent and provident Lordship. Consequently, adoration leads to the reunification of man and creation with God, to the abandonment of the state of separation, of apparent autonomy, to loss of self, which is, moreover, the only way of regaining oneself.

Before the ineffable beauty of God's charity, which takes form in the mystery of the Incarnate Word, who for our sake has died and is risen, and which finds its sacramental manifestation in the liturgy, there is nothing left for us but to be left in adoration. "In the paschal event and the Eucharist which makes it present throughout the centuries", affirms Pope John Paul II in *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, "there is a truly enormous capacity which embraces all of history as the recipient of the grace of the redemption. This amazement should always fill the Church assembled for the celebration of the Eucharist." (n.5)

"My Lord and my God", we have been taught to say from childhood at the moment of the consecration. In such a way, borrowing the words of the apostle St Thomas, we are led to adore the Lord, made present and living in the species of the holy Eucharist, uniting ourselves to Him, and recognising Him as our all. From there it becomes possible to resume our daily way, having found the correct order of life, the fundamental criterion whereby to live and to die.

Noble simplicity in matters liturgical. Here is the reason why everything in the liturgical act, through the nobility, the beauty, and the harmony of the exterior sign, must be conducive to adoration, to union with God: this includes the music, the singing, the periods of silence, the manner of proclaiming the Word of the Lord, and the manner of praying, the gestures employed, the liturgical vestments and the sacred vessels and other furnishings, as well as the sacred edifice in its entirety. It is under this perspective that the decision of his Holiness, Benedict XVI, is to be taken into consideration, who, starting from the feast of Corpus Christi last year, has begun to distribute holy Communion to the kneeling faithful directly on the tongue. By the example of this action, the Holy Father invites us to render visible the proper attitude of adoration before the greatness of the mystery of the Eucharistic presence of Our Lord. An attitude of adoration which must be fostered all the more when approaching the most holy Eucharist in the other forms permitted today.

I would like to cite once more another passage from the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum caritatis*:

> During the early phases of the reform, the inherent relationship between Mass and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was not always perceived with sufficient clarity. For example, an objection that was widespread at the time argued that the eucharistic bread was given to us not to be looked at, but to be eaten. In the light of the Church's experience of prayer, however, this was seen to be a false dichotomy. As Saint Augustine put it: "*nemo autem illam carnem manducat, nisi prius adoraverit; peccemus non adorando* – no one eats that flesh without first adoring it; we should sin were we not to adore it." In the Eucharist, the Son of God comes to meet us and desires to become one with us; eucharistic adoration is simply the natural consequence of the eucharistic celebration, which is itself the Church's supreme act of adoration. Receiving the Eucharist means adoring him whom we receive. Only in this way do we become one with him, and are given, as it were, a foretaste of the beauty of the heavenly liturgy. (n.66)

Liturgy: locus for adoration. I think that, among others, the following passage from the text I just read should not go unnoticed:"[The Eucharistic celebration] is itself the Church's supreme act of adoration." Thanks to the holy Eucharist, his Holiness, Benedict XVI, asserts once more: "The imagery of marriage between God and Israel is now realised in a way previously inconceivable: it had meant standing in God's presence, but now it becomes union with God through sharing in Jesus' self-gift, sharing in his body and blood." (*Deus Caritas est*, n.13) For this reason, everything in the liturgy, and more specifically in the Eucharistic liturgy, must lead to adoration, everything in the unfolding of the rite must help one enter into the Church's adoration of her Lord.

To consider the liturgy as locus for adoration, for union with God, does not mean to loose sight of the communal dimension in the liturgical celebration, even less to forget the imperative of charity toward one's neighbour. On the contrary, only through a renewal of the adoration of God in Christ, which takes form in the liturgical act, will an authentic fraternal communion and a new story of charity and love arise, depending on that ability to wonder and act heroically, which only the grace of God can give to our poor hearts. The lives of the saints remind and teach us this: "Union with Christ is also union with all those to whom he gives himself. I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own. Communion draws me out of myself towards him, and thus also towards unity with all Christians." (*Deus caritas est*, n. 14)

Active Participation

It was really the saints who have celebrated and lived the liturgical act by participating actively. Holiness, as the result of their lives, is the most beautiful testimony of a participation truthfully active in the liturgy of the Church.

Rightly, then, and by divine providence did the second Vatican Council insist so much on the necessity of promoting an authentic participation on the part of the faithful during the celebration of the holy mysteries, at the same time when it reminded the Church of the universal call to holiness. This authoritative direction from the Council has been confirmed and proposed again and again by so many successive documents of the magisterium down to the present day.

Nevertheless, there has not always been a correct understanding of the concept of "active participation", according to how the Church teaches it and exhorts the faithful to live it. To be sure, there is active participation when, during the course of the liturgical celebration, one fulfills his proper service; there is active participation too when one has a better comprehension of God's word when it is heard or of the prayers when they are said; there is also active participation when one unites his own voice to that of the others in song.... All this, however, would not signify a participation truthfully active if it did not lead to adoration of the mystery of salvation in Christ Jesus, who for our sake died and is risen. This is because only he who adores the mystery, welcoming it into his life, demonstrates that he has comprehended what is being celebrated, and so is truly participating in the grace of the liturgical act.

As confirmation and support for what has just been asserted, let us listen once again to the words of a passage by the then Cardinal Ratzinger, from his fundamental study *The Spirit of the Liturgy*:

> What does this active participation come down to? What does it mean that we have to do? Unfortunately the word was very quickly misunderstood to mean something external, entailing a need for general activity, as if as many people as possible, as often as possible, should be visibly engaged in action. However, the word "part-icipation" refers to a principal action in which everyone has a "part".... By the *actio* of the liturgy the sources mean the Eucharistic Prayer. The real liturgical action, the true liturgical act, is the *oratio*.... This *oratio* – the Eucharistic Prayer, the "Canon" – is really more than speech; it is *actio* in the highest sense of the word. (pp. 171-2)

Christ is made present in all of his salvific work, and for this reason the human *actio* becomes secondary and makes room for the divine *actio*, God's work.

Liturgy as the action of God. Thus the true action which is carried out in the liturgy is the action of God Himself, his saving work in Christ, in which we participate. This is, among other things, the true novelty of the Christian liturgy with respect to every other act of worship: God Himself

acts and accomplishes that which is essential, whilst man is called to open himself to the activity of God, in order to be left transformed. Consequently, the essential aspect of active participation is to overcome the difference between God's act and our own, that we might become one with Christ. This is why – that I might stress what has been said up to now – it is not possible to participate without adoration. Let us listen to another passage from *Sacrosanctum Concilium*:

> The Church, therefore, earnestly desires that Christ's faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators; on the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part in the sacred action conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration. They should be instructed by God's word and be nourished at the table of the Lord's body; they should give thanks to God; by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn also to offer themselves; through Christ the Mediator, they should be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all. (n. 48)

Totality of the liturgical action. Compared with this, everything else is secondary. I am referring in particular to external actions, granted they be important and necessary, and foreseen above all during the Liturgy of the Word. I mention the external actions because, should they become the essential preoccupation and the liturgy is reduced to a generic act, in that case the authentic spirit of the liturgy has been misunderstood. It follows that an authentic education in the liturgy cannot consist simply in learning and practicing exterior actions, but in an introduction to the essential action, which is God's own, the paschal mystery of Christ, whom we must allow to meet us, to involve us, to transform us. Let not the mere execution of external gestures be confused with the correct involvement of our bodies in the liturgical act. Without taking anything away from the meaning and importance of the external action which accompanies the interior act, the Liturgy demands a lot more from the human body. It requires, in fact, its total and renewed effort in the daily actions of this life. This is what the Holy Father, Benedict XVI calls "Eucharistic coherence". Properly speaking, it is the timely and faithful exercise of such a coherence or consistency which is the most authentic expression of participation, even bodily, in the liturgical act, the salvific action of Christ.

I wish to discuss this point further. Are we truly certain that the promotion of an active participation consists in rendering everything to the greatest extent possible immediately comprehensible? May it not be the case that entering into God's mystery might be facilitated and, sometimes, even better accompanied by that which touches principally "the reasons of the heart"? Is it not often the case that a disproportionate amount of space is given over to empty and trite speech, forgetting that both dialogue and silence belong in the liturgy, congregational singing and choral music, images, symbols, gestures? Do not, perhaps, also the Latin language, Gregorian chant, and sacred polyphony belong to this manifold language which conducts us to the centre of the mystery?

"Thus the true action which is carried out in the liturgy is the action of God Himself, his saving work in Christ, in which we participate. This is, among other things, the true novelty of the Christian liturgy with respect to every other act of worship: God Himself acts and accomplishes ... [in the liturgy of the Church]."

Sacred or liturgical music

There is no doubt that a discussion, in order to introduce itself authentically into the spirit of the liturgy, cannot pass over sacred or liturgical music in silence.

I will limit myself to a brief reflection in way of orienting the discussion. One might wonder why the Church by means of its documents, more or less recent, insists in indicating a certain type of music and singing as particularly consonant with the liturgical celebration. Already at the time of the Council of Trent the Church intervened in the cultural conflict developing at that time, re-establishing the norm whereby music conforming to the sacred text was of primary importance, limiting the use of instruments and pointing to a clear distinction between profane and sacred music. Sacred music, moreover, must never be understood as a purely subjective expression. It is anchored to the biblical or traditional texts which are to be sung during the course of the celebration. More recently, Pope Saint Pius X intervened in an analogous way, seeking to remove operatic singing from the liturgy and selecting Gregorian chant and polyphony from the time of the Catholic reformation as the standard for liturgical music, to be distinguished from religious music in general. The second Vatican Council did naught but reaffirm the same standard, so too the more recent magisterial documents.

Why does the Church insist on proposing certain forms as characteristic of sacred and liturgical music which make them distinct from all other forms of music? Why, also, do Gregorian chant and the classical sacred polyphony turn out to be the forms to be imitated, in light of which liturgical and even popular music should continue to be produced today?

Three vital spaces in the human cosmos. The answer to these questions lies precisely in what we have sought to assert with regard to the spirit of the liturgy. It is properly those forms of music, in their holiness, their goodness, and their universality, which translate in notes, melodies and singing the authentic liturgical spirit: by leading to adoration of the mystery celebrated, by favouring an authentic and integral participation, by helping the listener to capture the sacred and thereby the essential primacy of God acting in Christ, and finally by permitting a musical development that is anchored in the life of the Church and the contemplation of its mystery.

Allow me to quote the then Cardinal Ratzinger one last time:

> Gandhi highlights three vital spaces in the cosmos, and demonstrates how each one of them communicates even its own mode of being. Fish live in the sea and are silent. Terrestrial animals cry out; but the birds, whose vital space is the heavens, sing. Silence is proper to the sea; crying out to the earth; and singing to the heavens. Man, however, participates in all three: he bares within him the depth of the sea, the weight of the earth, and the height of the heavens; this is why all three modes of being belong to him: silence, crying out, and song. Today... we see that, devoid of transcendence, all that is left to man is to cry out, because he wishes to be only earth and seeks to turn into earth even the heavens and the depth of the sea. The true liturgy, the liturgy of the communion of saints, restores to him the fulness

of his being. It teaches him anew how to be silent and how to sing, opening to him the profundity of the sea and teaching him how to fly, the nature of an angel; elevating his heart, it makes that song resonate in him once again which had in a way fallen asleep. In fact, we can even say that the true liturgy is recognisable especially when it frees us from the common way of living, and restores to us depth and height, silence and song. The true liturgy is recognisable by the fact that it is cosmic, not custom-made for a group. It sings with the angels. It remains silent with the profound depth of the universe in waiting. And in this way it redeems the world. [trans.from the Italian]

Conclusion: renewing an authentic spirit of the liturgy

At this point I would like to conclude the discussion. For some years now, several voices have been heard within Church circles talking about the necessity of a new liturgical renewal – of a movement, in some ways analogous to the one which formed the basis for the reform promoted by the second Vatican Council, capable of operating a "reform of the reform", or rather, one more step ahead in understanding the authentic spirit of the liturgy and of its celebration. Its goal would be to carry on that providential reform of the liturgy that the conciliar Fathers had launched but has not always, in its practical implementation, found a timely and happy fulfillment.

There is no doubt that in this new liturgical renewal it is we priests who are to recover a decisive role. With the help of our Lord and the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of all Priests, may this further development of the reform also be the fruit of our sincere love for the liturgy, in fidelity to the Church and the Holy Father.

Lang, continued from page 27, above.

Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1982), no. 20, p. 86.

[22] Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Instructio ad exsecutionem Constitutionis de sacra Liturgia recte ordinandam "Inter Oecumenici"*, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964), pp. 877-900; *Documents on the Liturgy*, no. 23, p. 96.

[23] Paul VI, *Address to translators of liturgical text* (10 November 1965), in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 57 (1965), pp. 967-970; *Documents on the Liturgy*, no. 113, pp. 273 and 274.

[24] Consilium, Instruction *Comme le Prévoit* (25 January 1969); French version in *Notitiae* 5 (1969), pp. 3-12; English in *Documents on the Liturgy*, no. 123.

[25] See esp. E. A. Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating, with Special Reference to Principles and Procedures Involved in Bible Translating*, Leiden: Brill, 1964.

[26] Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Fifth Instruction for the Right Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council *Liturgiam authenticam* (28 March 2001), in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 93 (2001), pp. 685-726.

[27] Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Fourth Instruction for the Right Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council *Varietates legitimae* (25 January 1994), in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 87 (1995), pp. 288-314.

[28] M. Luther, *Formula Missae et Communionis*, 1523: Weimarer Ausgabe, vol. XII, p. 218.

[29] The text is available on <http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal/OrdoMissaeWhiteBook.pdf≥.

[30] See E. Duffy, "Rewriting the Liturgy: The Theological Implications of Translation", in S. Caldecott (ed.), *Beyond the Prosaic: Renewing the Liturgical Movement*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998, pp. 97-126 (also published in *New Blackfriars* 78 [1997], pp. 4-27).

Murray, continued from page 38, below.

remove the thorn. Why? Astonishingly, in the *Dialogue* of Catherine of Siena, God the Father gives us an answer to this question. And He is thinking here not only of the "thorn" which afflicted St Paul, but also of the humiliation of weakness which afflicts those whom He calls "my great servants", by which He means ministerial priests in particular. Here is what the Father says to Catherine on the subject:

> Sometimes my providence leaves my great servants a pricking, as I did to my gentle apostle Paul, my chosen vessel. After he had received my Truth's teaching in the depths of me the eternal Father, I still left him the pricking and resistance of his flesh. Could I and can I not make it otherwise for Paul and the others in whom I leave this or that sort of pricking? Yes. Then why does my providence do this? To give them opportunity for merit, to keep them in the self-knowledge whence they draw true humility, to make them compassionate instead of cruel toward their neighbours so that they will sympathise with them in their labours. For those who suffer themselves are far more compassionate to the suffering than are those who have not suffered.[57]

Suffering in the life of a priest. Catherine has a lot to say about the role of suffering in a priest's life. To Ranieri, a Dominican priest, for example, she writes: "In this life we are set as on a battlefield and we must fight courageously, not dodging the blows or retreating, but keeping our eyes on our captain, Christ crucified."[58] And again:

> I want the tree of the cross to be planted in your heart and soul. Conform yourself with Christ crucified.... As St Paul says, glory in the cross of Christ crucified.... Fasten your heart and affection to the cross with Christ, for the cross has been made a ship for you and a port that will lead you to the [ultimate] port, salvation ... when your life is finished you will after your labours come to rest and see the supreme eternal beauty and vision that is God, where your soul is quieted and stilled. Every suffering and evil ended, you will receive every good, satiety without boredom and hunger without pain. Finish your life on the cross. Keep living in God's holy and tender love.[59]

Here, Catherine speaks of the "ship" which will bring us safe to our ultimate port, our final destination. That image of the ship is, as it happens, one which we often find in Catherine's writings. It occurs, for example, in a particularly memorable passage she wrote to her great priest-friend, Blessed Raymond of Capua. I cite it here by way of conclusion to our reflections because, first and last, it is a passage of great encouragement for those among us who may be experiencing enormous difficulty at this time. But, also, because the passage draws our attention to the gracious, intercessory power of Mary our Mother. Catherine writes:

> I've heard ... that you have been experiencing tremendous struggles and that your spirit has been overtaken by darkness because of the devil's illusions and deceits. He wants to make you see the crooked as straight and the straight as crooked, and he does this to make you stumble along the way so you won't reach your goal. But take heart. God has provided and will continue to provide for you, and his providence will not fail you. See that in everything you turn to Mary as you embrace the cross. And don't ever give in to spiritual discouragement, but navigate the stormy sea on the ship of divine mercy.[60]

[57] *The Dialogue,* 145, p. 305.

[58] Letter to Frate Ranieri in Pisa, *The Letters,* Vol 2, p. 108.

[59] Ibid., pp. 110-12.

[60] Letter to Frate Raimondo da Capua, *The Letters,* Vol 2, p.473.

Preaching to Priests:
Wisdom from the Middle Ages

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Introduction

The exclusive focus of attention, in this article, will be on the preaching to priests by two of the greatest saints of the Middle Ages, two Doctors of the Church, one from the 12th century, and one from the 14th; a man in one case and a woman in the other: St Bernard of Clairvaux and St Catherine of Siena.

St Bernard of Clairvaux

Bernards's giving "breathing space". One of the secrets of Bernard's preaching is his ability, humbly and openly, to identify with those among his listeners in manifest distress of one kind or another, those in need of the grace of healing and of the help of God's forgiveness, those who are still caught up "... in the snare of ... evil propensities, still periously tempted."[1] In one of his sermons, with an open and disarming honesty, St Bernard confesses:

> Is not this how we too often feel? Is not this our experience at prayer, we who are tempted daily by our passions and filled with remorse for our past sins? O good Jesus, from what great bitterness have you not freed me by your coming, time after time? When distress has made me weep, when untold sobs and groans have shaken me, have you not anointed my wounded conscience with the ointment of your mercy and poured in the oil of gladness? How often has not prayer raised me from the brink of despair and made me feel happy in the hope of pardon?[2]

For those people, burdened with guilt and despair because of worldly weakness, Bernard, as preacher of the Word, is concerned to give what he calls "breathing space".[3] But that does not mean he is a preacher of cheap and easy grace. No – Bernard understands that preaching must always be based on the full Gospel message. The Word which he proclaims, and the Word which he encounters in prayer, is the same Word, and it comes to him always "full of grace *and* truth". Grace and truth – the two things are inseparable. For grace without truth – compassion without truth – would be a mere sentimentality, a false Santa-Claus god. And truth without grace – judgment without grace – would be a harsh, fundamentalist weapon, a complete negation of the Good News. Not surprisingsly, therefore, St Bernard prays that God would never come to him as truth only but always as truth and grace:

> I need both of these: I need truth that I may not be able to hide from him, and grace that I may not wish to hide. Indeed, without both of these his visitation would not be complete, for the stark reality of truth would be intolerable without grace, and the gladness of grace might appear lax and uncontrolled without truth.[4]

What is true of prayer is true of preaching. What Bernard says so wisely here about prayer holds true also, of course, for preaching. Bernard knows that "Truth is bitter unless seasoned by grace."[5] And, in the 12th century, there was no-one more than Bernard who deserved the title "preacher of grace". According to his contemporary and good friend, William of St Thierry, "The force of his preaching began to shine out especially in the way in which he softened to conversion even the hard hearts of his hearers, and he rarely came home without a catch!".[6]

One of his most famous sermons is entitled, *Ad clericos de conversione* ("On Conversion: A Sermon to Clerics"). It was delivered once if not twice by Bernard in the early part of 1140 at Paris, and attended by a large group of scholars, student clerics, and priests. The sermon made an enormous impression – and no wonder. In this particular sermon Bernard finds words of astonishing comfort and consolation for the person – whether priest or student – who knows himself to be "acutely or morally sick", but who can find no release from his bondage, no remedy. That said, however, the sermon is not all comfort – far from it!

On clerical standards. Nowadays, we are accustomed to hearing strong and sometimes bitter criticism of the clergy, both within and outside the Church. But, reading this sermon of St Bernard, it's hard to believe that there could be found anywhere today, even in the media, a criticism more biting and more deeply felt.

At that time, there was no shortage of men wanting to become priests. "The clerics in sacred orders", Bernard says, "have multiplied beyond number."[7] But, as the numbers of priests went up and up, the standards went down and down. Bernard writes: "People rush into holy orders all over the place and, without stopping to think, men appropriate for themselves the ministry which awes angelic spirits."[8] Bernard speaks of "vile abominations, horrors in the house of God." And he refers to "shameless acts", things that cannot even be spoken of, crimes worse than "fornication, adultery and incest." "Alas!" he says, "Chosen race, holy priesthood ... who could have believed that such things should have come to pass in you."[9] He asks the question: "Who spread the deadly virus?" And he answers: "Woe! Woe! The enemy of mankind [the devil] has ... strewn the body of the Church with those damnable ashes, and even spattered some of her ministers with that stinking, putrid discharge!"[10] And he continues: "Stained like this, they [the clergy] go into the tabernacle of the living God. They dwell in the temple with these stains, profaning the Lord's holy place, calling down upon themselves manifold judgment."[11]

[1] St Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermon 32:3, *On the Song of Songs,* Vol 2, trans., K. Walsh (Kalamazoo 1976) p. 136..
[2] Ibid.
[3] Sermon 11:2, Vol 1, p. 70.
[4] Sermon 74:8, Vol 4, pp. 92-3.
[5] Ibid., p..93..
[6] William of St Thierry, *Vita Prima,* I.13.61; PL 185:260 CD, cited by Marie-Bernard Saïd, OSB in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Sermons on Conversion* (Kalamazoo 1981) pp. 14-15..
[7] St Bernard of Clairvaux, "On Conversion: A Sermon to Clerics", XX, 34, in *Sermons on Conversion,* (Kalamazoo 1981) p..72..
[8] Ibid..
[9] Ibid., p. 73..
[10] Ibid., pp. 73-4..
[11] Ibid., p. 74.

Preaching conversion. Judgment is a word St Bernard finds it necessary to pronounce here, but the key word in his sermon is not judgment but *conversion*. Bernard advises the men listening to him to prick up the ears of their inner hearts in order to hear what God is saying:

> [T]hat voice offers itself, presents itself, never ceases to knock at the door of each one of us. Indeed, it says, "For forty years I was close to this generation and said, 'They are people who err in their heart'." He is still close to us, he is still speaking ... wisdom is still crying aloud in the streets, "Turn back, trangressors, to your heart" ... this voice is not only a mighty voice, it is also a beam of light both informing men of their transgressions and bringing to light things hidden in darkness.... What other effect does that beam or that word have than to bring the soul to self knowledge? It opens the book of conscience, passes in review the wretched sequence of life, unfolds the sad errors of its history, enlightens the reason and, the memory having leafed is set, as it were, before its own eyes ... to be judged by its own thoughts. Who can support this judgment without distress? "My soul is troubled within me", says the Lord's prophet. Why be astonished then that you cannot stand before your own face without squirming, without feeling either distress or shame?[12]

It is not difficult to imagine the impact these words must have had on the clerics and students listening that day to St Bernard. He, the great preacher of truth, has brought them, as a group and individually, before the mirror of conscience. But he does not leave them standing there like men condemned. No, all of a sudden, with great daring, he suggests that their very wretchedness itself can somehow be the cause, or at least the occasion, of their beatitude. For it is when we have been utterly humbled by weakness that we are most likely to experience the grace of God's mercy. And, in fact, just as a medical doctor needs our sickness in order to heal us of our distress, God's mercy, in some sense, actually needs our misery:

> Let the soul which is in this state harken to the divine voice, and to its own amazement and wonder it will hear it say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Who is poorer in spirit than the man whose spirit finds no rest and who has nowhere to lay his head? This also is a counsel of devotion, that the man who is displeasing to himself is pleasing to God, and he who hates his own house, that is to say a house full of filth and wretchedness, is invited to the house of glory.... It is no wonder if he trembles with awe at the greatness of this honour, and finds it hard to believe what he has heard, if he starts in astonishment and says, "Is it possible for such wretchedness to make a man happy?" Whoever you are, if you are in this frame of mind, do not despair: it is mercy, not misery, that makes a man happy, but mercy's natural home is misery.[13]

Preaching that anoints the wounded conscience. According to Bernard, as soon as an individual's wounded conscience is anointed in this way, he begins to "breathe more easily".[14] And he begins to experience, even in this life, something of the light and happiness and refreshment of heaven itself, the beginning radiance of "the house of glory". This grace, Bernard indicates, will manifest itself, first of all, in a new capacity to live the life of virtue, but also in a new and saving awareness of the felt presence of God. "There," Bernard writes, "... once all the thorns and briers which earlier pricked the soul have been burnt, the spirit is pervaded with the balm of mercy and rests happily in good conscience.... Has it not been said: 'Taste and see that the Lord is delightful'? This is hidden manna, it is the new name which no one knows except him who receives it. Not learning but anointing teaches it, not science but conscience grasps it."[15]

[12] Ibid., II, 3, pp. 33-4.
[13] Ibid., VII, 12, pp. 45-6.
[14] Ibid., VIII, 13, p. 47.
[15] Ibid., XIII, 25, pp. 60-1.

Preaching wisdom more than knowledge. What Bernard is speaking about here is obviously not academic knowledge, but what he calls "wisdom." And to acquire it, he tells us, "you consult books to no avail; you must try to experience it instead."[16]

Wisdom, as it happens, is a central theme in another impressive text of St Bernard entitled *De Consideratione* ("On Consideration"), This text is not, as it happens, a sermon in the strict sense of the word. Nevertheless, in this text we can hear, as strong and impressive as ever, the voice of Bernard, the great preacher. And, in all of the literature of the Middle Ages, this particular text contains what are some of the most helpful and illuminating statements concerning priestly and pastoral life. The text itself was eventually made available to the public, but the person to whom the work was actually addressed was none other than Pope Eugene III. Why Bernard presumed to give advice to the most honoured priest among his contemporaries, the Pope of the day, is because Eugenius, as a young man, had been a monk in Bernard's monastery. If one came upon the text, by chance, and didn't know to whom or for whom it was written, one might very easily conclude, reading parts of it, that it was an epistle, or an extended homily, addressed by the Abbot of Clairvaux to a busy parish priest, someone badly in need of good advice.

Preaching self-knowledge. The word "consideration" occurs over and over again in the text. What Bernard means by it is something close to the idea of "contemplation". But, unlike contemplation, which is largely intuitive, consideration is a more discursive activity. It demands or involves actively thinking and reflecting on a particular subject. Consideration, as Bernard understands it, means standing back from one's daily tasks and preoccupations, and assessing them in the light of God's truth.[17] He writes: "[F]our subjects are worthy of your consideration: yourself, things below you, things around you, and things above you."[18] For reasons of time and space, I will be able to focus, in this paper, only on the first of these themes. St Bernard, before attending to anything else, invites us to come to know ourselves, to be wise in our own regard. Wthout that knowledge, he explains, all other wisdom adds up to nothing. Bernard writes:

> Let your consideration begin with yourself lest, while spending your energies fruitlessly on other things, you neglect yourself ...; if you do not belong to yourself, you lack wisdom towards yourself. And, if so, to what extent then are you lacking in wisdom? In my opinion, *completely.* For although you may know all the mysteries, and know the breadth of the earth, the height of the heavens, the depth of the sea, if you do not know yourself, you will be like a man building without a foundation... Whatever structure you raise outside yourself will be like a heap of dust before the wind. For the man who is not wise to himself, is not wise.[19]

Preachers building life resources for preaching. Bernard is not suggesting here a monastic recoil from the pressures of pastoral life. More than anything else, he wants Eugene to be a dedicated pastor, a true shepherd. But he is afraid that the pressures of a busy life can so absorb the energies of the pastor or the priest that the meaning of that life can get completely lost. When this happens, the pastor may find he has no resources to fall back on, especially when things go wrong, and all his best efforts,

[16] Ibid., p. 60.
[17] See Jean Leclercq OSB, "Introduction to 'On Consideration'", in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works* (New York 1987) pp. 146-7.
[18] St Bernard of Clairvaux, *De consideration,* Bk.2, 417, Ch.3, in *S.Bernardi opera omnia,* Vol 1, PL 182, 745.
[19] Ibid.

as pastor, are frustrated or undermined. Bernard writes: "How often do you move, but not move forward? How often do you attempt, but without the least result? put yourself forward and achieve nothing? How often are you in labour, and do not bring forth? venture [out to sea] and get washed away? where you begin, there make an end? And just as you are beginning to launch out, find yourself cut down?"[20] Given these circumstances – and they are circumstances with which every busy pastor today can identify – Bernard recomments "consideration", the wisdom of stepping back to find one's breath, as it were, and recover a saving perspective on what it is one is attempting to achieve. He writes:

> If you give all your life and all your wisdom to action, and nothing to consideration, will I praise you? No, in this matter, I will not praise you.... Actions not preceeded by consideration lead nowhere. If you wish to belong completely to other people, like Him who became all things to all men, I praise your humility, but only if it is full. But how can it be full if you yourself are excluded? You, too, are a man. So, in order that your humanity may be full and complete, let your bosom, which receives all, make space also for yourself. Otherwise ... what does it profit you if you gain the whole world, and lose your own self? (Mt 15:26) So, while all possess you, see that you are one among them.... All others drink at the public fountain of your heart, and will you stand aside and thirst? ... Yes, let your waters stream down into the streets; let men and flocks and herds drink there ... but, among the rest, let you yourself drink from the spring of your own well.... Are you a stranger to yourself? Then to whom are you not a stranger? In short, if someone is bad to himself, to whom will he be good? So, remember, I do not say always, I do not say often, but at least sometimes render yourself to yourself.[21]

Catherine of Siena

The voice of a child; the voice of a prophet.

St Catherine of Siena, during her short life, wrote many letters to priests. But she also wrote or dictated letters to all kinds of people: to members of her own family, to hermits, widows, cardinals, nuns, a mercenary soldier, a king, a queen, a prostitute, a lawyer, a poet and, of course, most famously of all, to two popes. Catherine, when she corresponds with all these people, writes at times with the daring of a girl-child, at other times with the seeming authority of an Old Testament prophet. She cajoles, she pleads, she encourages, she bullies, she inspires. We might think that the Abbot of Clairvaux was rather forward in the way he wrote to Pope Eugene. But St Catherine was, in fact, far more audacious. Whereas Bernard, when he wrote to the Pope, spoke with considerable hesitation regarding the advice he wanted to give, declaring, "It is not consistent with my humility to tell you that such and such a thing should be done. It is enough for me to have intimated that something ought to be done so that the Church may be consoled."[22] Catherine, in contrast, when writing to the Pope, drives home her point without the least hesitation, and with an almost fierce determination. With regard to the return of Pope Gregory XI to Rome, for example, she makes bold to say: "Up, father, courageously! I tell you, you have no need to fear. But if you *don't* do as you should, you may well have reason to be afraid. It is your duty to come. So come! Come trustingly, without any fear at all."[23]

[20] Ibid., 408, Bk 1, Ch.1, 730.
[21] Ibid., Bk 1, 411, Ch.5, 734-35.
[22] *De consideration,* Bk.2, 417, Ch.4, in *S.Bernardi opera omnia,* Vol 1, PL 182, 744.
[23] St Catherine of Siena, Letter to Pope Gregory XI, in *The Letters of Catherine of Siena,* Vol 2, trans., S. Noffke (Tempe, Arizona 2001) p. 213.

Pope Benedict XVI, commenting on the contribution made to the Church by people like Catherine, remarked on one occasion, "How could we imagine the goverment of the Church without this contribution, which sometimes becomes very visible, such as when St Hildegaard criticised the Bishops, or when St Bridgit offered recommendations, and St Catherine of Siena obtained the return of the Popes to Rome?"[24] Of course, this grace of teaching or preaching belongs to what Pope Benedict calls the "charismatic sector" as distinct from "the ministerial sector in the strict sense of the word."[25] Nevertheless, the contribution which someone like Catherine of Siena was able to make to the Church is, according to Pope Benedict, "always a crucial factor without which the Church cannot survive."[26]

Her unique genius. A measure of the uniqueness and great strength of Catherine of Siena's character and personality is that a sharply defined impression of her spirit still survives today in her writings, a spirit at times disconcerting to the modern reader. But so eloquent is Catherine in her *Dialogue* and in her *Letters* as preacher of God's Word, and so profound is her grasp of Catholic doctrine, I sometimes wonder if she is not, perhaps, one of the two or three most outstanding Christian preachers of all time.

Her deep respect for the priesthood. Catherine's respect for the priesthood knew almost no bounds. Again and again her letters will begin with a phrase such as the following: "Dearest and very loved father, I call you father in reverence for the sweetest of sacraments, the dear body of God's Son."[27] And, on another occasion, writing to a number of priests in the same letter: "Dearest, very loved fathers – I call you fathers in reverence for that sweetest of sacraments [which is yours to administer]."[28]

In her dialogue with God the Father, a *Dialogue* which constitutes her single most important text, the Father speaks to her at length about the holy lives of good priests. These men, these "glorious ministers", He tells Catherine, are "stewards of the light".[29] And to explain what He means by that fine phrase, the Father makes use of an unexpected but very powerful image, one that pays priests an enormous compliment. "[T]hese ministers of mine," He says, "are suns because they have taken on the qualities of me, the true Sun. By love they have been made to be one thing with me and I with them."[30] And, what is more, "they behave", the Father explains, "as the sun does":[31]

> The sun warms and enlightens, and with its heat makes the earth bring forth fruit. So also these gentle ministers of mine, whom I chose and anointed and sent into the mystic body of holy Church to be stewards of me, the Sun, that is, of the body and blood of my only-begotten Son along with the other sacraments that draw life from this blood. They administer it both actually and spiritually by giving off within the mystic body of holy Church the brightness of supernatual learning, the colour of a holy and honourable life in following the teaching of my Truth, and the

[24] Pope Benedict XVI, "Meeting with Members of the Roman Clergy," Hall of Blessings, Thursday, 2 March, 2006.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Letter to Don Giovanni dei Sabbatini of Bologna, *The Letters of Catherine of Siena,* Vol 1, p. 144.
[28] Letter to Frate Bartolomeno Dominici and Frate Tommaso d'Antonio, *The Letters,* Vol, 1, p. 38.
[29] Catherine of Siena, *The Dialogue,* 119, trans., S. Noffke (New York 1980) p. 221.
[30] Ibid., p. 222.
[31] Ibid.

warmth of blazing charity. Thus with their warmth they cause barren souls to bring forth fruit and enlighten them with the brightness of learning.[32]

By far the greatest compliment which the Father pays to priests in the *Dialogue* is when he refers to them, on occasion, as "my Christs". "They are my anointed ones", He says, "and I call them my 'christs' because I have appointed them to be my ministers to you and have sent them like fragrant flowers into the mystic body of holy Church. No angel has this dignity, but I have given it to those men whom I have chosen to be my ministers. I have sent them like angels, and they ought to be earthly angels in this life."[33] Needless to say, not all priests live up to this ideal. In spite of the "tremendous grace and blessing" they receive, and in spite of the fact that "it is impossible", according to the Father, "to have a greater dignity than theirs in this life", they sin against God, and "against their own dignity."[34] To Catherine, the Father goes on to say: "I demand purity and charity of every soul.... But much more do I demand purity in my ministers, and that they love me and their neighbours, administering the body and blood of my only-begotten Son with burning love and hunger for the salvation of souls, for the glory and praise of my name."[35] What we are privileged to hear, in this text, is what we might call God's own message for priests, God's preaching. And it's precisely that "holy preaching" which, again and again, we find echoed in Catherine's letters. Here, for example, is an extract from a letter she wrote to Pietro, a priest of Semignano:

> Consider your dignity, since God has in mercy given you the great distinction of having to dispense the fire of divine charity, the body and blood of Christ crucified. Just think! Not even the angels have such dignity! See how God has put his word into the vessel of your soul. You know very well that when you speak in the person of Christ, you have the authority to consecrate that wonderful sacrament. So you must carry this word with an immense fire of love, with spiritual and bodily purity, and with a peacable heart, dispelling all hatred and animosity from your soul.[36]

It would appear that this particular priest was very far from living up to the high ideal of the Catholic priesthood. He was, in fact, provoking serious scandal. As a result, Catherine can hardly contain her feelings of disappointment and displeasure. She writes: "Alas! Alas! Where is the purity of the ministers of God's Son? Reflect that just as you demand that the chalice you carry to the altar be clean and would reject it if it were dirty, so God, supreme eternal Truth, demands that your soul be pure and clean."[37] Chosen ministers who are expected to be "God's temples carrying the fire of God's word" are instead, Catherine says, carrying within their souls, "the fire of anger, hatred, animosity, and ill will."[38] Some among the priests, she notes, have even become "lodgings for pigs and other animals!" Catherine exclaims: "Alas! How bewildering to see Christ's anointed ones giving themselves over to such wretchedness and immorality!"[39] Later, in the same letter, Catherine refers to the bitter hatred which the priest to whom she is writing continues to harbour towards a fellow priest. She writes: "What a bewildering thing it is to see two priests living in mortal hatred! It's a great miracle that God doesn't order the earth to swallow up the pair of you!"[40]

"Dearest son and father in Christ Jesus!".

Catherine is never content simply to criticise the priests to whom she is writing. She always offers hope and she offers wisdom. And quite often, as with Bernard of Clairvaux, the form that wisdom takes is an exhortation to what she calls "self-knowledge in God". The fruits of such knowledge are twofold: first, those who are priests discover how poor and needy they really are as men; and, second, they discover – and this is even more important – that each one of them is infinitely loved by God, and has been individually chosen by God for a hugely privileged task. To one priest, living in Bologna, Catherine writes: "Self-knowledge is the dwelling in which we discover our own lowliness, and this makes us humble. There we find the knowledge of God's goodness too, and in this light a warmth, a fire of love, is born in us – so gently that all bitterness becomes sweet, everything weak grows strong, and all the ice of selfish love melts away."[41] And she adds: "Dearest son and father in Christ Jesus, let's not put off any longer our move into the holy dwelling of self-knowledge. We so need this, and it is so pleasant for us – because, as I have said, God's boundless infinite goodness is there."[42]

To one friar who had run away from his convent, Catherine again speaks of the need for self-knowledge. But, first of all, she talks to him about the wonderful mercy of God: "In this mercy you will find relief from the terrible dejection that seems to have come from seeing yourself fallen.... Hide yourself under the wings of God's mercy, for he is more ready to pardon than your are to commit sin."[43] When she comes to speak directly about self-knowledge, Catherine composes what I consider one of the most interesting paragraphs in all her writing. The stark need and manifest vulnerablity of this wayward friar seems to draw from Catherine, and as almost never before, words and images radiant with hope and blessing. How can someone who feels so utterly weak expect to overcome the power of sin and temptation? How can he move the stone which blocks his way to the new life? Catherine writes:

> Go into the tomb of self-knowledge, and with Magdalen ask, "Who will roll back the stone from the tomb for me? For the stone (that is, the guilt of sin) is so heavy that I can't budge it." And as soon as you have acknowledged and confessed how imperfect and heavy you are, you will see two angels, who will roll this stone away. I mean that divine help will send you the angel of holy love and reverence for God ... and the angel of hatred [that is, hatred of sin] ... to roll this stone away. So, with true hope and lively faith, never leave the tomb of self-knowledge. Persevere in staying there until you find Christ risen in your soul by grace. Once you have found him, go and proclaim it to your brothers.[44]

Unexpectedly, with the word "brothers", Catherine intends to draw attention not to other people, the possible objects of the friar's preaching, but first of all to what she calls "the

[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., 113, p. 212.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Letter to Pietro, Priest of Semignano, *The Letters,* Vol 1, p. 276.
[37] Ibid., p. 277.
[38] Ibid.,
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid., p. 278.
[41] Letter to Don Giovanni dei Sabbatini of Bologna, *The Letters,* Vo 1, p. 145.
[42] Ibid., pp. 145-6.
[43] Letter to a Brother who has left his Order, *The Letters,* Vol 2, pp. 510-11.
[44] Ibid., p. 512.

true, solid, lovely virtues."[45] These virtues must first be acquired, Catherine says. Only then will you really begin to experience Christ risen in your heart and in your life, and begin to enjoy a personal and living experience of the mystery. "Then", Catherine writes, "Christ lets you touch him in continual humble prayer by appearing to your soul in a way you can feel. This is the way; there is no other."[46]

Her acute perception of human nature. Normally we are inclined to think of mystics as people contemplative first and last of God and of the nature of God. But, to a degree almost unique among the Christian saints and mystics, Catherine was contemplative also of human nature, of both its misery and its grandeur. In particular, she understood an aspect of our human condition and of our human psychology which, over the last two hundred years, has begun to receive increasing attention from both psychologists and philosophers, namely the psychology of fear. In her letter to the friar she speaks of "slavish fear" (*un timore servile*).[47] For the majority of spiritual authors it has always been enough simply to address what they perceived as the three most obvious enemies of freedom: the world, the flesh, and the devil. Catherine herself names these three enemies, and over and over again. But then she does something else, something more. With a quite remarkable grace of insight, she uncovers, at the root of human weakness and human distress, the face of fear. And she names for us – now in one letter now in another – some of the many different forms which fear assumes, noting for example how afraid we can become of other people, afraid that is of what they think of us and of how they judge us, or afraid of death and suffering, or of God's judgment, or afraid even of ourselves, afraid of our own weakness and our spiritual and moral failure. To one priest she writes: "Start being brave about everything, driving out darkness and spreading light as well. Don't look at your weakness, but realise that in Christ crucified you can do everything."[48] But, of course, this is easier said than done. Catherine understands very well that an individual can, at times, feel so caught up in the coils of sin that he or she begins to suffer a virtual moral paralysis. At this point, in St Catherine's understanding, the sinner is not just wicked or not just worldly. The sinner is *afraid*. He has become "weak" and "fearful" and "slavishly timid," Catherine says, and is "afraid even of [his] own shadow".[49]

Empathy for the sinner. Catherine makes this observation when writing to a certain Bishop from Florence called Angelo Ricasoli. From start to finish her letter reveals how well she understands just how helpless and hopeless the sinner can feel with regard to the Gospel call to perfection. She writes: "Perhaps the thought might arise in our hearts: 'I can't pursue that sort of perfection; I feel that I am frail and weak and imperfect. I am worn down by the devil's wiles, by the weakness of my flesh, by the world's allurements and deceit.' True, reverend father, it can't be denied that if you follow the world you will grow weak, so fearful and slavishly timid that like a child you will be afraid of your own shadow."[50] But, Catherine then goes on to say, "Boundless Goodness has, however, given us a remedy for all our weakness in his wondrous charity."[51] Accordingly, like a child going to its mother, the sinner should go to God, Catherine says, bringing all fear and all weakness into the presence of love. Love – the "wondrous charity" of God – she explains, is the "gentlest of mothers."[52]

Assuaging fears. Of all the letters which touch on the theme of fear, one of the most impressive is a letter Catherine sent to a woman called Costanza Soderini. In the first place, Catherine outlines a number of the fears which usually prevent us from being free. She writes: "Sometimes people suffer a great deal from fear of death and because of their self-indulgence. The first is a delusion the devil puts in their minds. He says, 'You see that you are going to die, and that you haven't done a bit of good! So do you know where you're going? Your deeds have earned only hell!' On the other hand, he makes them feel sorry for themselves by saying, 'Just think! Your body is so pampered now with worldly pleasures, but soon you will die.'"[53] The devil, Catherine explains, exploits the deepest human fears in order to lead people into "discouragement and despair": "He wants them to see only their short-comings and sins, and to hide the divine mercy from them."[54] So how, then, are we to address the situation? Catherine's answer reveals two things: first, how sharp her grasp is of human psychology and, second, how profound her understanding of the nature of God's mercy. She writes:

> We have to counter the devil's great malice by responding to these interior suggestions of his. Turning our gaze to our Creator, we should say, "I acknowledge that I am mortal, but this is a tremendous grace for me, since death will bring me to my goal, to God who is my life. I acknowledge, too, that my life and deeds deserve only hell. But I have faith and trust in my Creator, in the blood of the Lamb who was slain and consumed, that he will pardon my sins and grant me grace. I will try in this present time to amend my life. But if death should overtake me before I have amended my life – that is, before I have yet done penance for my sins – I [still] say that I trust *in Domine nostro Jesu Christo*, because I see that there is no comparison between my sins and divine mercy. Even if all the sins that could possibly be committed were gathered together in one person, it would be like a drop of vinegar in the sea."[55]

The message is clear. "No more fear!" Catherine says. "Live this bit of time in joy with a desire for virtue."[56]

Merit grows in humility. Because priests live so close to the divine mysteries, the light cast on their human weakness and mediocrity can, on occasion, be almost impossible to bear. How many times the words of St Peter rise spontaneously to the lips of the ministerial priest: "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" It is not known what exactly was the nature of St Paul's "thorn in the flesh". It may or may not have been a moral weakness or vulnerability. But we do know that it was something humiliating for him. It's not difficult to understand, therefore, the passion and sincerity with which Paul must have prayed to be released from that particular hurt or weakness or humiliation. But God did not

[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid., p. 513.
[47] Ibid., p. 508.
[48] Letter to Frate Bartolomeo Dominici in Asciano, in *The Letters,* Vol 1, p. 21.
[49] Letter to Bishop Angelo Riscasoli in Florence, *The Letters,* Vol 1, p. 228.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid., p. 229.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Letter to Costanza, wife of Niccolò, *The Letters,* Vol 2, p. 486.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.

Murray, continued at page 33, above.

McDaid, continued from page 5, above.

the priesthood, it is possible to find all types and sizes. Priests of great ability on so many levels, from astronomers to mathematicians, theologians, artists, poets, writers, the list is endless. You also find priests who don't glimmer and glisten in the world, priest who are imprisoned for the Faith, ordinary "common or garden variety" Parish Priests, the Curè d'Ars types who are simply true Fathers to their faith families, loving shepherds of the flock – the truly Saintly types among us. Ordinary men doing extraordinary things. Given such disparity of persons, talents and realities – What is it that makes us one?

I venture to suggest that it is the fact that each of us has heard in our hearts a call "Come, follow me" and has responded "Here I am Lord, I come to do your will". An ancient call, a well worn response, that leaps at us from the pages of the Old Testament, from the lips of Mary at the Incarnation, "Fiat voluntas Tua", from the sweating-blood-Christ in the Garden, "Not my will but Thine be done" – to each of us who said "Yes" to Christ in faith. By that voluntary act, we placed our lives in His hands, our talents, our possibilities and we made of our lives from then on "becoming a disciple of Christ, hearing His voice, walking with Him and in turn, having been chosen as His priests, bringing Him to His People through our preaching, teaching, administration of the Sacraments in the flesh and blood of our everyday ministry and in the Flesh and Blood of the Priest/Victim on the altar. Our "Oneness" is Christ. The Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. We find our meaning in Him. Without Him, there is nothing. We follow Him and no other.

Maintaining our christological focus. Thus Christ, His Words, His Ways, are front and centre for us as priests. He is the Pole Star wherefrom we take our navigational bearings so as to keep us on true course. Christ speaks to us through His Spirit, the Scriptures and through the Magisterium established by Him, that is the Successor of Peter and the members of the College of Bishops in harmony with Peter. Here it is that we find Christ and hear His voice.

It must be said that in certain ecclesiastical circles today much confusion is sown, even inside the Church, by those who would have us forsake the "Traditional" Magisterium and listen to the so called "Parallel Magisteria" that abound. This is nothing but stuff and nonsense that does not resonate with our Tradition, spelt with a capital "T". It almost seems today that it bespeaks a certain level of sophistication to have a very broad spectrum, ill-defined set of truths, such as a "Fundamental option" or a "Parallel Magisterium" handy in one's quiver which ultimately serves to confirm one in one's views and even in one's sinfulness and render harmless any need to reform one's life in conformity with the "Universal call to Holiness".

This approach does not proclaim the "Truth that sets us free". Rather, it is redolent of the old "Golden Calf" – the "Designer Label" god who has "eyes but hears not" and most especially a "mouth that speaks not". This is to so anthropomorphise the Living God in such a fashion as to be nothing but crass idolatry, where the human is seen as superior to the Divine and man as the creator of his own personal version of Divinity. At times, we seem to strive be so "with it" and open to everyting – non-judgemental – so as to give the impression we are "so broad minded that our heads are flat". And flat they are, as is the earth, if we be foolish enough to think man creates his God.

We priests live and move and have our being is space and time and are subject to the same sensory barrage as the next man, we too can be influenced and hijacked by the glib, glossy and reasonable presentation of serious matters and come to conclusions that are just wrong. We must don a pair of "noise cancelling headphones" and block out the "white noise" that surrounds us so as, with unmistakable clarity, to hear the voice of Christ and of His Apostles in matters of faith and morals and not be dismayed by thinking that questions we personally cannot answer in a sound byte are beyond explanation in the vast treasury of our Faith. So as I said, we must be clear as to the "sage voices" we listen to. There is only One Who is the "Way the Truth and the Life", and "no one can come to the Father except through Him", so let's make sure it is His voice we listen to and tune our frequencies often to Him in personal Prayer.

Rightly nourishing our priesthood. As well as listening to "sage voices" I said we need to eat the "right foods" … "you are what you eat" some would have you believe. Needless to add, I am only using this ephemeral phraseology to say that we priests, especially today, must seek proper nourishment for the soul if we are to live our "lives to the full" and persevere in our vocations as priests.

The journey gets long and hard; things get so out of proportion and we get so "burned out" if we are not nourishing ourselves especially with prayer, the Scriptures, sound spiritual reading and ongoing study of the sacred sciences. We lose the "fuel" in our tank and the motor no longer has the wherewithal to function fruitfully and may just be "ticking over".

Ontology and "being", and the "practice of the presence of God" in the Christian sense of these words, are not so well understood in today's many enticing spiritualities which purport to give us the necessary spiritual energy for "self-realisation" so that we can seemingly go forth and accomplish great things. These apparently modern spiritualities are eclectic, have a smattering of everything and are oftentimes more geared towards the individual's sense of physical and spiritual "well being" than towards "resting in God" and "being still" knowing God in His absence, waiting for Him to fill our void. There is no "exercise" whereby we can command or evoke His presence in our lives through breathing this way or that, as though His omnipresence can be under our direction like a genie from a bottle. True spirituality consists in preparing ourselves for His interior visitation if He chooses to come to us in this fashion. We cannot "buy" His presence simply by ordering Him on the internet and paying our money for the product even though, in a consumerist mentality, this is touted as possible. This is merely inanity of the worst kind yet it is the promised resultant of so many of these programs that have found their way even inside the Church and are even sometimes recommended for priests.

Now I cannot pretend to any great spiritual prowess but I have, and continue to seek hoping to find, as He has commanded us. God's action in our lives unfolds in a timely, yet eternal fashion, budding as the heat of the noon day sun requires. In the early years of my priesthood, (I speak of 1975 and following) we had many courses and programs on the theme of spirituality – which was very "incarnational" in those days.

Thus, the tradition modes of meditation on the Scriptures, "Lectio Divina" were transformed or supplanted by breathing exercises, psychbabble programs, Yoga, physical exercise, we all had good gym memberships too. You can behold in me the lasting results of the latter…abject failure!

In my innocence during this period, I once asked as we were all sitting in a circle, on the floor awaiting for the infusion from somewhere or other of one's personal "mantra" which would be the means of unlocking great powers latent within my already well imprisoned soul, I had the temerity to ask were not our Litanies and the Rosary, kind of, sort of, like a mantra that we kept repeating and maybe we had these mantra things already packaged in a Catholic format and we didn't need to be going through all this tomfoolery? I didn't do so well in that particular path of "spiritual formation" thereafter. But those days were peppered with smelling flowers and humming with the Universe and in fact "being God"… because that was the quest at the end of the day. Not essentially in seeking Him in order to find Him and rejoice in His company, but rather attempting to transcend Him, rendering Him irrelevant as one had now emerged from the chrysalis of that old spirituality and had finally ARRIVED complete with elevated cosmic consciousness. And the most important element was that it was all Divinity by DIY – Do It Yourself. Such time wasting balderdash… yet it was all serious stuff in its moment and caused many a good priest to lose perspective.

What I am trying to say here is that we threw the "baby out with the bathwater", I am sure you have heard that phrase before in speaking of that era. Spiritual nourishment became mere candy floss, pabulum that crumbled before the harsh realities of life and lent no meaning to them never mind be a source of consolation in time of trial like what focusing on Christ and He crucified can be. It was grand for the "flower children" or druggies and the "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" crowd, higher than kites – no feet on the ground, but gravity does eventually exert an influence. Reality has its own way of intruding and fads are consigned to the ever receptive dust.

Retrieving our own heritage. I like to think that today we are beginning, and I emphasise, beginning, to rediscover the vast spiritual treasures that undergird our everyday Faith and have done so for centuries. The spiritual classics are being dusted off and opened again. Breviaries are seen once more in the hands of priests. I personally find the Office of Readings to be a great source of daily spiritual nourishment and so relevant to life. The figure of the Priest as one who prays for the Church is re-emerging from the shadows. More importantly the priest is being formed again as one whose duty it is to pray and not as some type of amorphous hybridised spiritual social worker. We have spun ourselves out trying to be in the world of the world and with the world. We can easily see where it has brought us – to a priesthood that is sometimes far too secularised, too professional, too sensual, too worldly and not enough of the other-worldly in the mix. We thought all that stuff would make us more accepted and many pseudo-experts agreed – especially as they had one step out of the priesthood already themselves. Well, we reap the whirlwind… and we were just wrong and it's time to seek the Pole Star again so as to make the necessary course corrections.

A healthy diet, sound spiritual reading, praying the Breviary, praying the Mass sincerely simultaneously "in persona Christi" and as sinner needing salvation. Traditional devotions such as the Rosary, Adoration, Holy Hours... you know the list as well as I do. We just need to get on with it.

Perhaps a word regarding the selection of the resources we might choose in deepening our knowledge of the sacred sciences might be in order.

Too often, especially in the English speaking world, as we are the Latin Rite of the Church and with the temporary hiatus of expertise in the language, books and documents in the English language have not always been translated and rendered through the Catholic optic. I mention this as we need to be careful in our selection of texts regarding the Scriptures, Dogma, Patrology in fact concerning theology in general.

When the use of the vernacular became more widespread in the liturgy this led to the use, for example, of hymns that had already been in English since the Reformation and thereafter written by our Protestant brethren. While may of them were fitting for Catholic liturgies, some were not as they came from a different theological base, but they were popular. This has, to my mind, been a distinct factor in engendering a type of religious indifferentism that is not to be found only in liturgy but in spirituality/theology in general.

Spirituality and Renewal programs as well as Bible Study, for too long a period, was the domain of books and programs that were markedly Evangelical Protestant in their content and pedagogy. You can go through the other sacred sciences and find the same to be true there also.

The body of literature regarding sacred literature/spirituality tends still to be overwhelmingly of the aforementioned bent. Catholic programs began to be created but they seemed to base themselves on the previously existing English language material, which was not, in the main Catholic.

I just mention this in passing as we are speaking of the "proper diet" so as to keep your Catholic figure in form. Naturally, we look to a brighter future in this regard, but before purchasing any product, read the label. Some of the ingredients may not be what you want and may either raise your blood pressure, give you indigestion, or a bit of both.

Spiritual exercise. The last member of the healthy triad I mentioned above is exercise. It should be obvious to you, looking at me, that I am not talking of physical exercise. It is a well known truism that all our do-gooding activity as priests needs to be flowing from a resilient Catholic "ens" or "corpus" that is housed within us. Is has to be a natural, fluid motion from a body that is well tuned to Catholic principles. It cannot just be "stuck on" or a "stand alone" ministry. If it is, it will not endure, nor will our priesthood.

One can always follow the Second of the Greatest commandments without even being a Christian, never mind a Priest; One can never follow the First of the Greatest Commandments without necessarily embracing the Second as a natural consequence.

In our English speaking world especially, the diocesan priest has a tough time getting the time spent in the development of his Interior Life recognised as an essential priority by our system as it now exists. Fewer priests, more parishes per priest, more parishioners per priest, more demands, travelling times, etc., the list is well known to you. These worthwhile

things tend to physically tire one out and when arriving at home base one just wants to flop, turn off the phone, on with the telly… and that is generally all she wrote... next thing we know, the telly is still blaring, we've seen nothing, it's three in the morning, and we have a "creak in the neck" having slept for a few hours in a contorted position. The only thing we want to do is drag the bod off to the bed. We are certainly not about to pick up, at least with any enthusiasm, John of the Cross or Teresa of Avila at that time to see what they have on offer.

Rightly adjudging pragmatism, functionalism and efficiency. We have become infected with pragmatism, functionalism and efficiency… victims of Diocesan planners who often don't know that a Parish Priest does anything more than say a Mass or two on a Sunday and then fill in the endless forms generated by the local bureaucracy (so that they in turn can show the Bishop how important their jobs are… I know, I was 19 and a half years in a Chancery!)… in other words we have allowed a type of busybody secularism to invade ministry. Too many time spinning, endless meetings. Too often we function with little visible difference from a local big business. This is just not good enough.

We are only, simply and totally about the salvation of souls. We have no other mandate. We don't need a new "Mission statement"…we were told "Go forth, proclaim the Good News, baptizing them in the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit etc… we all know the Mandate. There is no effective way of doing this except cooperating with the grace of God as He puts times, places, circumstances and people together. We priests know what our task is, it is to bring the face of Christ to the world, not as out personal "feel good" construct, but as He has revealed Himself especially from the Cross and to do so always in fidelity to, and with the fullness of, our Catholic Tradition. To do less, is to betray our mission. I have yet to see an effective diocesan pastoral plan that accomplishes this task, but, perhaps my eyes are not open wide enough! But I don't believe that. The goal of evangelisation is not accomplished by plans but by fired and committed people of the Spirit acting in harmony with God and His Church.

We need to be infected with rampant and incurable ascesis, that self-discipline that makes us a Disciple. Following and forming ourselves in Christ through prayer (in all its forms), fasting and almsgiving. The denial of self in order to find oneself not in some kind of masochistic pursuit, but as a loving disciple who sees this path as the means of ascending to the feet of Christ on His throne and becoming one with Him. This journey must be deeply rooted in the certainty of His call to each one of us, unlikely though we may be as candidates for His priesthood. We cannot be put off by our own sinfulness or we will never take the first step. We try to rid ourselves of our sins, but we do not let them drag us down. That is the difference in Peter after the Denial and Judas. One despaired of forgiveness the other sought it, not once, but more than a few times, as Jesus has told him to do previously.

We are those who "struggle" with God…Israel…and struggle we do. It is meant to be a struggle. It is not a place of arrival on this side of the divide. Augustine warned us of that "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and we cannot rest until we rest in Thee". The struggle should neither surprise nor dismay us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. We just must keep climbing that ascent of Calvary on our own personal Via Crucis with the Saviour at our side, falling and rising, being helped, reviled, crucified and lost and found in the One Who has walked this way before us. If we do not have this reality impelling us then the road is too hard, too long and our spiritual body not fit for the journey.

It is difficult, but not impossible, to make this journey without a good spiritual director who is a priest. I realise that this type is a "rara avis" (rare bird) and in truth, he always was. But, God does not call us to be aesthetes and immediately abandon us. Sometimes our path is a veritable Via Negativa rather than a Via Positiva. It really matters not as long as we are walking with Christ and reflecting honestly with Him. This ascesis must be a scheduled part of our daily life and rigidly adhered to. As in the old days, so in the new… 'tis all best done early in the morning before the demands of "pastoral charity" begin making their inroads on your day.

Coda: listening, nutrition, exercise. So listening to the Voice, sound nutrition and suitable exercise, these are the essentials for the priest so that he can then carry out the ministry entrusted to him. There is nothing new or spectacular in what I have said, yet, as a characteristic perspective of the priesthood in recent times, these understandings are not as predominant as they should be neither in the formation of Diocesan Priests nor in the life and Ministry of same nor in the Ongoing Education/Permanent Formation programs provided. The absence is painfully evident when one studies the requests for Dispensation that come from those formed in the other "way" and unfortunately convinced of it with the inevitable result.

One sees sporadic flare ups of one or other of the elements of, shall I call it, the "prescribed diet", but the package is not yet in place as a whole to the degree that it needs to be in the times that are in it. We need soldiers trained for battle not a herd of Victorian gentlemen taking the waters at Bath, each, from his nurse-attended top-of-the-line wheelchair grumpily complaining of their own ailments and the uselessness of their medicine/doctors/superiors.

Christ has called us, He has sent us forth. He knows us. He is with us – Emmanuel. Instead of simply bemoaning the loss of the "plot" we must, as individual priests, attend to our personal relationship with Christ. We must set our sights on Him, recalibrate, take our bearings and set the instruments aright to get our own house in order as priests and to lead God's people safely to the eternal shores – their heavenly homeland.

What I have laid before you is a meal of "bread and butter" but it is not pabulum. It is the tried and tested "way" for priests to walk in and through this world. We had laid it aside for awhile and became besotted with new fangled things. Enough! We have to bring it forth again from our storehouse, polish it up a little and above all be proud that we are priests, inadequate, more sinners than saints yet, chosen by the God Who made heaven and earth, and called to assist Him in the salvation of souls, our own included.

May God Who has begun the good work in you bring it to fulfilment.

Oremus pro invicem!

The Priest as Sinner in the Thought of St Augustine

Father Robert Dodaro, OSA

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Introduction. If the Donatist Controversy is treated nowadays at all in seminaries and divinity schools, it is probably mentioned only briefly, perhaps in a survey course on Church History, perhaps in a course on sacramental theology. What most students take away from this treatment – I am guessing – is at best only a general awareness that early on in the fourth century a group of radical African Christians concluded that bishops who were in communion with other bishops who had handed over sacred books to Roman imperial officials during the Diocletian persecution were not real bishops, and that the sacraments they administered were neither valid nor efficacious. Students would have heard that, against this viewpoint, St Augustine established what would become the standard Catholic position on the sacraments; namely, that their validity does not depend on the moral or spiritual condition of the minister, but upon Christ, who is the true minister of every sacrament.

As far as it goes, such a treatment of this controversy is technically correct, and yet it is also inadequate. Indeed, the more we plunge into Christian writings of this period the more we understand the vision of the Church and its holiness that Donatist bishops offered to their followers as well as the appeal that this vision exerted over the latter. By focusing on the appeal behind this Donatist logic, we can also understand better why Augustine opposed it with a paradoxical viewpoint about the Church and its holiness.

For both Augustine and the Donatists, nothing that priests do matters more than to administer the sacraments, primarily baptism and Eucharist. Of course, both Augustine and the Donatists acknowledged that priests carry out other important ministries; they preach the Word, teach, exhort and console Christians in their faith. Yet nothing more than baptism and Eucharist communicates to believers the spiritual peace and reconciliation that constitute the ground of holiness. Hence, sacraments play an essential role in making Christians holy, and priests are inseparable from that process. This is the common ground that unites Augustine's position with that of his adversaries, and it is important ground. As to what divides them, I have already indicated that the key to understanding this lies in perceiving how each party imagines the Church and the nature of the holiness that the Church offers through its sacraments.

The Church and the holiness offered though the sacraments

Donatists. To begin with the Donatists, they conceived of the Church in the terms described by St Paul at Ephesians 5:27, "a Church without stain or wrinkle". They meant by this that the Church in its present historical condition was holy because all its members were holy; which is to say, free of serious sin. The Donatists imagined themselves as the remnant of a once vast, international Church that had lost its soul through the corruption of its priests. They believed it was their mission to safeguard this remnant from contamination with the scandal of clerical betrayal that had so corroded the holiness of the Catholic Church that not only was it no longer capable of sustaining the true faith, it also destroyed the spiritual life of all those who still came into contact with it with the same sin and scandal. Donatists saw themselves as the "Church of the martyrs", as the Church that stands in continuity with those Christians who had remained faithful during Roman persecution. Their Church had been purified by that persecution. In order to sustain that faith of their fathers, Donatists had to ensure that all their members became and remained holy throughout their lives. They saw their Church as the only oasis in the desert constituted by a world of sin. In their view, the "Catholic" Church had long ago betrayed itself and become indistinguishable from the pagan, sinful world. Donatists felt threatened by this world. They trusted that their sacraments and their priests alone would ward off the sin that had destroyed the rest of the Church.

One of their bishops, Petilian of Constantine, interpreted Psalm 23 as the perfect description of the Donatist ideal.[1] In so doing, he evoked the image of an oasis in the desert: "He makes me to lie down in the green pastures: He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul." The Donatist bishop contrasts the green pastures and the still waters in which the soul is restored with the "valley of the shadow of death" representing the persecution that Church members must endure in this life. Petilian says that this Psalm refers to "our baptism", meaning that – when administered by his communion – the sacrament draws its recipient out of the wilderness and into the green pastures beside the still waters where he dwells secure all the days of his life until he dwells in the house of the Lord forever. For Petilian, defence of the Christian believer from "the valley of the shadow of death" is the function of priests, whose sacrifices and prayers are efficacious only if their consciences are clean. In the following passage, Petilian addresses Catholic priests:

> If you make prayer to God, or utter supplication, it profits you absolutely nothing whatsoever. For your blood-stained conscience makes your feeble prayers of no effect; because the Lord God regards purity of conscience more than the words of supplication, according to the saying of the Lord Christ, "Not every one that says to me, *Lord*, *Lord*, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father who is in heaven."[2]

This is a telling accusation. Petilian clearly states that when priests pray on behalf of the laity, God is more concerned with the priests' consciences than with the wording of their prayers. By claiming that all Catholic clergy possess "blood-stained consciences", Petilian is not trying to tie Catholic priests individually to any particular personal sin. Instead, he is accusing them collectively of sharing in the guilt of their predecessors from a hundred years before. Never mind that the Catholic bishops and priests of Petilian's day had nothing to do with those crimes, a point Augustine repeatedly makes to his adversary. For Petilian this collective sin constitutes the "blood" that will forever stain the consciences of Catholic priests, and that voids the prayers and sacraments they offer.

Two key elements of Donatist theology: To understand Petilian's reasoning fully, we have to grasp two elements from his sacramental theology. The first concerns the way that a sacrament is communicated between the minister and the recipient; the second concerns impediments on the side of the minister.

The conscience of the minister. As far as baptism is concerned, Petilian declares that, "The conscience of him who gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient."[3] This statement must be examined closely. Petilian claims that what cleanses the conscience of the recipient of baptism is the clean conscience of the minister: his exact words are "the conscience of him who gives in holiness" (*conscientia ... sancte dantis*). In order to understand exactly what Petilian may have meant by this expression, we have to proceed to the second element in his sacramental theology, concerning impediments.

This argument is harder to follow. Modern scholars who have tried to understand it suppose that for Petilian there are two kinds of sin, ecclesial and personal. Ecclesial sins, such as *traditio* and heresy, are few in number; but they are deadly to the Church, because they sap it of its holiness. The Donatists claim that this is what happened to the Catholic Church, not only in Africa, but throughout the world. In effect, by being in communion with those Catholic bishops who committed the sin of *traditio* during the Diocletian persecution, the Catholic Church throughout the world was forever contaminated by the sin of a relatively small number of bishops. Thus, even one hundred years later, Catholic bishops and priests remain the heirs of that sin and scandal, and their holy orders and the sacraments they administer are thus null and void.

Sacramental mediation between minister and the one receiving the ministration. Donatist spirituality seems obsessed with materialist concepts rooted in Old Testament accounts of worship, such as ritual purity and its opposite, contamination or contagion. Sacramental validity depends on a material exchange or mediation between the priest and the recipient. In the case of baptism, the priest transfers his holiness to the recipient, as it were, cleansing the recipient's conscience with his own clean conscience. Similarly, when Donatists look at Catholics they see that the priest transfers to the recipient his guilt, which he inherits from his Church. This Donatist way of thinking establishes a concrete bonding between the priest and the recipient of the sacrament that makes the layperson's spiritual growth dependent on the priest's.

I have already described one element of the Donatist conception of holiness; namely, their view of the Church as having to be "without stain or wrinkle," along with Petilian's image of it as an oasis surrounded by desert. When we align these images with their idea of a sacrament as the transfer of the priest's holiness to the laity, it becomes even clearer that Donatist theology is obsessed with holiness in a visible and tangible form. Donatism places a high stake in the appearance of holiness in its members. Accordingly, the Church must be visibly, palpably holy, especially when one compares it with the world outside the Church. Donatists insist on this strong, clear contrast between the holiness of the Church and the sinfulness of the secular world. To this end, laypeople yearn to see holiness reflected in their clergy, and to feel it like a kind of "Dolby Surround®". The role of the clergy is to mirror the Church's ideal of holiness. In looking at the clergy, the laity should expect to see holy men, heroes of virtue, or – at the very least – men who are free of sin. For the laity, therefore, the Church's holiness takes bodily, personal form in bishops and priests. So long as the clergy appears holy, the laity can be certain that their Church is holy, and that, as long as they remain in the Church, they are safe from the world.

Augustine's answer to the Donatist perspective

Augustine's concept of the priest as sinner. Augustine thought that the Donatist idea of the priest was dangerous for all concerned. Obviously it was dangerous for the priest, because it encouraged him to see himself as a saint, not as a sinner. But it was even more dangerous for the Donatist laity for several reasons, all of them spiritually lethal.

First, Augustine argued that there is something theologically and psychologically destructive for the laity in the fantasy of saintly priests; that is, priests who never sin. At one end of the scale, such priests risk becoming objects of infatuation. People will fawn over them, desirous of possessing for themselves the sanctity they project onto priests. At the other end of the scale, the idea of saintly priests encourages people to make priests into objects of spiritual envy. Augustine held that in yearning to imitate the imagined holiness of their priests, many people in effect are striving to outdistance them. In fact, he thinks that holiness is all too easily conceived as a personal achievement, something that the individual person accomplishes for himself. Augustine, on the other hand, thinks of holiness exclusively in terms of what God achieves in us, almost in spite of ourselves. At the top of the Donatist religious totem pole one finds Christian martyrs, including Donatist martyrs. Donatists were taught to measure their holiness against the holiness of the martyrs (and herein lies the subtle introduction of envy and rivalry). After the martyrs came holy bishops. Augustine charges the Donatists with setting their clergy on a par with the angels as models for the laity to imitate (a practice he defined as a form of envy).[4]

Another danger that Augustine observes in this *faux* spirituality is any specific role for God, except as the remote

and silent divine judge. We observed in Petilian's account of baptism that God's role was limited to judging whether the priest who administered the sacrament possessed a clean conscience. Augustine mocks Petilian's viewpoint. Clearly for the Donatists, Augustine argues, God's intervention in the purification of the recipient's conscience is unnecessary; they would rather believe that the only important actor in the sacrament is the priest who stands before them, the priest they can see and touch. Augustine accuses Donatists of preferring the priest's presumed holiness to God's, real but invisible, intangible holiness. In fact, for Augustine, the more a religious community believes itself to be holy, the less it perceives its need for God. Augustine believes that, if it does nothing else for us, sin teaches us that we need God.

Augustine quickly understood that the Donatists' obsession with being the Church "without stain or wrinkle" only reinforced their spiritual insecurity and encouraged them all the more to focus obsessively on the holiness of their priests. He accuses Donatists of teaching that it is only on account of the prayers of their bishops (*sacerdotes*) that God forgives the sins of their laity.[5] Donatist theologians who defended this view cited 1 Samuel 2:25 – "If the people sin, the priest prays for them; if, however, the priest sins, who shall pray for him" – as a proof-text for their argument. This sentiment was rooted in the Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament with its emphasis on cultic purity. According to this argument, only those priests who were truly holy and completely separated from the people were capable of offering a holy sacrifice capable of satisfying God and gaining for the people divine pardon for their sins.

Against this Donatist reasoning, Augustine argues that the most complete Christian interpretation of the role of Hebrew priests in the Old Testament understands them as symbols pointing to Jesus Christ as the only true high priest, a viewpoint embraced by the Letter to the Hebrews. Augustine insists on many occasions and against different adversaries that Jesus Christ is the only human being ever to have lived perfectly free from every possible sin. Christ alone in history, therefore, fulfills the Old Testament criteria for the high priest. Only his sacrifice is holy, and it alone perfectly atones for the sins of all people, including bishops and priests.[6] Augustine charges the Donatists with losing sight of Christ's role as bridegroom of the Church, a role he accused Donatist bishops of usurping. Donatists saw their bishops and priests as icons of holiness scattered within their communities in order to remind the laity that they constitute a holy people. In Augustine's view, only Christ can accomplish this task. He alone is the Church's bridegroom.

Augustine's view of the priest as pardoned sinner. But in addition to criticising Donatist theology, Augustine offered his adversaries his own view of priesthood – one that stressed the theme of priest as a pardoned sinner. To defend this view, he told the Donatists that he found it modeled by the apostles, as recorded in the New Testament. Augustine recalls the incident reported at Acts 14:8-18 in which Paul and Barnabas eschew attempts to worship them as gods following their performance of a healing miracle. He also refers to a similar example in the case of Peter, who directs pagans to honour God for the miracle that he performed (cf. Acts 3:12-13). Moreover, unlike Donatist bishops, the apostles did not hesitate to ask their fellow Christians to pray for them (cf. Colossians 4:3; Acts 12:5; 1 John 2:1-2). Implicit in these biblical examples of the attitudes of the apostles is their recognition of themselves as sinners in need of God's forgiveness, and their public admission of their ardent desire for the prayers of the laity in order to obtain that pardon. Augustine argues that priests of his day can do no better than to follow these examples of the apostles. He thought it important that, in terms of personal holiness, priests not be thought of as constituting a separate priestly caste, but be seen as standing together with the laity as members of Christ's one body. Yes, he thought priests should strive for holiness, and he also recognised that the laity were right to expect their priests to remain faithful to the promises inherent in their clerical state. However, Augustine was also concerned that priests should not pretend to be holier than they were so they do not obscure Christ's unique status as the only truly righteous, saintly priest in history. The laity should learn to depend upon Christ as the sole source for sanctity in their lives, not upon their priests.

Augustine on the humility of the priest as forgiven sinner. One of the most beautiful and moving examples of Augustine's reflection on the priest as sinner is found in his commentary on the foot-washing in John's Gospel (cf. John 13:1-20). Augustine interprets Jesus as determined to pardon his apostles for those sins they had committed while serving him in the ministry (as symbolised by their dirty feet). Hence, Augustine interprets Jesus' insistence against Peter's objection to having him wash his feet as a divine instruction against both clerical pride and blindness to personal sin. Peter's reply that Jesus should wash not only his feet, but his whole body, along with Christ's response that the apostle has already been washed (a reference to baptism), offers Augustine another opportunity to remind the Donatists that forgiveness of sins is possible in the Church even after baptism, and even for bishops!

In his meditation on the foot-washing, Augustine couples John 13:1-20 with Song of Solomon 5:2-3, "I slept, but my heart was awake. Hark! My beloved is knocking. 'Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one; for my head is wet with dew, my locks with the drops of the night'. I had put off my garment, how could I put it back on? I had bathed my feet, how could I soil them?" Augustine identifies men who "sleep while their hearts are awake" with those Christians whose ecclesial vocation is contemplative and intellectual. These Christians "sleep" in the sense that they are not actively working by preaching or teaching or counselling. Yet their "hearts are awake" in the sense that they study the sacred mysteries. In the voice of those who complain that they have already bathed their feet and do not want to get out of bed, only to soil them again, Augustine sees those ministers whose apostolate is active and pastoral. These are the pastors, preachers, teachers, counsellors, lectors and cantors, whose involvement with the laity in the course of their ministry will necessarily lead them to sin, whether through pride or through other failings. Augustine recognises that many of these clerics would rather resign their offices, so discouraged are they on account of the sins they commit while engaged in the

active apostolate (thus dirtying their feet). He reminds such individuals that it is Christ who calls upon them to "get out of bed and open the door", when they would rather remain occupied with less perilous tasks.

In line with this thought, Augustine quotes the apostle James who warns his readers to avoid commissioning many teachers, because it is the most dangerous occupation, but who also includes himself in his admission concerning teachers that "we all make many mistakes" (James 3:1-2). By implication Augustine argues that if the apostle James overcame his fear of teaching despite his acknowledgement that he too had "made many mistakes" in doing so, clerics in his own day should not allow their fear of sinning to deter them from taking part in the active apostolate. Christ is prepared to wash his disciples feet repeatedly when they repent of their sins. But the same Christ also demands of his ministers that following their purification, they once again get out of bed and walk the dusty ground of the apostolate in answer to his call.[7] In Book 10 of his *Confessions*, Augustine showed himself unafraid to indicate his own sinful past and present to his Donatist critics.[8]

Church, priests, and holiness on our day

By way of conclusion, I wish to draw some parallels between Augustine's confrontation of the Donatist model of the priest as saint with some of the difficulties surrounding the image of the priest in our own day. In many respects, it strikes me that several issues attached to the current clerical sexual abuse scandal are reminiscent of the Donatist controversy. It seems to me that the sinful, scandalous behaviour of a relatively small number of Catholic clergy has exercised a disproportionately negative effect on the faith of many Catholics, beyond the victims of abuse and their families. Here, I am not simply speaking of the widespread shock and anger which is shared by all good Catholics, including both of the Popes whose pontificates have spanned the years of this scandal. I am speaking instead of a disillusionment with the whole of the Catholic clergy that borders on despair and has induced in some countries widespread religious indifference, new forms of anti-clericalism and even defections within the Catholic community.

I wonder whether these phenomena do not indicate an affinity with certain Donatist assumptions about the nature of holiness in the Church and its relationship to clerical holiness. Please, understand that I am not speaking about the reactions of the actual victims of clerical abuse or about those who are close to them. Nor am I referring in any way to the suspicion with which all of us who are priests are by now accustomed to experiencing from some laypeople who have children. But I do ask whether a certain spiritual idealisation of the priest has not contributed in some way to the extensive negative feelings of many Catholics toward their faith in the light of this scandal? After all, Donatism was nurtured on the concept that the grave sin and scandal committed by a few bishops had contaminated the entire Catholic clergy, and that nothing could be done about it except to leave the Catholic Church.

Donatist parallels today. Is there not today, as in every age, a strong force within believers to see the Church as a holy refuge from a sinful world, as a spiritual oasis in the desert? Are there not too many Catholics who want to see their bishops and priests as living icons of the sacred, as men with supernatural capacities to overcome sin completely in their lives? Is there not a tendency among Catholics to understand the mediatorial role of priests in the dispensation of sacraments too closely along Donatist lines, in such a way that the personal holiness of the priest, or lack of it, positively or negatively influences the extent to which the sacrament is thought to communicate holiness to the believer? Finally, is there not something quasi-materialist in the understanding of sanctity on the part of many contemporary Catholics whose obsessive need for visible and tangible holiness contributes to profound disillusionment with their Church when some of their bishops and priests are discovered to be ambitious, avaricious, lascivious, or to be sinners and criminals with other vicious tendencies.

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Summing-up: contemporary need to stress Augustinian understanding of the priest. It further seems to me that the Catholic clergy itself may be contributing to its own spiritual idealisation by not taking advantage of the pulpit and other occasions to stress a more Augustinian theology of priesthood. The Year of Prayer for Priests presents an opportunity for priests to acknowledge publicly (but only in an appropriate manner) their own sinfulness, and to invite the lay faithful to pray that God forgives them and gives them the grace to overcome their sins. Augustine saw that part of the solution to the Donatist controversy lay in a pastoral "levelling of the playing field" between priests and people where the question of personal holiness was concerned.[9] The more clergy and laity undertake a common commitment to each others' progress in personal holiness, the less priests will reinforce their distinction from the laity as a separate, holy caste, and the less laypeople will allow clerical moral weakness to undermine their faith in Christ and his Church.

Notes:

[1] Petilian as quoted at Augustine, *c. litt.Pet.* 2,109. Abbreviations of Augustine's works follow those at Augustinus-Lexikon, ed. C. Mayer, Basel:Schwabe, 1986.

[2] Petilian as quoted at Augustine, *c. litt. Pet.* 2,121.

[3] Petilian as quoted at Augustine, *c. litt. Pet*.3,18. The Latin text reads, "conscientia namque sancte dantis attenditur, quae abluat accipientis."

[4] For a fuller account of Augustine's suspicions regarding Donatist "envy", see Robert Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of Augustine*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 97-104.

[5] See, for example, Augustine's complaint at *s. Dolbeau* 26,52; 26,55; 26,45; *c. litt.Pet.* 2,240-241; *s. Dolbeau* 26,54; *en. Ps*. 6,2,20, along with Dodaro, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

[6] See, for example, Augustine, *en. Ps*. 36,2,20; *s. Dolbeau* 26,57.

[7] See Augustine, *Io. eu. tr*. 55-57, especially 57.

[8] Scholars have long noted the anti-Donatist purposes behind Augustine's confession at *Conf.* 10 of the sins that he commits as a bishop. See Pierre Courcelle, *Recherches sur les «Confessiones» de saint Augustin*, Paris: Etudesaugustiniennes, 1950, pp. 26 and 247, and Maria Grazia Mara, *Agostino interprete di Paolo*, Milan: Edizioni Paoline, 1993, p. 214. See also Augustine, *Cresc*. 3,92.

[9] See Augustine, *s. Dolbeau* 26,57.

Editor's "Corner"

I had no plans for this "corner" in this issue. But one paper that was estimated at 6,000 words turned out to be 4,000 words – and, behold! this arose at a late stage when layout of the full-colour pages has been completed and the journal length settled. When one is dealing A3 pages, each sheet of paper is 4 pages at about 1,000 words a page: thus, this "corner".

It's been an amazing experience of God's providence in the production of this Special Issue for what is also the "25th year of publication" of this journal. I left Rome soon after the Conference for Jerusalem, and – fortunately – most of the presenters sent me electronic copy while I was there (electronic connection being reasonable there: at Ecce Homo Convent on the Via Dolorosa in the Old City). It has been far more difficult with those sending later! as for this Semester I am teaching at the Capuchin Institute of Theology in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – a "dial-up" environment (*very* slow), and erratic, and with unscheduled black-outs! Once things are on my miniaturised travelling computer, the only problem is getting one's fingers correctly placed on a tiny keyboard! the computer itself has all the software on my Canberra, Australia, computer *and* a five-hour battery to see me through black-outs! But, in brief, it's been providence that has brought together this issue in these unusual and difficult circumstances: *Laus Deo!*

And what an experience for an Editor to work through papers of such astonishing quality! Particularly in respect of those papers that treat reform in the liturgy, it has been an astonishing as I have experienced the "*Hear, hear!*" of my own affirmations of what these authors say with such poignancy and depth and fidelity to the Church. I feel that we may well get a book out of these papers if they should be grouped with more papers of like quality. A "working title" for such an edited book might be: *New Directions in Liturgy: responses to the leadership of Pope Benedict XVI*. Scholarly readers who might be interested in contributing to such a project are invited to contact me using the email address shown in the inside page of this journal.

Readers' attention is also drawn to the "advert" at page 25 that brings of our to clergy attention the second ACCC Clergy Retreat to be conducted by Bishop Meeking, and marking the close of ACCC observance of the Year for Priests. Certainly, the high quality of the First Retreat addresses assures us that a "feast" is on offer. These First Retreat addresses were edited during my Term in Rome into a book form, and the process of identifying a suitable publisher is underway: *please pray!*

One aspect in which our Australian Confraternity was bold in undertaking the leadership in mounting an International Conference in Rome is *financial*. During the Conference there was a point at which our Treasurer was looking glum as unanticipated bills came in or bills came in at a higher price than anticipated – and he was wondering how the limited financial resources of the ACCC would sustain this. Fortunately, some generous donations from international Conference participants "saved the day" and he departed Rome with a "break even" report. The fact remains, however, that the mission undertaken by ACCC for clergy and our lay associates could be on a much stronger financial footing. It is for this reason that the "membership" / "membership renewal" form insert in the back of each issue has provision for "donations", and also includes on its "front" an invitation for bequests to ACCC. Since the circumstances described in the first paragraph above give me the opportnity of doing so, I have inserted below again the "bequest invitation" form, and on the back of this "filler page" have inserted a second copy for this issue of the "membership " / "membership renewal" form – in the hope that readers, both clergy and associates, will use these duplicates to invite friends of like commitment to membership / subscription, and in the hope that more donations and bequests may be forthcoming to give greater financial security to the work of this Confraternity. And even those without gift-giving resources can regularly use of "Daily Prayer for Priests" – the prayer support for our Confraternity is so important to us and is reciprocated.

Finally, on a more personal note, I might share my most significant "discovery" so far in this sabbatical year "Africa experience". I have heard on and off over the years remark about the Church's concern with "inculturation" issues – not least in matters of liturgy; and Africa often figures in such coverage. The Archdiocese of Addis Ababa is Ethiopian Catholic rite (that is, not Latin rite), and my first public liturgy experience was not the rite proper to the diocese, but for the English language congregation in down-town Addis: a congregation that is largely anglophone African (mainly professionals from Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya). Yet the experience was very little "African"; rather, one encounters liturgy that is like one encounters in so much suburbia in "the West". And the thing that "came home" to me is that the greatest "inculturation" issue – indeed "inculturation" *crisis* – is *not* in Africa or India, but in "the West". For what we encounter is not "vernacular expression of the Roman rite" (to quote Marini in this issue), but in signficant respects we encounter new vernacular rites of a "congregationalist" nature. And these "rites" have in troubling degree a ritual focus that is not "God, God. God", but "community", "community", "community". We truly encounter an "inculturation" that has got "out of control" and where the normative role of "the Roman rite" is attenuated, and where the fact of this attenuation is very little appreciated. Thus we see that the "project" of Benedict XVI to reinvigorate the Roman rite in its authenticity is *key* to the mission of the Church in circumstances where what has emerged are "vernacular rites". This perception – sharply occurring well away from suburban Australia (or USA, UK, France, Italy, etc.) – greatly highlights for me the pervasive and eloquent message that we encounter in the superb papers presented in this Special Issue that commemorates the Year for Priests that the Holy Father has given to us priests of the universal Church. May the fruits thereof be enduring! **(Ed.)**

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to serve you in the Priesthood.
To You, O Holy Trinity,
be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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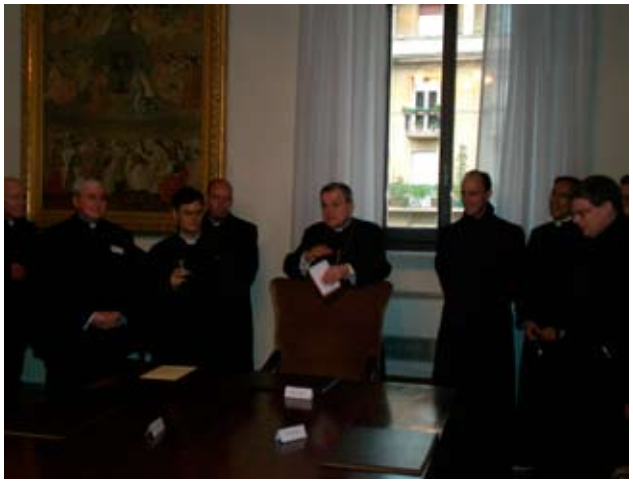
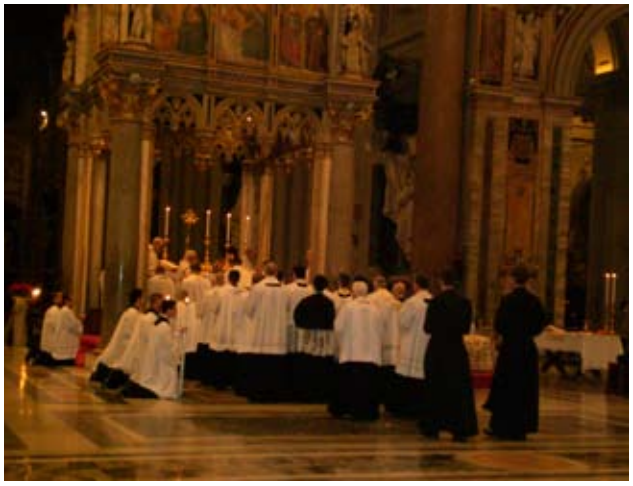


A particular privilege of our International Conference was intimacy with our speakers and principal celebrants. Above, participants are seen being briefed by Archbishop Bourke during our personalised tour to the Apostolic Signatura in Rome.

Also special were the intervals of informal fellowship afforded by the International Conference. Above is seen the National Chairman in impromptu briefing with some of the "Aussie" participants.

Below is seen priests, deacons, and seminarians during Holy Communion at St John Lateran Basilica during the Conference. (See stories at pages 2 and 26.)



Castrillón Hoyos, continued from page 4, above.

Charity: a priest's life

The truth that the priest is an ordained minister lies in his union with Christ, accomplished on a sacramental level. But this union is completed and renewed through the work of the same priest.

Priests work as "another Christ: since "by the power of the sacrament of Orders, in the image of Christ the eternal hish Priest, they are consecrated to preach the Gospel and shepherd the faithful and to celebrate divine worship, so that they are true priests of the New Testament." (*Lumen Gentium* n. 28)[2] Though the source of holiness is God's love, a priest should spare no efforts in making sure his work and each and every action reflect this love. Today's Liturgy of the Word reminds us of this: "For this is the declaration which you have heard from the beginning, that you should love one another." (1Jn 3:11)

Priestly charity is also essential to a priest's identity because priesthood entails a particular identification with the love and mercy of the Good Shepherd, who gives his life for his sheep. It is a love that cannot help but spread, that cannot help but give itself to others in priestly ministry. At the start of his pontificate, the Servant of God John Paul II recalled the idea when he spoke to the priests of Rome:

> The priest won over by the mystery of Christ, is called to win others over to this mystery …; he is called to help others to become a community…. In this way, the commitment with which the priest … builds the Church becomes the measure of his holiness.[3]

And what is holiness but the living of priestly charity, a taking part with God's life in Christ? A priest's identity is therefore also anchored in identification with Christ the Priest through good works. This is what we just read in the first reading: "Let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth. In this we know that we are of the truth and in his sight [we] shall persuade our hearts." (1Jn 3:18f)

Sacramental unity; plurality of pastoral action

Earlier we referred to the two hinges on which priestly identity depends – truth and charity. We can say that they are expressed respectively in the sacramental unity of the priesthood and the union of our wills with Christ through our acts.

Union with Christ is the fulcrum of priestly identity, and each priest's union with Christ is also the bond that unites all who partake of the priestly order. In its turn, this unity of priests gives rise to a rich plurality of ministry.

It is true that priesthood is received in the Church and for the Church, but there is not a doubt that each priest builds the Mystical Body of Christ from a different position, according to the gifts that God gives him and the place that Providence assigns him. Some are parish priests, others are seminary formators as theology professors or spiritual directors, others are vicars for their diocese and counsellors to their bishops, and so on. The key is that this plurality of priestly charisms works as "yeast in the dough" in the living of brotherly charity and unity in pastoral work.

Charity that works in truth

Dear brother priests, during this Year for Priests we are invited to renew our awareness of our identity, to strengthen our union with our Lord, and to live charity in the plurality of our ministry. We are bearers of a great truth, and the world thirsts deeply for it: the truth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God who became man out of love for us, who offers himself in sacrifice to the Father so as to redeem us. We are vessels of clay who desire to bring God's mercy and love to souls whom the Lord of the harvest has entrusted to us.

The Holy Father affords us a beautiful summary of this task in the letter proclaiming the Year for Priests:

Castrillón, cont. over page.

[2] *Lumen Gentium*, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church".
[3] "Address to the parish priests and clergy of the diocese o f Rome", Friday 2 March 1979, n. 2.

The altar during Solemn Vespers with Adoration and Benediction at Santa Trinità dei Pellegrini on the Solemnity of the Epiphany: thanks to the hospitality of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter (FSSP), who have the care of that church.

Castrillón, cont. from previous page.

In Jesus, person and mission coincide: all Christ's saving activity was, and is, an expression of his filial consciousness: which from all eternity stands before the Father in an attitude of loving submission to his will. In a humble yet genuine way, every priest must aim for a similar identification. Certainly this is not to forget that the efficacy of the ministry is independent of the holiness of the minister; but neither can we overlook the extraordinary fruitfulness of the encounter between the ministry's objective holiness and subjective holiness of the minister.[4]

Faithful dispensers: truth and charity

Christ is present among us, and he is alive in the mystery of the Eucharist, to which our priesthood and the whole life of the Church is ordered. Let us be faithful dispensers, then, of this truth and this charity.

I make my own the desire our Holy Father expressed in the start of the Year of Priests: "May this year help deepen the commitment of all priests to interior renewal, so that your witness to the Gospel may be stronger and more incisive in today's world" (see previous footnote).

Let us invoke the aid of the Blessed Virgin Mary and contemplate her as the most perfect model of Christ's redemption. May she, Mother of the eternal High Priest and Queen of the Apostles, make all of us priests more like her Son, Jesus, dispensers of the priceless treasure of the Good Shepherd's love. ***Amen.***

[4] Benedict XVI, "Letter proclaiming a year for priests on the 150th anniversary of the *dies natalis* of the Curé of Arts", Vatican City, 17 June 2009.

Enjoying Priesthood:

an after dinner conference speech

Father Timothy Finegan

Rev. Timothy Finegan, MA (Oxon), STL (Greg), is Parish Priest of Blackfen in the Archdiocese of Southwark, UK. Among other things, he is editor of the popular blogsite: ***www.thehermeneuticsofcoontinuity.blogspot.org***

Most Reverend Fathers, Very Reverend Fathers, Reverend Fathers and Deacons, Ladies and Gentlemen – and fellow bloggers. I mention bloggers last because, as my companions in the new media will know, in the eyes of many ecclesiastics, we priest bloggers are the lowest form of life. We occupy a place in the chamber of horrors somewhere between Margaret Thatcher and Jack the Ripper

Indeed one of the English Bishops in his *Ad Clerum* notice took the trouble to excoriate us in general, although since the same Bishop also went on record to say that he did not recommend frequent confession, I feel entitled to enter into constructive dialogue on the question.

Back in April 2006, I started to look at some Catholic blogs to see what the fuss was about, worked out more or less what was going on, went to *blogger.com*, and realised that it could all be set up very quickly and easily. I had read Pope Benedict's message to the Roman Curia the previous Christmas and thought that "The Hermeneutic of Continuity" would be a title with the right amount of pseudo intellectual pomposity and typed it in. Increasingly, in Catholic circles it has proved to be a useful item of product placement as Pope Benedict's key idea has become a focus for so many Catholic thinkers today to encapsulate the way forward for the Church as she recovers from four decades of devastation in doctrinal, moral and liturgical chaos.

This conference of clergy, gathering, as it does, like-minded priests from all over the globe, is a sign of hope. There have been many communications from Catholics all around the world who are delighted that this conference is taking place. Our good people are happy that priests gather together and especially that they gather at the heart of the Church, paying their respects at the tomb of the apostles. Forgive me for offering a reminder – perhaps unnecessary, to remember our people at the tomb of St Peter tomorrow – and indeed to follow the Lord's command that we should also pray for our enemies.

About six months after my arrival in the parish of Our Lady of the Rosary, Blackfen in September 2007, a lady spoke to me after Mass and told me that she had heard in the chemist that I was moving.

More recently, there have been rumours that I was being appointed to a post in the Vatican . It must be something to do with the number of times I quote Pope Benedict in my sermons.

I normally tell people that I am staying in Rome and they often ask me whether I am staying at the Vatican . I point out to them that you do not stay at the Vatican itself but in the City of Rome. Sure enough, the taxi driver who took me to the station the other day asked me whether I was staying in the Vatican and was able to answer "Well yes, actually." I am deeply grateful to the Australian Confraternity of Catholic Clergy and the USA Confraternity of Catholic clergy for making it possible.

When priests get together, of course, we remember the days of our "formation" those of us who were trained in the late seventies and early eighties have many stories to swap; we have heard some already so I will just regale you with one or two.

One year, we were sent for pastoral training to the Westminster Religious Education Centre, known by the acronym WREC. The sister who has in charge of one activity instructed us to make our model of Church out of cardboard and pipe cleaners. There isn't supposed to be a right and wrong answer in these exercises, but I am sure that I and a fellow student got the wrong answer by making a papal tiara and a thurible.

On another occasion, a fellow student had to take part in an activity with a bowl of stones. The participants were instructed to take a stone from the bowl and tell the group why that stone was like them. He had the presence of mind to take a stone out and say "This stone is like me because it can't see the point of this bloody exercise."

As a part of my apostolate online, I have promoted the reception of *Summorum Pontificum* and the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy according to the *usus antiquior*. Some time ago, a writer in *The Tablet* (a newspaper which unaccountably seems to take issue with some of the things I say and do) dealt with the issue of *Summorum Pontificum* and made the grave observation that Pope Benedict was "not a trained liturgist". Well given some of the liturgical training that we have received, in the past, thank heavens for that!

Liturgists used to be the butt of many jokes (such as the one about being in a lift with the Taxman, a Terrorist, and a Liturgist and having a revolver with only two bullets... you shoot the liturgist twice to make sure!) Now, praise be to God, there are liturgical experts whose scholarship and wisdom we can benefit from without the same scruple and I am sure that tomorrow afternoon's lecture by Mgr Guido Marini will bear this out.

I am sure that we all share Pope Benedict's recent expression of priorities in the pastoral ministry and would wish to see the proper, reverent celebration of the liturgy given the first priority – not by any means to the exclusion of our pastoral, social and charitable apostolate, but as the source from which it flows.

However, I would like to share with you also a discovery of my own which has made a big impact on my own life as a priest. When I was at the seminary, there was a lot of psychobabble floating around. A popular book was called *I'm OK You're OK*. I was told that the Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta was visiting a seminary once, saw this book and said "Well: I'm *not* OK, and you're *not* OK; and that's why we need Jesus!"

After beginning to celebrate the older form of the Mass, I also discovered little books for the priest. It is a feature of traditional sacristies that lying around on tables and shelves are various little black leather bound books of piety. One that I discovered was called *Clericus Devotus* – although there are many others. It opened my eyes to the expectations that were made of the priest and communicated to the student in his training. The various exercises that were recommended for a faithful priestly life were set out in an instructive and helpful way.

Another good book I discovered was Cardinal Manning's *The Eternal Priesthood*. In one chapter, he explains the importance of the time taken in preparation and thanksgiving for Mass. He says:

> The hour and a half of a priest's Mass is both his own and not his own. It is the first-fruits of his day. They belong to God : he has the *usufruct*, not the *dominium*, of them. He cannot alienate them.

The various books about the priestly life of prayer and priestly asceticism have helped me to see that there is much to rediscover from our tradition in addition to the worthy celebration of the Sacred Liturgy.

Our Lord said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I shall be there with them." He might have added, "Where two or three priests are gathered in my name, it will be a matter of seconds before they start on the Bishops." So let me add a word of appreciation to the Bishops who have generously given of their time to be with us, and those Bishops in the United States of America and in Australia who give such sterling orthodox leadership. I would also like to record my appreciation for Cardinal Pell. On one occasion I met him with a group of priests walking past the colonnade of St Peter's on their way to lunch. He said to me "Tim – remember my advice: keep your guard up, and keep moving around the ring."

I am sure we all remember with great joy and nostalgia that wonderful moment which we watched on the television, hearing "*Josephum*", wondering whether it was really true and, then rejoicing at the resounding, dramatically delayed "RATZINGER" boomed out across the world.

I remember a few weeks later a conversation on the telephone with the great Joanna Bogle. We were still rather stunned by the fact of Pope Benedict. As I said to her on that occasion, "I wake up in the morning, the sun is shining, God is in heaven – *and Cardinal Ratzinger is the Pope!*"

(Incidentally I remember too the election of Pope John Paul II – a truly great pope – and the joy and hope that he brought to the Catholic world with his unmistakeable determination to foster orthodox faith and devotion.)

We often have litanies of thanks at events such as this, and they are not out of place. But my brothers in the sacred priesthood, let us give thanks with all our hearts to almighty God in His providence who has given us Pope Benedict. The Church historians will back me up, I am sure, in saying that there have been other times in the Church when things have not gone well, when even Popes have let us down. But then the Lord, in His providence, raises up a St Augustine , a St Bernard, or a St Ignatius. His providence is not lacking today and the young priests now coming out of our seminaries, sometimes despite the best efforts of their formators, but increasingly , thank God, in union with them, are men ready for that spiritual battle which beckons us: orthodox in faith, reverent in worship, and prudent in morals. They do need our encouragement and support (as has been said already), but we also need their youthful enthusiasm and hope.

"The Church is alive, the Church is young", Pope Benedict said in that magnificent homily at his inaugural Mass. He also reminded the young – and the reminder can be important for us too – that:

> If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great. [...] Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything.

It is a joy and a privilege to be at a conference where such confident and joyful affirmation of life in Christ is directed specifically for us as priests. Thank you for your encouragement, thank you for your example – and to many of you, thank you for reading my blog!

Photo below: Conference participants during lunch at the Monastery of the Fratelli della Sanctus Vergine Maria during our excursion to Bagno Regio. We are most grateful for the hospitality of Father Jacqus Marie, the Prior. In the background is the organ played as an "afterlude" to our luncheon.

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Domus Sanctae Marthae

Rome 4-8 January 2010

The dining room of the Domus was the venue for meal-time fellowship during our International Conference within the Vatican City. We were able to walk across the courtyard for Masses in St Peter's Basilica each morning. The happy memories of this occasion for our international participants and our readers are captured in this Special Issue of this journal. (Ed.)