

Summer 2024 – Edition No. 17



# RESORIUS MAGNUS



The voice of the Foederatio Internationalis Una Voce



## Introducing the Una Voce Bulletins

FIUV General Assembly

*Peregrinatio Ad Petri Sedem: photos*

News, features, and reviews

# Gregorius Magnus: biannual magazine of the Una Voce Federation

The FIUV's periodical is dedicated to St Gregory the Great (Pope Gregory I), who died in 604 AD, a Pope forever associated with Gregorian chant, and the Gregorian rite of Mass (the Extraordinary Form).

*Gregorius Magnus* magazine aims to be a showcase for the world-wide 'Traditional Catholic' movement: the movement for the restoration to the Church's altars of the Mass in its traditional forms: Roman, Dominican, Ambrosian, and so on.

*Gregorius Magnus* is published twice a year: in March and in October.

The FIUV wants to hear from you! While we cannot pay for contributions, we would like to spread the news, good or bad, about the movement for the restoration of the Church's liturgical traditions, from all over the world.

The production of the magazine is supported financially by the Latin Mass Society of England and Wales, and we wish to record our thanks to them.

*'He who would climb to a lofty height must go by steps, not leaps.'*

St Gregory the Great



Please send contributions to [secretary@fiuv.org](mailto:secretary@fiuv.org), for our two annual deadlines:

**15th February,**  
for the March issue,

**15th September,**  
for the October issue.

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# Contents

## News and Comment

President's Message	4
The Una Voce Federation and Its General Assembly	5
Una Voce Bulletins by Joseph Shaw	6
<i>Fiducia Supplicans</i> : The Curious Tale of Ecclesial Incoherence by Michael Haynes	7

## From the Magazines

<i>Una Voce</i> : 120 Years of Evelyn Waugh, by G.N.	10
<i>Mass of Ages</i> : The Way of Beauty by Caroline Farey	14
<i>Mass of Ages</i> : Liberating the Old Rite by Andrew Cusack	16
<i>Mass of Ages</i> : World News: Updates from around the globe, with Paul Waddington	19

## Features and News from Around the World

<i>Peregrinatio Ad Petri Sedem</i> : Rome, October 2023 by Joseph Shaw	20
Why We Must Recover St Thomas Becket: The Anti-Henry and Antithesis to Modernity, by Thomas Colsy	22
Liturgical Music and the Old Mass in Australia by Anthony Bailey	26
A Traditional Catholic School in Nigeria by Uchenna Okezie	30
A Meditation on the Last Gospel by Dickson Leong, Traditional Mass Society of Malaysia	32

## Books

T.S. Eliot and Tradition, by Robert Lazu Kmita	38
Sigrid Undset's Genius and Olav's Hallowed Road to Contrition by Thomas Colsy	42
Position Paper: Prayers for the Persecuted Church and the Leonine Prayers	45

## FIUV Member Associations 48



Editor: Joseph Shaw  
 Website: <http://www.fiuv.org/>  
 For further queries, please email [secretary@fiuv.org](mailto:secretary@fiuv.org)  
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Cover image: Procession of the *Peregrinatio Ad Petri Sedem* crossing the Ponte Sant'Angelo towards the Castel Sant'Angelo. Photo by Joseph Shaw.

*Gregorius Magnus* is published by the Foederatio Internationalis Una Voce. The FIUV is a lay movement within the Catholic Church, founded in Rome in 1965 and erected formally in Zürich in January 1967.

The principal aims of the FIUV are to ensure that the Missale Romanum promulgated by Pope St John XXIII in 1962 is maintained in the Church as one of the forms of liturgical celebration, to obtain freedom of use for all other Roman liturgical books enshrining 'previous liturgical and disciplinary forms of the Latin tradition', and to safeguard and promote the use of Latin, Gregorian chant, and sacred polyphony.

### The Council of the International Federation Una Voce, renewed at the 2023 General Assembly

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- Uchenna Okezie  
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- Catharina Chen  
(Una Voce Sinica, China)

# President’s Message

by Joseph Shaw

I write from the depths of Lent, looking forward to the joy of Easter, and also to the many devotional events that characterise the summer months of the northern hemisphere: walking pilgrimages to Chartres, Walsingham, Covadonga, and elsewhere; summer schools and camps for children; the annual gatherings of many Una Voce groups, and the annual traditional pilgrimage to Rome, *Ad Petri Sedem*.

I am privileged to hear of developments around my own country, and indeed the world, that speak positively of the continuing place of the Traditional Mass in the Church. One example is the recent meeting of the Superior General of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter with Pope Francis, in which the Holy Father graciously expressed his approbation for the Fraternity’s apostolic work. In many other cases, however, the good news comes with the warning: ‘please don’t publicise this’.

When a new apostolate is established, when permission for a pilgrimage is confirmed, when a church is restored, when a devotional event takes place with increased numbers of the Faithful, when numbers at Masses expand, when converts are received or the sacrament of Matrimony celebrated, we are frequently asked not to publish the details.

This is not a matter of keeping things secret from the bishops. In most cases the local ordinary is well aware of the event; sometimes he is personally involved. Rather, it is an extension of the principle articulated in the Dicastery for Divine Worship’s *Responsa ad dubia* of 2021, which declared, in relation to the permission for Traditional Masses to be celebrated in parish churches, that ‘such a celebration should not be included in the parish Mass schedule, since it is attended only by the faithful who are members of the said group’.

This was explained in a short paragraph which deserves lasting fame:

There is no intention in these provisions to marginalise the faithful who are rooted in the previous form of celebration: they are only meant to remind them that this is a concession to provide for their good (in view of the common use of the one *lex orandi* of the Roman Rite) and not an opportunity to promote the previous rite.

The promotion of the Traditional Mass implicit in *Gregorius Magnus* is legitimate, naturally, since this is not a parish Mass schedule, but the Dicastery will no doubt be pleased that traditional Catholic websites and publications, including this one, are refraining from many opportunities to promote the ancient Mass so loved by the doctors, popes, saints, and martyrs among our predecessors in the Faith, by talking about many of the items of good news which come to our ears.


Since I cannot list these things or display photographs of them, readers will have to take my word for it. What may well be evident to you locally about the positive effects of the Traditional Mass – expanding congregations, the action of grace on sinners, family formation, vocations to the priesthood, the restoration of the crumbling physical fabric of our churches – is not only happening in your area. It is happening all over the world.

I always have to qualify this kind of observation by conceding that real pastoral harm is being done by the closure of long-standing and fruitful apostolates in many places. If that negative reality gives comfort to some of our opponents, then they must enjoy their *schadenfreude*

while they can. I don’t believe this purely destructive result was Pope Francis’ objective, although I confess it has been difficult to discover what positive object he did have in mind, and I speak as one who has put a lot of effort into trying to find out. Nevertheless, it is not in vain that the Church warns us about the sin, one of those ‘crying out to heaven for vengeance’, of ‘envy at another’s spiritual good’.

The harm that is being done by the policy of *Traditionis Custodes* does not, however, negate the good that continues to be done by the ancient liturgy itself. I will end this discussion with a quotation from J.R.R. Tolkien, words he put into the mouth of Galadriel following the apparent death of Gandalf in the second volume of *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Fellowship of the Ring*:

The world is indeed full of peril, and in it there are many dark places; but still there is much that is fair, and though in all lands love is now mingled with grief, it grows perhaps the greater.

I am pleased to announce the inclusion of two young Catholic journalists as new contributors to *Gregorius Magnus*: Thomas Colsy of the UK-based *Catholic Herald*, and Michael Haynes, the Rome correspondent of *LifeSiteNews*. 

## Become a Friend of the Una Voce Federation

Becoming a Friend is an easy way to support the work of the Federation for the ‘former Missal’ of the Roman Rite, and to keep yourself informed about its activities.

**You can become a Friend by e-mailing your name and country of residence to [treasurer@fiuv.org](mailto:treasurer@fiuv.org) and making an annual donation according to your means: all are welcome.** This can be sent by PayPal to the same email address, or using the bank details below.

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*‘It is vitally important that these new priests and religious, these new young people with ardent hearts, should find—if only in a corner of the rambling mansion of the Church—the treasure of a truly sacred liturgy still glowing softly in the night. And it is our task—since we have been given the grace to appreciate the value of this heritage—to preserve it from spoliation, from becoming buried out of sight, despised and therefore lost forever. It is our duty to keep it alive: by our own loving attachment, by our support for the priests who make it shine in our churches, by our apostolate at all levels of persuasion...’*

Dr Eric de Saventem, founding President of the Una Voce Federation, New York, 1970

# The Una Voce Federation and Its General Assembly

by Joseph Shaw

On Saturday, 28th October 2023, the FIUV's biennial General Assembly took place, at which the Council was elected and the officers confirmed. The General Assembly is also the opportunity for delegates of member associations to meet one another and report on their activities. In all – in person, by Zoom, and by email – we received reports from thirty-five member associations and one association seeking to join: nineteen European associations, eight from the Americas, seven from Asia, and two from Africa. I do not believe this number of reports has ever been exceeded; these have been circulated to member associations.

Dr Joseph Shaw (Latin Mass Society of England and Wales) was re-elected as President, and Monika Rheinschmitt (Pro Missa Tridentina, Germany) as Treasurer. We got a new Secretary, Andris Amolins of Una Voce Latvia.

The President d'Honneur remains Jacques Dhaussy (Una Voce France), and the Vice Presidents Felipe Alanís Suárez (Una Voce México), and Jack Oostveen (Ecclesia Dei Delft, The Netherlands).

The other Councillors are Patrick Banken (Una Voce France), David Reid (Una Voce Canada), Jarosław Syrkiewicz (Una Voce Polonia), Fabio Marino (Una Voce Italia), Rubén Peretó Rivas (Una Voce Argentina), Uchenna Okezie (Una Voce Nigeria), and Catharina Chen (Una Voce Sinica, China).

A truly international Council! We are truly blessed to have representatives of vigorous, lay-led Una Voce groups from South America, the Far East, Africa, Central Europe, and North America, as well as the key European nations of Italy, France, Germany, and England.

The Federation stands in rude health. Our total membership, of forty-two, is the greatest we have attained, despite the removal of some inactive associations from the list, and we are in discussions with two new potential members. Our coverage of northern Europe and Latin America is close to complete, and our contacts extend much further than this suggests.



*Andris Amolins, FIUV Secretary, with a flag of his native Latvia on the procession to St Peter's*


Of particular importance is the level of engagement we have with our members and supporters: the vital two-way communication between ordinary Catholics, Una Voce groups, the FIUV Council, and the President and officers. One aspect of this is represented by the number of reports we received for the General Assembly, which is very encouraging. Another is the pattern of regular Council meetings held by Zoom, which is now established, and communication through dedicated Telegram groups (for officers, Council, and members).

Thanks to all this, the Federation's leadership has a better understanding of the state of the Traditional movement than any self-appointed online lay spokesman, and a distinct and complementary

perspective to those of the Traditional institutes and the Holy See itself.

We are able to pass this information and the insights it generates, together with what we learn from our contacts in Rome, back to our members and supporters, and to the international press, with due regard to the need for confidentiality. The Federation has become the source, in fact, of a unique perspective on the unfolding consequences of *Traditionis Custodes*, and on the wider crisis of the Church.

Our work is increasingly supported by 'Friends' of the FIUV who make us regular donations. These donations now exceed in total the amount we raise from the (very low) membership dues and other donations from national associations.

If you are reading this and are not a 'Friend', please consider becoming one! 

# Una Voce Bulletins

by Joseph Shaw

Readers of *Gregorius Magnus* who are on our email list will already know that I have begun an occasional series of short news-related emails called ‘Una Voce Bulletins’. I aim to send about one a month, but as they respond to news items, they don’t have a fixed schedule. So far I have written about reactions to *Fiducia Supplicans*, the Traditional Mass celebrated in the US Capitol building, and the latest twist in the saga of the German Synodal Way. I hope that these make members and supporters of the Federation feel more connected and better informed.

Anyone can receive these, at no cost. You can sign up for them through the website, [www.fiuv.org](http://www.fiuv.org).

Here follow the two most recent Bulletins, to give readers an idea of what they are like.

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## Una Voce Bulletin Number 3 (1st February 2024): Mass in the US Capitol

From the President: A conservative Catholic is baffled by the Traditional Mass

Conflicts on social media between fanatical opponents of the Traditional Mass and its defenders take place every day, and are of little significance.

Much more important to the public perception of our movement are the words of people who have some credibility, who cultivate a reputation as balanced, or even as conservatives.

A prime example of this is the American-based Catholic news outlet *The Pillar*. Their reasonable and informative articles are seasoned with frankly bizarre attacks on figures close to the traditional movement. In 2021 it was Cardinal Burke; in 2022 it was Prof Thomas Pink. This year it is the Traditional Mass itself.

A Traditional Mass was celebrated in a meeting room in the Capitol, the seat of America’s legislature, at the invitation of a politician wishing to make amends for something that happened a year ago. This was the leaking of an FBI report (a body normally concerned with organized crime), characterising Catholics who attend the Traditional Mass as far-right extremists.

Ed Condon, one of *The Pillar*’s founding editors, was in attendance. He admits that his absurd preconceptions about the kind of person who attends the Traditional Mass were shattered. Nevertheless, he was unable to abandon his equally absurd preconceptions about their motivation in doing so.

He writes:

Because if the extraordinary form of the liturgy is about anything, it’s about the aesthetics – right? The look, the sound, the smell, the totality of people and place and thing, that’s what is supposed to make it seem so timeless, so magical, to newbies like me.

What I was not expecting was a modest set-up, in a hastily repurposed conference room, gray carpet with a bare folding table for a makeshift altar.

Since the people were there anyway, could there be more to it than aesthetics after all? Apparently not.

What the people I met say they want – and are determined to have whatever the Church tells them to the contrary – is the TLM. But shorn of the ‘extras’ afforded by grander settings, what they have got seems not vastly different to what I want and have most Sundays: simple, reverent liturgy.

### Comment

Our determination to hang on to the liturgy, Mr Condon might like to note, derives both from the Fourth Commandment (Honour thy father and mother) and from this liturgy’s incalculable theological and devotional richness, which has been expounded in thousands upon thousands of pages of commentary.

Condon doesn’t care. ‘So, what’s the big deal? I don’t mean that rhetorically. It’s a serious question’. But it is a question to which he prefers not to hear the answer.

Hearing the answer and taking the answer seriously is indeed a dangerous undertaking. It is the reason why so many priests and lay people, and even a good number of bishops, have suffered marginalisation and worse for the sake of this Mass.

Mr Condon has no intention of following us into the ecclesial wilderness. As we prepare for the →



# Fiducia Supplicans: The Curious Tale of Ecclesial Incoherence

by Michael Haynes

The widely documented pushback against *Fiducia Supplicans* by numerous bishops and episcopal conferences across the Church has highlighted an element little seen in this pontificate, namely, an implicit admission of defeat by Pope Francis along with his close aide Cardinal Victor Manuel Fernández. Such a position has been effected by the accumulated impact of large numbers of the African episcopate, but also – more surprisingly – by one of the Pope’s trusted cardinal advisors. The Church is now in the bizarre situation in which the Pope has not only approved a document but less than a month later works with his aides to effectively nullify it.



Cardinal Fernández

How, therefore, did such a scenario come about?

## The document emerges

Issued on 18th December, Cardinal Fernández’s *Fiducia Supplicans* contained proposals for ‘blessings of

couples in irregular situations and of same-sex couples’, provided that such blessings were not confused with sacramental marriage.<sup>1</sup>

Due to its publication only one week before Christmas, the text was at risk of being largely ignored by bishops in their preparations for Christmas. It would hardly have been surprising had the document been met with a ponderous silence, with bishops reneging on addressing it until the early days of the new year, by which time the impetus of any strong movement of resistance or support would be considerably lessened.

*Continued on page 8*

1. <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2023/12/18/0901/01963.html#en>

→ season of Lent, however, we know that Our Lord has been into the wilderness before us.

.....

## Una Voce Bulletin Number 4 (26th February 2024): German Synodal Way hits a snag

From the President: The Vatican finally gets tough

The Bishops’ Conference in Germany has been collaborating with the radical activist laity of the Central Committee of German Catholics (ZdK) to establish new institutions which would have a decisive role in governing the Church in Germany. The next, and crucial, step in this process was to have been



the creation of a ‘synodal committee’, a majority of whose members would be laity (partly because of the refusal of some bishops to participate), and which would have important powers.

On the eve of a meeting to approve the statutes of this committee, the bishops received a letter warning them against this step signed by the Prefects of three Dicasteries: of the Secretariat of State (Cardinal Parolin), of the Doctrine of the Faith (Cardinal Fernández), and of Bishops (Cardinal Prevost).

This was followed by public interventions in support of the letter by two important German-speaking Cardinals, Schönborn and Kasper.

The Synodal Committee’s statutes were removed from the German Bishops’ agenda.

It is possible make a long list of occasions on which senior Vatican officials have criticised the German Synodal Way, including harsh criticisms of it by Pope Francis in an interview in January last year.

However, the reality is more complex. In November 2022 the German Bishops made an *ad limina* visit to Rome, which would have been the natural opportunity to apply the brakes, but instead the

bishops returned home determined to continue. The Conference President Bishop Bätzing suggested that they were travelling in the same direction as the Vatican’s own ‘Synod on Synodality’.

## Comment

One reading of the situation would be that the German Synodal Way usefully brought radical proposals into the Church’s conversation, making the Synod on Synodality look more acceptable to theological conservatives by comparison. Perhaps the German Bishops themselves have taken this view.

This would explain why relatively minor deviations from Vatican policy by conservative bishops continue to be treated harshly, whereas there seemed to be no negative consequences for German bishops ignoring repeated criticisms. These criticisms were just for show.

Whether that was true or not, it seems that the Pope Francis has determined that the Synodal Way must be stopped, if not from contradicting sacramental theology and the Church’s discipline, then at least from undermining the role of bishops, and therefore of the Holy See, as the ultimate wielders of spiritual authority in the Church. ⑥

Yet, as is now well known, such was not the case. In a style that likely came as a shock to the notoriously slow and bureaucratic system of operations within the Vatican, *Fiducia Supplicans* (FS) was met with swift and firm rejection by bishops. Certain more recognizable prelates – such as Bishop Athanasius Schneider, Cardinal Gerhard Müller (emeritus Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith), Ukrainian Greek Catholic Primate His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, and Archbishop Héctor Aguer – were among the leading names voicing their opposition to the text, and warning of the dangers that the document poses to the Catholic faith.

Cardinal Müller’s striking response<sup>2</sup> from Rome attested that a Catholic could only ‘accept the teaching of FS’ if one were to reject Catholic teaching on homosexuality: ‘Given the unity of deeds and words in the Christian faith, one can only accept that it is good to bless these unions, even in a pastoral way, if one believes that such unions are not objectively contrary to the law of God’.

Joining these prelates have been dioceses or bishops’ conferences in a variety of places such as Poland, Hungary, and Peru.

### Africa’s voice resounds

But such responses were less surprising for those accustomed to keeping pace with the Vatican’s regular news cycle. Instead, the evidence of just how drastically the document has backfired on Cardinal Fernández and on Pope Francis can be found in the continent of Africa.

By far the most encompassing and strident rejection of FS has been from numerous Catholic bishops in Africa, and it is their undeterred proclamation of Catholic teaching condemning homosexuality and their subsequent refusals to enact FS that have sent the Vatican into retreat.

Within mere days of FS’s publication, the bishops’ conferences of Malawi, Zambia, Rwanda, Togo, Angola and São Tomé, Burkina Faso and Niger, and Cameroon all announced they would not be practising blessings of homosexual couples. They were supported by additional dioceses in the Ivory Coast and Kenya. While by no means simply copying each



Cardinal Ambongo

other’s statements, the respective statements from the African bishops were replete with quotations from Scripture regarding the impossibility of the Church’s reconciliation with homosexuality, and that – as noted by Archbishop Philip Anyolo of Nairobi – ‘[a]ny form of blessing of same-sex unions and activities would go against God’s word, the teachings of the Church, the African cultural traditions, the laws of our nations, and would be scandalous to the faithful’.<sup>3</sup>

In a statement<sup>4</sup> the like of which would be unimaginable in anti-Christian Europe, the Cameroon bishops wrote that they not only ‘formally forbid all blessing of “homosexual couples”’ but launched an attack on the cultural acceptance of homosexuality itself: ‘Homosexuality falsifies and corrupts human anthropology and trivializes sexuality, marriage and the family,

the foundations of society. In fact homosexuality sets humanity against itself and destroys it’.

Had Cardinal Fernández hoped that publishing FS in the immediate build-up to Christmas would mean less than a week of media coverage and little episcopal interest, then those hopes were swiftly dashed. The words ‘scandal’, ‘heresy’, and ‘blasphemy’ were regularly and freely employed in the various episcopal rejections of his text.

2. <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/cardinal-muller-tells-pope-francis-blessing-homosexual-couples-is-impossible-and-blasphemy/>, 21st December 2023
3. <https://www.lifesitenews.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Nairobi-statement-Dec-23.pdf>, 23rd December 2023
4. <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:9202418f-75dd-4834-a01d-8bad0d784078>, 21st December 2023



### Cardinal Ambongo's exercise of power

The true scale of the African bishops' accumulating responses was evidenced by the action of the continent's leading cardinal. In an almost unprecedented development, on 20th December Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo, the president of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) sent a letter to all the African bishops, calling for a unified, continent-wide response to FS. Cardinal Ambongo is the Archbishop of Kinshasa but, crucially, is also a close aide to Pope Francis due to his status as one of the so-called 'C9' council of cardinal advisors.

He ordered bishops to submit their responses to him by mid-January.

A little over three weeks later – again, demonstrating an efficiency and singularity of purpose largely unknown in the contemporary Vatican – Cardinal Ambongo's letter<sup>5</sup> was published on 11th January, representing the collective response of all the Catholic bishops of Africa and Madagascar. The verdict: a firm rejection of the blessings of homosexual couples proposed by FS. 'We, the African bishops, do not consider it appropriate for Africa to bless homosexual unions or same-sex couples because, in our context, this would cause confusion and would be in direct contradiction to the cultural ethos of African communities', the letter read.

The letter was clear that the bishops were 'reaffirming their unwavering attachment to the Successor of Peter', but equally clearly affirmed that FS would not be practised in Africa, and that the Scriptural teaching was very clear on the Catholic stance regarding homosexuality.

Cardinal Ambongo's letter also demonstrated acute mastery of Vatican politics. In the closing lines of the text, he drew from a regular theme of Pope Francis – on 'colonization' – using it to defend the African bishops in their stance rejecting FS. 'His Holiness Pope Francis, fiercely opposed to any form of cultural colonization in Africa, blesses the African people with all his heart, and

encourages them to remain faithful, as always, to the defence of Christian values', wrote Ambongo, in a passage that seemed as much a warning to the Pope as a noble defence of African 'Christian values'.

Such a development, led by one of the Pope's handpicked advisors is even more astonishing in light of the 4th January press release<sup>6</sup> by Cardinal Fernández. Reeling from the buffeting he had taken over FS, Cardinal Fernández attempted to 'clarify' the declaration via his statement, but also issued a veiled warning to bishops that there was no room to reject FS: 'There is no room to distance ourselves doctrinally from this Declaration [FS] or to consider it heretical, contrary to the Tradition of the Church or blasphemous'.

### A cardinal in Rome

The background to the groundbreaking letter was provided by Cardinal Ambongo himself, in a talk he gave sometime between 11th January and 18th January.<sup>7</sup> He stated that after having compiled all the various responses from the African bishops, he flew to Rome and requested a meeting with the Pope to discuss the African bishops' stance. Allowing himself a little over forty-eight hours in the Vatican before having to leave, Cardinal Ambongo was awarded his meeting with Francis on the evening of the day he arrived, 9th January.


The result was that Cardinal Fernández was summoned into the room about one hour later to join the discussion. Then on 10th January, Cardinals Ambongo and Fernández spent the day drafting a document, reportedly even phoning the Pope at regular intervals for his approval on particular phrasing.

The text they compiled was the document that Cardinal Ambongo published on 11th January, and though the public version was in his name only, he stated that Cardinal Fernández had co-signed a copy destined for the Vatican archives.

Thus in the space of three weeks and two days, Cardinal Fernández's and Pope Francis' *Fiducia Supplicans* was effectively rendered impotent. Not only had numerous dioceses

and national bishops' conferences rejected it – in itself a poignant move – but the very authors of the text had collaborated with Africa's leading prelate to support bishops in the continent in their rejection of FS.

Certainly, arguments have been expertly made that Cardinal Ambongo's letter could have posited Africa's rejection of FS on more theological than cultural grounds. Yet the very existence of the letter is one of the most striking moments of this pontificate, since it marks a rare occasion in which the 'dictator Pope,' to quote Henry Sire, has been forced to walk back on his own decree.

*Fiducia Supplicans* certainly remains, but how exactly do Pope Francis and Cardinal Fernández expect skeptical bishops to pay any attention to it, or them, now? 

5. <https://www.lifesitenews.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/MessagePresidentSECAMEnglish.pdf>
6. [https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_dcf\\_doc\\_20240104\\_comunicato-fiducia-supplicans\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_dcf_doc_20240104_comunicato-fiducia-supplicans_en.html)
7. <https://lesalonbeige.fr/le-cardinal-ambongo-a-propos-de-fiducia-supplicans-vous-detruisez-la-famille-vous-detruisez-la-societe/>

# Una Voce is the magazine of Una Voce France.

Here we publish two appreciations of the Catholic English novelist Evelyn Waugh, on the occasion of a gathering to mark his 120th birthday in Compiègne.



## 120 Years of Evelyn Waugh

by G.N.



As FIUV had announced (No. 343), an 'Evelyn Waugh Day' took place in Compiègne on 14th October 2023. We were represented by our secretary, Benoît Le Roux, and by several members, such as the faithful Gérard Guillerez. We even came across a

great-nephew of Simone Wallon (a musicologist and for a long time a vigilant secretary of our review) who is a notary in Seine-Saint-Denis.

Excerpts were shown from the TV movies *Return to Brideshead* and *The Sword of Honour*. During the debates that preceded and followed, moderated by Professor Éric Georgin (Paris II), Mrs Pat Pattison, Honorary Professor of English Literature in Utrecht, explained what gives Waugh's style its special savour: '[He used] a very rich language, but never a word too much'. Éric Fauquet, Professor Emeritus of French Universities and a great connoisseur of the Arab and Egyptian world, became interested in the geopolitics of Waugh's novels. Colonel de Rambures emphasized the extent to which the early parts of *The Sword of Honour* contain interesting information on the organization of the British Army in 1939-41 (Waugh served for the entire 1939-45 period). Laurent Dandrieu, editor-in-chief at *Valeurs actuelles*, pointed out Waugh's Christian inspiration: 'Every soul is of equal importance in God's sight. Every person is irreplaceable. And yet our societies

wound and eliminate individuals, with utter indifference. His novels show this, behind their comical appearance, an appearance which allows us to endure this cruel picture of our world'.

We publish on page 12 one of the concluding texts of this day dedicated to Waugh.

.....

### Evelyn Waugh and the Reforms in the Church

Evelyn Waugh had a pious childhood in the Anglican Church (his father was High Church). He abjured all Protestantism and he entered the Roman Catholic Church on 29th September 1930 in London, at the age of twenty-six, following a crisis in his personal life: his wife had left him. This first marriage was declared null and void by a Catholic Marriage Tribunal in July 1936, and in 1937 he married Laura Herbert, with whom he had seven children. Evelyn was accustomed to spend each Holy Week in a Benedictine abbey (Ampleforth or Downside, and even once in Spain, in Avila in 1932, to flee the English general election).

From the first months of the Second Vatican Council, he rebelled against the 'Bishops of the Rhine' and other 'progressives', including a certain Fr Sheerin, who wrote in the *Catholic Herald*. It is worth quoting Waugh's reply, on 7th August 1964:

Father Sheerin suggests that Catholic Conservatism is the product of the defensive policy necessary in the last century against the nationalistic-masonic-secularism of the time. I would ask him to consider that the function of the Church in every age has been conservative – to transmit undiminished and uncontaminated the creed inherited from its predecessors. Not 'is this fashionable notion one that we should accept?' but 'is this dogma (a subject on which we agree) the Faith as we received it?' has been the question (as far as I know) at all General Councils. I have seen no evidence that Pope Paul [sic] had anything else in mind when he summoned the present Council.

Conservatism is not a new influence in the Church. It is not the heresies of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the agnosticism of the eighteenth century, the atheism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, that have been the foes of the Faith turning her from serene supremacy to sharp controversy.

Throughout her entire life the Church has been at active war with enemies from without and traitors from within. The war against Communism in our own age is acute but it is mild compared with those fought and often won by our predecessors.

Finally, a word about liturgy. It is natural to the Germans to make a row. The torchlit, vociferous assemblies of the Hitler Youth expressed a national passion. It is well that this should be canalised into the life of the Church. But it is essentially un-English.

We seek no 'Sieg Heils'. We pray in silence. 'Participation' in the Mass does not mean hearing our own voices. It means God hearing our voices. Only he knows who is 'participating' at Mass. I believe, to compare small things with great, that I 'participate' in a work of art when I

study it and love it silently. No need to shout.

Anyone who has taken part in a play knows that he can rant on the stage with his mind elsewhere. If the Germans want to be noisy, let them. But why should they disturb our devotions?

'Diversity' is deemed by the Progressives as one of their aims against the stifling *Romanita*. May they allow it to English Catholics.

I am now old but I was young when I was received into the Church. I was not at all attracted by the splendour of her great ceremonies – which the Protestants could well counterfeit. Of the extraneous attractions of the Church which most drew me was the spectacle of the priest and his server at Low Mass, stumping up to the altar without a glance to discover how many or how few he had in his congregation; a craftsman and his apprentice; a man with a job which he alone was qualified to do.

That is the Mass I have grown to know and love. By all means let the rowdy have their 'dialogues', but let us who value silence not be completely forgotten.

The value of silence is today recalled by Cardinal Sarah.

On 5th February 1966, Waugh signed the international petition by thirty-seven writers and artists (including Chirico, Borges, Britten, Montale; for France, Robert Bresson,

Julien Green, Mauriac) asking Paul VI to maintain the office in Latin at least in the monasteries and convents. On 10th April, he died suddenly on Easter Sunday, in his house in Taunton, Somerset, shortly after attending a Mass that a Jesuit friend had celebrated in Latin in a nearby village. On 6th July 1971, he was therefore not available to sign the next petition, which he would surely have also signed, in which Agatha Christie, Graham Greene, but also Henry de Montherlant, Yehudi Menuhin, and many non-Catholics begged Paul VI, in the name of the 'history of the human spirit', not to 'refuse to allow the Traditional Mass to survive, even though this survival took place side by side with other liturgical forms'.

#### Notes

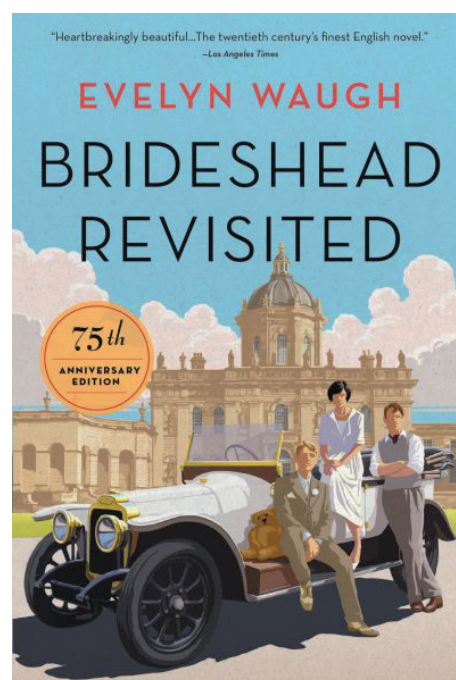
On Waugh, see his biography by Martin Stannard (2 vols.); his *Letters and Diaries*, published by Penguin; in French: *Wilde, Waugh, Chesterton, trois humeurs britanniques* (ICES, 17 Bd des Belges, La Roche-sur-Yon, Actes du colloque de 2011); Benoît Le Roux, *Evelyn Waugh, l'homme et l'oeuvre* (L'Harmattan, 2003); *L'Homme nouveau* (bimensuel, n° 1793, 21 octobre 2023, pages 28-29).

.....

## Happy Birthday, Mr Waugh!

At least one city celebrated the 120th anniversary of Evelyn Waugh's birth (28th October 1903). It was neither Marseille, where he situated most of his first novel (*Decline and Fall*), nor Le Touquet, where he got off the plane for the first time, nor Cabris, where he wrote *Labels: A Mediterranean Journal*, but Compiègne, thanks to the Association des Avenues de Compiègne, with its tradition of Anglo-French friendship, and perhaps also the proximity of Chantilly, where Waugh stayed three times and wrote one of his novels.

There was nothing in England: No one is a prophet in his own country! Graham Greene, however, had always proclaimed that 'Evelyn was



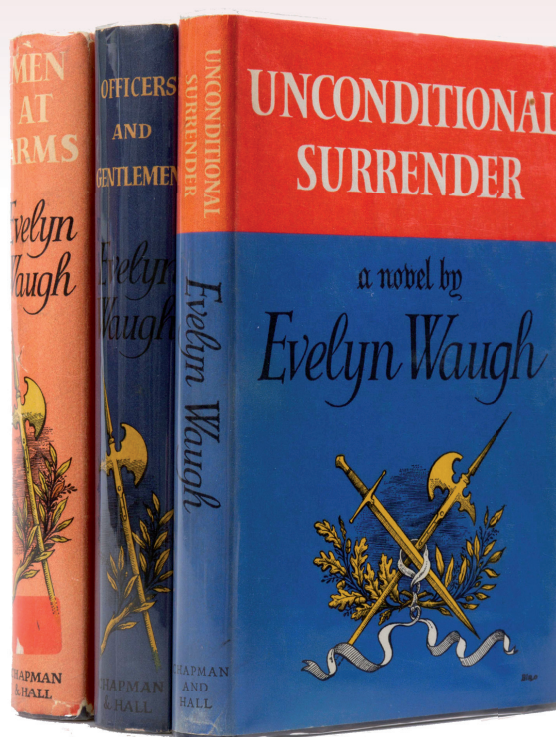
the best novelist of our generation' – a beautiful manifestation of fair play. Paul Morand approved, from the very beginning, 1933, in London, and Giraudoux in 1938 prefaced *Black Mischief*, the first of Waugh's novels translated into French; he spoke of 'its acidity, its cruelty, and I don't know what new laugh'. That's why Reserve Sergeant Mitterrand, in 1939, had *Black Mischief* in his pack when he left for the Maginot Line. As late as 1946, the press hailed 'the English Mauriac', which it thought it saw in the author of *Brideshead Revisited*, which evokes a family of the gentry between 1914 and 1939.

Paradoxically, that this saga is a bit kitschy has ensured its survival in the mainstream of English culture, because of the 1981 TV series. Castle Howard, too large in fact to be the novel's manor, became the most visited castle in England! But the hand of political correctness fell on the author, in England more than anywhere else. For its centenary in 2003, at Oxford College, where he had studied for two years, academics had to be brought in – American (North and South), Scandinavian, and Spanish – to organize a colloquium devoted to his work.

Before he could live on the income from his books, he served as a war correspondent in Ethiopia, as evidenced by his novel *Scoop* (1937), which every journalist has read (because he's making fun of them), but first as a teacher of literature and history in Wales, like *Decline and Fall's* hero, the naïve Paul Pennyfeather, who was told by an Oxford 'porter': 'You will no doubt dabble in teaching, that is what gentlemen expelled from the University for immodesty usually do' (he was caught without trousers in the quad).

In addition to Paul, and Mrs Stitch, inspired by Lady Diana Cooper, wife of the English ambassador, his host at Chantilly, Waugh created several unforgettable characters: Aimée Thanatogenos, the scatterbrained young man from Los Angeles (in

*The Loved One*), Guy Crouchback, the disillusioned warrior of *The Sword of Honour* (performed by Daniel Craig in the TV series), and especially the cynical Basil Seal, who trades in children in *Put Out More Flags*, and declares to his fiancée in *Black Mischief*: 'You're an amazing girl, Prudence! We'd eat it!' (She should have taken note). More phlegmatic is Adam Fenwick-Symes, the young writer of *Vile Bodies*, arguably Waugh's masterpiece, on the gilded youth of the 1920s (the title



of which is borrowed from the King James translation of the Epistle to the Philippians 3:21).

Communist historian Eric Hobsbawm wrote: 'While the artists on the left, W.H. Auden and Benjamin Britten, put up with enough in their time, only two great novelists were able to express the horror of the century begun in August 1914: Evelyn Waugh from 1930 and Louis-Ferdinand Céline in 1932'. This was confirmed by publishers and filmmakers, unknown to him. In 1933, Waugh wrote a short story, *The Man Who Liked Dickens*, whose hero is an illiterate mulatto living in the Amazon rainforest, where he holds captive a lost explorer, to get him to read and reread the complete

works of his favourite author. A New York publisher had bought the rights, but when he found out that this text would serve as a denouement to *A Handful of Dust* (1934), he demanded a less tragic end for the US public (which was done). Similarly, Stephen Fry, adapting *Vile Bodies* for the cinema in 2003 (under the title *Bright Young Things*), concluded his film with the marriage of Adam and Nina, with them cuddling their young son. In the novel (published in 1930), the Second World War has begun, and Adam, while being bombed in a trench, rereads the letter in which Nina announces that she has secretly married a young officer. The truth, always cruel, is no longer tolerable in our century of good feelings.

Evelyn Waugh's work is not limited to his novels, and the French public still has a lot to discover. Jocelyne Gourand has translated very well for Quai Voltaire Editions a very small part of his *Letters*, one of which is to Nancy Mitford, where he calls the French 'selfish pigs'. In 2021, Belles Lettres gave a glimpse only (1939-45) of his *Diaries*. Waugh wrote two biographies to pay off his debt to the Roman Catholic Church, that of Monsignor Ronald Knox (a convert like himself), and, in 1935, that of a Jesuit martyr during the reign of Elizabeth I, Edmund Campion. It was this that he offered to Claudel when he responded to an invitation to dinner, in April 1949, 'in the dark and hideous Passy apartment'. In exchange, Claudel offered him 'a Deluxe reissue of one of his volumes of verse', but 'at the time of our departure he laid his hand on the book, and cast a reptilian look, and left it on the table'. The meal had gone badly: when Claudel asked him how he would translate the title *Partage de midi*, Waugh feigned hearing *potage* and replied, 'Soup at luncheon'. For, even in his diaries, he remains above all one of the masters of the comic. He's always telling the truth, but by transforming reality. ⑥



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 **The Latin Mass Society**  
OF ENGLAND & WALES

# *Mass of Ages* is the magazine of the Latin Mass Society of England and Wales

In this edition of *Gregorius Magnus* we reprint an article in *Mass of Ages* by Caroline Farey on Pope Benedict XVI and the vocation of sacred art an article remembering Pope Benedict one year after his death, by Andrew Cusack, and the regular 'World News' column by Paul Waddington.

## The Way of Beauty

by Caroline Farey

Pope Benedict XVI's interest in sacred art, sacred music and ecclesial architecture was because of their 'vocation' which is to make manifest the beauty of God's Trinitarian love and his entire plan of salvation in Christ and his Church.

'The truest beauty is the love of God, who definitively revealed himself to us in the paschal mystery... The beauty of the liturgy is part of this mystery; it is a sublime expression of God's glory and, in a certain sense, a glimpse of heaven on earth. ... Beauty, then, is not mere decoration, but rather an essential element of the liturgical action, since it is an attribute of God himself and his revelation. These considerations should make us realize the care which is needed, if the liturgical action is to reflect its innate splendour.' (*S. Caritatis* 35).

Pope Benedict XVI spoke continually of beauty, especially but not only, in relation to the liturgy. It was never far

from his mind or his speeches. The *via pulchritudinis*, the way of beauty, became an ever-present principle for him because God is beautiful and therefore everything of God, from God, about God, is beautiful; the way of beauty is a visible way to God.

Pope Benedict XVI's passion for truth was also a passion for the splendour of truth, *veritatis splendor*; '...truth carries with it the joy and splendour of spiritual beauty' (CCC 2500). 'The relationship between truth and beauty is inseparable and therefore we need beauty.' We need it, 'above all, when it is a matter of evoking what is beyond words: the depths of the human heart, the exaltations of the soul, the mystery of God' (CCC 2500).

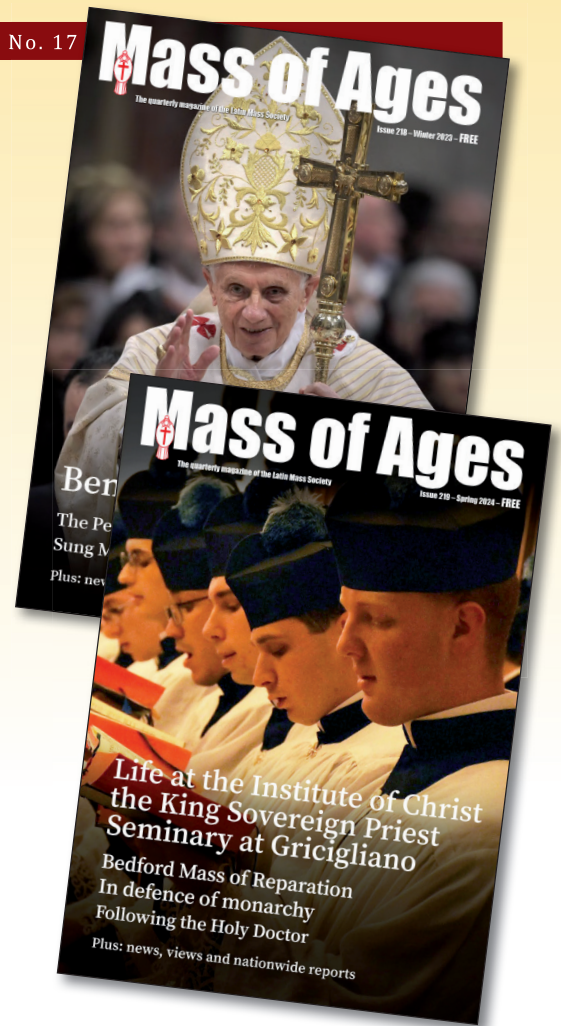
In an extraordinary gesture, for his visit to the UK in 2010, Pope Benedict XVI chose to loan four of the great Raphael tapestries that hang in the Vatican palace to the V&A Museum to be hung beside the cartoon drawings made by Raphael for these very tapestries. With this gesture he demonstrates the spiritual power of sacred art to manifest the *veritatis*

*splendor*, in this case, of the divine institution of the papacy.

The future Charles I bought seven of the twelve huge cartoon drawings in 1623. Three of the four tapestries that went to London were on the subject of St Peter, of whom Benedict was, of course, the direct successor. These were the miraculous draught of fishes (Lk 5:1-11), Christ's charge to Peter (Jn 21:15-19) and Peter's healing of a lame man (Acts 3:1-10). The fourth was of the miracle of St Paul at Lystra.

Just as the Protestant reformation was breaking Pope Leo X commissioned Raphael in 1515 for the designs of twelve tapestries depicting the apostles of Rome, Saints Peter and Paul. They were to hang in the Sistine chapel along the lowest story. Michelangelo had finished the ceiling only a few years earlier in 1512 and Raphael's designs were to be in harmony with Michelangelo's work, hence the similarly sculpted muscular figures.

The cartoons were made of hundreds of pieces of paper stuck together and fixed to a wall for the scene to be painted. As cartoons for





tapestries, the finished paintings had to be cut into strips, each one the width that a loom could produce. These were then sent to the finest Belgian weavers of the day to reproduce the scenes as closely as possible. The strips of painting and the strips of tapestry were then stuck and sewn back together.

The painting here shows the resurrected Christ dressed in white with the nail wounds visible in his hands and feet. Eleven apostles, having arrived earlier by boat (visible furthest to the right), have just finished breakfast with Jesus (Jn 21:15) when he turns to Peter to ask, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?'. Peter is portrayed on his knees to give his answer: 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you,' and Jesus says to him, 'Feed my lambs'.

With one hand Jesus points to the sheep and lambs behind him; with the other he points to the great key that Peter is clutching. It is as though he is showing Peter what his keys are for: to feed, look after and bring home Christ's


sheep. Pope Benedict's message was also clear. As successor to Peter, he holds the same keys and he was coming to feed Christ's lambs and sheep in the UK with a petrine love and obedience to the Lord Jesus.

In the strip of landscape visible between Jesus and St Peter, the dark hole in the ground alerts us to the holes of the nail wounds and to the one grazing lamb on Jesus' right, indicating Jesus himself as the lamb of God. Just above the sheep's head an old tree trunk (the stump of Jesse) is lifeless while a single new shoot has many young, leafy branches beside it (Christ and his Church).

On the verge, immediately below Christ's erect figure, there is another stump that seems to signify the tree of the cross, the instrument of death now destroyed by the resurrection, with white flowers blooming around it. Significantly for the turbulent time in which the painting was made, there is a fire breaking out just below the great Church, the smoke of which can be seen

wafting across the base of the tower to the right.

Across the river behind Jesus there is another flock of sheep. These are being led by a woman with children followed by a man with a staff, through an archway lit by the dawn light; an image of the Church and its authority being led by the Blessed Virgin Mother of Christ and new, 'mother of all the living' (Gen 3:20).

Pope Benedict XVI's mastery of the significance of truth and beauty in art is evident, finally, in his chairmanship of the editorial committee of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. There, he oversaw the inclusion of works of art to introduce each of the four parts, demonstrating the Catechism's text: 'Sacred art is true and beautiful when its form corresponds to its particular vocation: evoking and glorifying, in faith and adoration, the transcendent mystery of God – the surpassing invisible beauty of truth and love visible in Christ' (CCC 2502). 

# Liberating the Old Rite

## Andrew Cusack remembers Pope Benedict's visit to Britain in 2010

Proximity to events is an inherent danger in rendering historical judgement, which means it is probably too soon to describe the late Pope Benedict XVI as one of the most important pontiffs for the history of Catholicism in Great Britain since the Reformation. Benedict's gentleness and erudition stood him in great stead and earned him the love and respect of many Catholics as well as other Christians and non-believers.

Most memorable was his 2010 State Visit to the United Kingdom – the first official State Visit of any reigning Pontiff to this realm. The visit began with an historic arrival in Edinburgh, the second city of the union, where he was welcomed by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh – both of whom predeceased Benedict. Papal Masses in Glasgow and Westminster preceded a well-attended liturgy in Birmingham during which Pope Benedict beatified John Henry Newman, the scholar and churchman whose influence has guided, swayed, and encouraged many people from around the English-speaking world to come into full communion with the See of Peter.

Among the most important roles of the Pontiff is that of teacher and guide. In that capacity, Benedict XVI was given the privilege of addressing a joint sitting of the Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled on the fifth day of his visit in the medieval great hall of the Palace of Westminster which had witnessed the trial of St Thomas More, sometime Speaker of the House of Commons and Lord Chancellor of England.

Pope Benedict acknowledged the deep and abiding influence that Westminster, in one shape or another, has had on the evolution of participatory democracy which is now held as the common standard of government



*Pope Benedict XVI outside Westminster Cathedral*

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Pope Benedict with the Queen and Prince Philip

across most of the planet. In addressing the gathered lawmakers, he reminded them that, rather than an end in itself, democracy is instead a tool for the promotion of the common good.

He also reminded these paragons of Britain's highly secularised political class that religion has an informative role to play in the process of government.

'If the moral principles underpinning the democratic process are themselves determined by nothing more solid than social consensus,' Benedict told Parliament, 'then the fragility of the process becomes all too evident.'

'Herein', the teaching pontiff asserted, 'lies the real challenge for democracy'.

In a democratic society, Benedict contended, the clarity and logic which religion contains is a handmaid to democratic government rather than an obstacle, with a helpful role to play even in secular societies. The defence of objective truth and reality which Benedict upheld in 2010 appears all the more prescient more than a decade later, considering virulent assaults on biological reality have moved from academic fringes into the cultural mainstream. Once again, today in Europe and North America it is the Church who is defending science against science's enemies.

For anyone needing an insightful and timely reflection on the value of public service to the nation and the value of

religion to politics, Pope Benedict's address in the Palace of Westminster will remain a touchstone for years to come.

Another accomplishment from Benedict's papacy had particular resonance here in the United Kingdom. Since the introduction of the new liturgy following the Second Vatican Council, Great Britain has acted as an attractive pole of appreciation for the spiritual, aesthetic, musical, and cultural value of the traditional liturgy of the Roman Rite. The role which the letter signed by, among other cultural figures, the detective writer Agatha Christie, played in preserving the faithful's access to the traditional liturgy has now become almost legendary.

If Britons can bear any badge of pride in today's universal church, it is that from these isles came the indult which allowed the Mass of Ages to persist, to survive, and eventually to thrive.

The 2007 *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum* had the effect of liberating the 'Old Rite' from the shackles that had been arbitrarily imposed upon it, and made a wise attempt to end the liturgical civil wars that had plagued many a diocese across the world by allowing for a tolerance of diversity of forms of worship. The increase in devotion to the Eucharist and appreciation of

the traditional rites which followed Benedict's *motu proprio* was not limited merely to ostensibly sidelined factions but flourished at the heart of the Church in parishes across the United Kingdom and well beyond.

The limitations and restrictions which have since been imposed on the celebration of the traditional Roman liturgy since Pope Benedict's abdication have been frustrating for many around the world, even if the overwhelming preponderance of Catholic bishops in England and Wales have been quite pastoral and accommodating in their approach. Indeed, the perception of threat to this beautiful and immensely rewarding liturgy has in some ways renewed the zeal and fervour which are necessary for its propagation and defence.

It would be tempting to wonder what St John Henry Newman – born in London, beatified in Birmingham, and canonised in Rome – would make of Pope Benedict and his contribution to the English cardinal's native land. I can't help but imagine in their case Heaven might resemble the Senior Common Room of an Oxford college to which both Benedict XVI and St John Henry Newman occasionally repair for a brief conversation – before returning to the celestial college chapel to adore the Creator of all. ⑥

# World News

## Updates from around the globe, with Paul Waddington

### Priestly Fraternity of St Peter

Every November, the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter publishes statistics about its membership and activities. The latest information demonstrates the continued growth of the order.

There are now 342 priests incardinated into the order, with a further 24 associated in some way. There are also 22 deacons and 179 other seminarians below the grade of deacon. The average age of the membership, which includes priests and seminarians, is 39.

During 2023, 14 seminarians were ordained to the priesthood, which is the average number in recent years. However, there is the expectation that the number of ordinations will increase over the coming years, as the numbers entering the seminary each year has increased since 2021 when Pope Francis issued his *motu proprio, Traditionis Custodes*. This year, the intake to their two seminaries, in the USA and in Bavaria, was at a record level.

The FSSP are active in 146 dioceses distributed in 16 countries around the world.

### Italy

Shortly after it became known that Pope Francis intended to sanction the American Cardinal Raymond Burke by taking away his salary and charging a hefty rent for his home, the Italian daily newspaper, *Il Foglio*, published an article that was critical of this action and of Pope Francis more generally.

It posed the question: does this action not risk widening even further the rift that exists in American Catholicism, between a Church that

follows the papal 'agenda' and one that struggles even to recognize Jorge Mario Bergoglio as the successor of St Peter?

The article went on to suggest that the punishments meted out to Cardinal Burke and Bishop Strickland of Tyler would cause a 'boomerang effect' not only among Catholics in the United States, but also among bishops throughout the world, who may be asking the question: *What if tomorrow a pope of a different orientation does the same to those in vogue today?*

### USA

It was announced in January that Archbishop Leonard Blair of the Archdiocese of Hartford had ordered the discontinuation of Latin Masses at the church of St Stanislaus in New Haven in Connecticut. Latin Masses had been offered at this church for more than thirty years, and their ending is a bitter blow to the sizeable congregation that attended them, as well as to the St Gregory Society, which was responsible for introducing the Latin Mass into this part of Connecticut.

While there have been a number of cases in the USA where established Latin Masses have been shut down by local bishops responding to the provisions of Pope Francis' *motu proprio, Traditionis Custodes*, and subsequent instructions coming out of the Vatican, there have also been cases where American bishops have assisted in the setting up of new locations for the celebration of Mass in the older rite.

As an example, the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest has, in recent months, established apostolates at two new US locations.

With the blessing of Archbishop Jerome Listcki, the Institute has been able to open another apostolate in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Masses are now being offered on Sundays and holydays in the church of Saints Cyril and Methodius at Sheboygan, a small town some 60 miles to the north of Milwaukee. More recently, Bishop Robert McManus of the Diocese of Worcester invited the Institute to establish a new oratory at the historic church of St Paul in Warren in the state of Massachusetts.

A survey recently conducted among priests in the USA by the Catholic University of America has revealed a dramatic decline in clergy who describe themselves as theologically either progressive or very progressive. This is matched by a similar increase in those who describe themselves as either conservative or orthodox.

The survey found that of priests ordained in 2020 or later, 85% described themselves as conservative or orthodox compared with less than 5% who regarded themselves as progressive and none at all who regarded themselves as very progressive. In contrast, the survey revealed that 68% of priests ordained in the late 1960s described themselves as progressive or very progressive, compared with 17% who described themselves as orthodox or traditional. ⑥



The historic church of St Paul in Warren, Massachusetts

# Peregrinatio Ad Petri Sedem: Rome, October 2023

by Joseph Shaw

The FIUV managed to fit the General Assembly in among the events of the annual traditional *Peregrinatio Ad Petri Sedem*, which had special importance this year, because it was not allowed to have Mass in St Peter's Basilica, something which has been an annual event since 2012. Instead, Mass was celebrated for us in the Basilica of Santi Celso e Giuliano (SS Celsus & Julius), where the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest have their Roman apostolate, followed by Benediction there, and then the usual procession to St Peter's. Our entrance was delayed at the security gates for an hour, ostensibly because the numbers were larger than expected. Nevertheless, we finally got in and had a devotion at the High Altar, followed by the canonical hour of Sext in the Chapel of the Throne, with more than 1,000 pilgrims.

Sext, the traditional office of mid-morning (six hours after dawn, in its origin), is the third of the short daytime hours that were swallowed up by the 'Midday Office' in many communities after the Second Vatican Council: Prime, Terce, Sext, None. Outside Lent, it is the hour traditionally said immediately before the celebration of Mass. (In Lent, Mass is preceded by None.)

Sext was led by Fr Antonius Maria Mamsery, superior general of the Missionaries of the Holy Cross of Tanzania.

The previous evening we had had Vespers with Bishop Athanasius Schneider in the Basilica of Santa Maria ad Martyres (the Pantheon).

On Sunday I attended Mass in Santissima Trinità dei Pellegrini, which is cared for by the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter. Archbishop Guido Pozzo, once the Secretary of the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, celebrated Pontifical High Mass to a church that is fuller every year: if you want a seat, you have to arrive very early. On the other



hand, this year pilgrims also had the option of attending an earlier Mass at Santi Celso e Giuliano.

On the previous Friday, the usual Pax Liturgica Conference had taken place. It was addressed by Bishop Schneider, whose talk was attended by Cardinal Robert Sarah. During the course of the conference, I was able to launch a book I have edited, *The Latin Mass and the Intellectuals: Petitions to Save the Ancient Mass from 1966 to 2007*.

The weekend also saw the launch of Bishop Schneider's catechism, *Credo*, also attended by Cardinal Sarah. Bishop Schneider spoke with great eloquence about his book, and, in response to a rather unfriendly question from a journalist, about his determined adherence to the See of St Peter.

I encourage all readers able to do so to join the pilgrimage this year, particularly the procession to St Peter's, where we are on display, as it were, to all: even to the windows of the Sacred Dicasteries in the Via della Conciliazione. (Photos by Joseph Shaw) ⑥





**Peregrinatio Ad Petri Sedem: Rome, October 2023 (continued)**

## Why We Must Recover St Thomas Becket: The Anti-Henry and Antithesis to Modernity

by Thomas Colsy

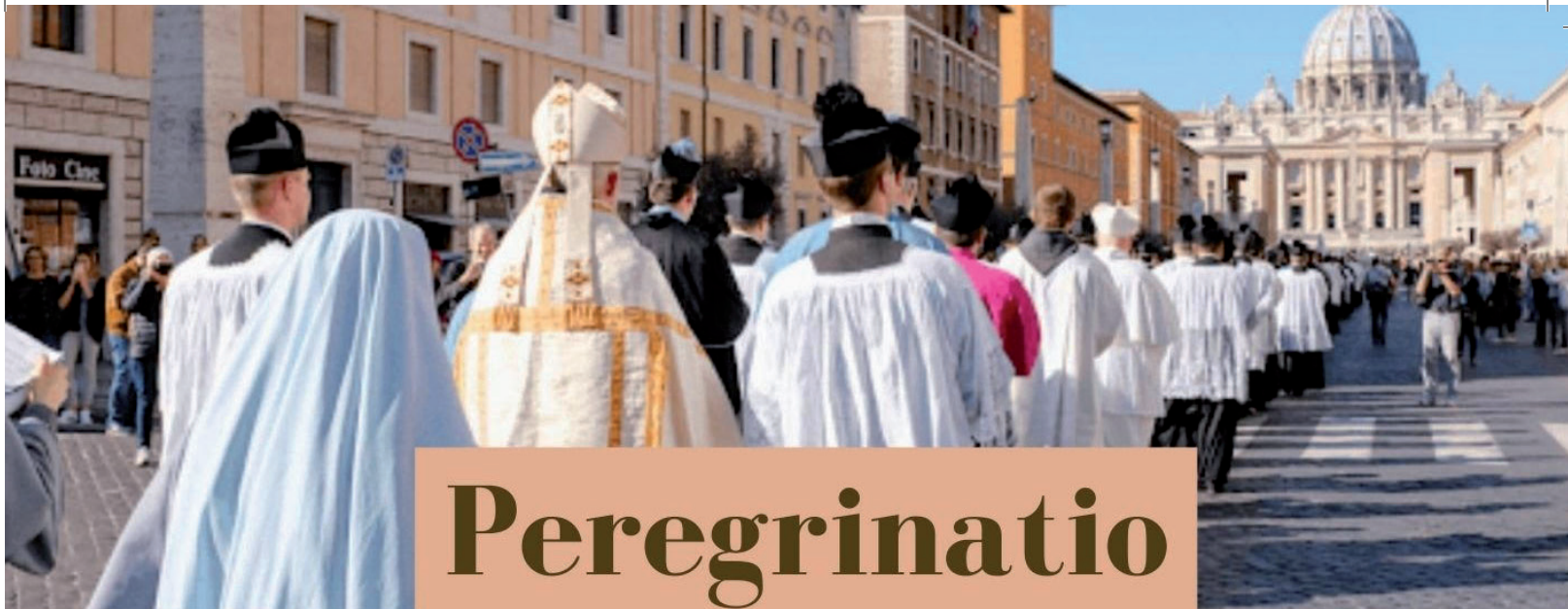
In August 2023, one of the foremost newspapers in the United Kingdom exhumed an old contention from the dirt after it featured a curious story titled, rather simply, 'Protestants added the "à" to smear Thomas Becket'.

The article, published by *The Times*, revealed that late-sixteenth-century Protestant partisans and propagandists had taken to the history books in an attempt to rewrite narratives surrounding St Thomas of Canterbury, a heretofore beloved hero and martyr of medieval Christendom.

One such tactic they deployed to undermine the enduring reputation of valour and prestige attached to the man was to insert a hitherto non-existent 'à' between his given name and surname. The aim was to both distance his person from the modern era in which the Protestant 'reformers' were dealing and to fabricate associations to the rural ruffians found in tales about Robin Hood such as George-à-Green or Alan-à-Dale. Thus, the revisionists sought to give Becket rustic, bawdy, and folkloric connotations, weakening

(it was hoped) any sense of the hard historicity to the story. A naïve hope given the unusually extensive range of detailed contemporary sources we have on his life and martyrdom in a variety of languages – but an undermining, nonetheless.

This recent revelation, uncovered by historians and circulated by *The Times*, draws attention to an enduring truth: the enemies of the Church have consistently deliberated it to be particularly crucial to control or suppress the narrative surrounding this



# Peregrinatio Ad Petri Sedem 2024

**Christians who live their Catholic faith to the rhythm of tradition**

Friday, October 25

9 hs. - 16 hs.	Meeting Pax Liturgica at the Augustinianum, in front of St. Peter's colonnade
17:30 hs.	Pontifical Vespers Basilica of Saint Mary of the Martyrs at the Pantheon, organised by the Institute of the Good Shepherd

Saturday, October 26

9 hs.	Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament Basilica of Saint-Celse and Saint-Julien, organised by the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest
11 hs.	Procession to the Basilica of Saint Peter at the Vatican Ceremony in the Basilica

Sunday, October 27

11 hs.	Mass of Christ the King Church of the Ssma. Trinità dei Pellegrini, organised by the Fraternity of Saint Peter
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<https://www.summorum-pontificum.org>

*specific* saint. Considering *why* will be (potentially) indispensably beneficial to Catholics who would wish to see the Faith restored in our civilisation. So who is this figure simultaneously regarded as such a historiographical threat by anti-Catholics and yet comparably obscure to Catholics themselves – even those who hail from his own land?

Thomas Becket was born in east London to an essentially middle-class family. As a young man he rapidly rose through the ranks of political society. In 1155, the King Henry II named him Lord Chancellor of England – a position to which *another* saint named Thomas would be elevated nearly 400 years later (but more on that later).

Henry was a man whose primary ambitions and preoccupations were worldly rather than otherworldly. To add to this, contemporaries note his short temper and merciless streak. He put Becket to great use in exacting funds from his subjects. When Becket proved competent at the task, the King nominated his chancellor for the position of Archbishop of Canterbury: Primate of England and thus the highest authority in spiritual matters in his entire kingdom.

Senior clerics had played instrumental roles as partisans in the preceding period of volatility and civil war between the Empress Matilda and Stephen of Blois (his mother and second cousin, respectively) known as ‘the Anarchy’, and Henry had no intention of encountering or tolerating clerical opposition.

As multiple-award-winning philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre describes:

Henry was primarily concerned to increase the royal power ... Becket in turn represented more than the manoeuvrings of ecclesiastical power, however much these preoccupied him. Embedded within the self-assertion of episcopal and papal power was the claim that human law is the shadow cast by divine law.

After what was quite a rushed consecration by contemporary standards, Henry’s plans began to unravel as his former friend and appointee began taking his priesthood and episcopacy rather seriously. Archbishop Becket became a noted ascetic (leading a rigorous life of mortification and prayer)

and, more crucially, a firm defender of the Church’s rights.

An inevitable conflict ensued. Hilaire Belloc summarises the events pithily:

[Archbishop Becket] was asked to admit certain changes in the status of the clergy. The chief of these changes was that men attached to the Church in any way even by minor orders (not necessarily priests) should, if they committed a crime amenable to temporal jurisdiction, be brought before the ordinary courts of the country instead of left, as they had been for centuries, to their own courts. The claim was, at the time, a novel one. [Archbishop Becket] resisted that claim ... and within a short time he was murdered by his exasperated enemies.

After his knights had (apparently) misinterpreted the King’s remark – something along the lines of ‘will no one rid me of this turbulent priest?’ – Thomas was assassinated inside Canterbury Cathedral. For St Thomas’ part, he greeted his end with full resignation and preparedness, explicitly welcoming his assassins by ordering that the barred door to the cathedral they were attempting to break down be opened. He made no attempt to flee. Moments before the fatal blow, he proclaimed: ‘For the name of Jesus and the protection of the church, I am ready to embrace death’.

The monk Edward Grim, an eyewitness who was wounded in the affair, tersely describes how the knights ‘scattered across the floor’ St Thomas’ brains and ‘purpled’ the Church by cleaving at his body.

What was the effect of such a callous and scandalous act of regal and civil thuggery?

First, the speed at which the populations of Europe rallied to St Thomas, both literally and figuratively, was remarkable. Little has ever been seen like it. Almost immediately, Canterbury became one of the most visited sites in Europe as Christians were eager to venerate the relics of such a brazen martyr. Belloc argues this should be little mystery: the regular layman knew that his surest guarantee of liberty against the oppression of the rich and powerful was the Church and her morality. Hundreds of thousands

flocked to the relics of one of the swords used in the assassination and a part of St Thomas’ skull that had been sliced off. Recorded miracles came rolling in at an extraordinary rate.

Second, in death, like Our Lord, St Thomas won. Belloc correctly insists that although specific arrangements over which the archbishop made his stand (namely the answerability of clergy to secular courts) were eventually waived, this is unimportant. He explains:

To challenge the new claims of civil power at that moment was to save the Church ... the spirit in which [St Thomas] fought was a determination that the Church should never be controlled by the civil power, and the spirit against which he fought was the spirit which either openly or secretly believes the Church to be an institution merely human, and therefore naturally subjected, as an inferior, to the processes of the monarch’s (or, worse, the politician’s) law.

What happened next was astonishing – and quite unimaginable in any other social order than a Catholic one. The high and mighty were brought low. The proud were humbled. MacIntyre writes of Henry II: ‘For more than a year before ... reconciliation [with the Church and Pope], immediately on hearing of Becket’s death, he took to his own room, in sackcloth and ashes and fasting; and two years later he did public penance at Canterbury and was scourged by the monks’. In contrition and from his own pocket, the King funded the construction of a breathtaking chapel at the centre of London Bridge dedicated to Becket that which was one of the architectural wonders of Christendom for centuries.

Becket’s victory was such that despite occasional small skirmishes here and there, the civil authorities across Europe would bow their heads to the Church’s independence and de facto supremacy for nearly 400 years – allowing Christian civilisation to flourish and flower through the High Middle Ages.

Belloc was not overstating the scale of the conflict between Church and State that had been raging until Becket. Only two generations prior, in



1076, the Church had similarly emerged victorious at Canossa after a similar standoff. The Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV knelt in the snow to beg Pope St Gregory VII's forgiveness for trying to insist on his right to nominate a wide range of clerical offices (the 'investiture conflict').

The principle for which Becket died – that *no one*, not even *kings*, was above divine law – was reversed at the advent of modernity. As the 'Reformation' progressed, civil rulers were again enticed (as their forebears had been) by the prospect of total independence and control of religious affairs within their realms. Albert of Prussia, Christian III of Denmark, Gustav I of Sweden, and (perhaps most crucially) Henry VIII of England seized such power for themselves – embracing schism and heresy.

This time, the martyrs in the vein of St Thomas Becket would not halt or turn back the tide.

In a mysterious parallel, in 1534 *another* St Thomas (a layman this time) defied the self-elevation and flouting of superior religious authority by *another* King Henry.

St Thomas More was known to be one of the most diligent and morally upstanding men in the realm. A lawyer by trade, as Lord Chancellor he found himself unable to recognise the King's divorce and his adulterous relationship with Lady Anne Boleyn – which enraged his hitherto dear friend the King. Imprisoned in the Tower of London, moments before his execution and beheading he serenely summarised the ordered hierarchy of just loyalties a good Christian should hold (and against which modernity was revolting): 'I die the King's good servant, but God's first'.

Christian civilisation was being turned on its head and the beginning of a more secular order we recognise – in which the politician and autocrat's power is total and replaces the absolute allegiance owed to God – was emerging. With the revolt of Henry VIII and his contemporaries, established ecclesiastical authorities in Protestant lands could no longer challenge and subdue the tyranny of civil power.

The widespread devotion to St Thomas Becket across Europe signified an embarrassment and quiet challenge. Henry VIII was only too conscious of this.

Under Henry's orders, as historian Alec Ryrie notes: '[St Thomas Becket's] shrine was pulverised [and] a royal proclamation ordered that all memory of him should be extinguished from the English Church – statues, paintings, windows, services all had to go'. According to some sources, St Thomas' bones were exhumed and put on trial, found guilty, and discarded. Such was the threat the dead archbishop posed. St Thomas represented the antithesis to the Reformers' and secularists' designs.

The smearing described in *The Times* was part of the historiographical offensive launched by Henry VIII, his minister Cromwell, and his Archbishop Cranmer. But what significance does this have for us today?

Though the spirit and body are distinct – and must be each nourished in their respective ways – they are hypostatically united in the human person, and must work alongside one another to the same end (the flourishing of the person), respecting the other's needs in attaining this goal. At a societal level, the body represents politics and the temporal sphere and secular life; the spirit represents the Church and the Faith, as Pope Leo XIII likened them. They must work together to the same end.

One of the triumphs of modernity has been to relegate religion entirely to the private realm. This enables evils in society to be first tolerated then fester and swell that never otherwise could.

Modernity attempts to make a 'liberal distinction between law and morality', as MacIntyre says. How often do we hear the Christian politician leave morality to the individual and private judgement to deflect while legislating to permit unspeakable evils such as abortion? St Thomas Becket defended the order where no such distinction was possible.

None of this is to say what's realistic for our times. We must work respectfully with the authorities to which Divine Providence has subjected us. However, we ought not lose sight of *the ideal* – and should pray for the return of a time when heads of state were subjected to God and the Pope, sanctity was more abundant, and Jesus Christ was given the private *and* public dues and influence over laws to which He is entitled.

It is a *supreme irony* that the nation that produced the martyr *par excellence* for the defence of the old order should adopt a state religion in Anglicanism and help export the secular order that is its opposite to the far corners of the earth.

It is also amusing that Protestants will frequently complain that the Church was corrupted with the conversion of Constantine and the early easing of relations between Church and State (even though over the course of the subsequent hundred years or so that that State even survived the two entities rarely got on perfectly), when the Protestant revolution itself was founded upon the principle that religious leaders should kowtow to kings. The earliest and to date largest Protestant institutions – in the Church of England and the Lutheran Churches of the Nordic countries – still do.

Perhaps, as the martyrdom of one St Thomas placated one tyrannical Henry and saved the unity and order of Christendom for generations (yet the parallel events of their namesakes did not), the countrymen and Faithful who lost their devotion to a certain martyr following the fracturing of Christendom shall rediscover it before its restoration.

*Sancte Thomæ Cantuariensis, ora pro nobis.* ⑥

# Liturgical Music and the Old Mass in Australia

by Anthony Bailey

One of the benefits of the revival of the Traditional Mass in Australia has been a corresponding revival of traditional liturgical music. This of course is not a phenomenon exclusive to Australia, but it is particularly apparent here, partly because it makes a marked change in the overall standard of Australian Catholic church music, which, except in several cathedrals, has never been high.

Even before the changes effected after the Second Vatican Council, and the wholesale introduction of American folk ditties in the guise of 'liturgical song', the repertoire in the typical Australian Catholic parish was restricted – if there was any music at all – to a few traditional devotional hymns. Here and there an oratorio might have been attempted at Christmas and Easter but Gregorian chant seldom or never. The bigger metropolitan cathedrals presented competent choral music in a range of styles – the choir of St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne, whose genesis was a visiting Vienna Boys' Choir stranded in Australia by the outbreak of the Second World War, was renowned for its quality under the inspired direction of the Reverend Dr Percy Jones – but to the average Catholic in the parishes the vast range of European liturgical music, and especially polyphony, was a sealed book. You were more likely to hear examples of the Church's musical patrimony at a concert than in church.

That there is now a network of around sixty Traditional Masses in Australia, in most dioceses only marginally disturbed by the detonation of *Traditionis Custodes*, thanks to episcopal goodwill, must be considered an act of divine grace, as well as a credit to the priests and communities who established and attended them. It is on account of the larger among these communities, those in the state metropolitan capital cities, with the resources of choir and organ, that the



*The schola at the Newman Parish (St Aloysius', Caulfield) singing at a Solemn Mass*

fine music representative of the range of Catholic tradition can now be more widely heard in Australia, properly performed in a liturgical context. Indeed, one parish, the Maternal Heart of Mary (a neo-Baroque former hospital chapel) in the inner-Sydney suburb of Lewisham (served by the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter), has *three* choirs: a Schola Cantorum of men, a mixed choir, and Our Lady of Ransom's women's choir, which is believed to be the only all-female Early Music liturgical choir in the Southern Hemisphere. The parish has two Sung Masses on a Sunday and Sung Vespers with Benediction every last Sunday of the month. Their musical range is wide, with Gregorian chant, sacred polyphony, motets, and hymns.

In Melbourne, a principal centre for the celebration of the Latin Mass is the Parish of St John Henry Newman at St Aloysius' Church, Caulfield – a large and imposing Gothic Revival church that celebrates its centenary this year. The parish choir is a dedicated group of singers who are learning the art of sacred music. The main part of their

work is to sing for the Sunday Solemn Mass. The choir has a new choirmaster, David Duckett, who has himself been singing with the choir for a number of years. At present there are sixteen singers, but the choir is expanding in numbers – and also in repertoire. The choir sings for the Sunday Solemn Mass, where the normal arrangement is for the choir to sing the propers and choir and congregation together to sing such parts of the Mass as the Kyrie and the Credo. In Lent, Easter, and Christmastide a schola sings Vespers on Sundays.

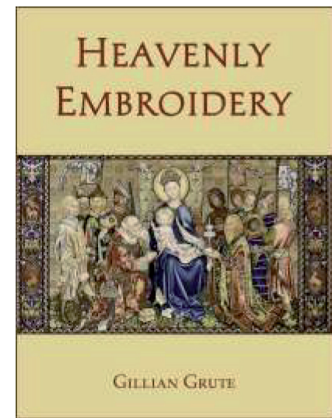
St Aloysius' has a fine J.W. Wolff organ originally built in 1880, installed in the church in 2010, and blessed that year on Gaudete Sunday, 12th December. The parish's first principal organist was inducted the same day.

Even before it became the Newman Parish, St Aloysius' was unusual among Australian parish churches in having a long musical tradition. Miss Ellie Davin, who was organist and choirmistress for almost fifty years, beginning in 1950, always sought to maintain the Church's heritage of sacred music at St Aloysius'.

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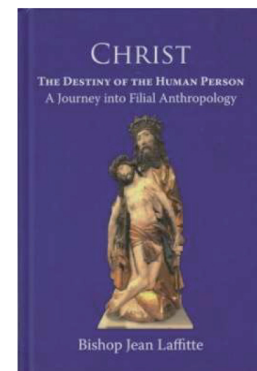


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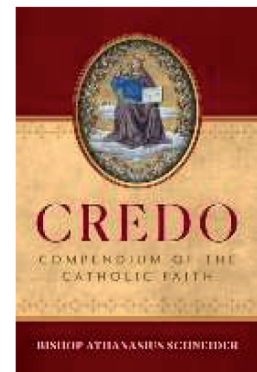


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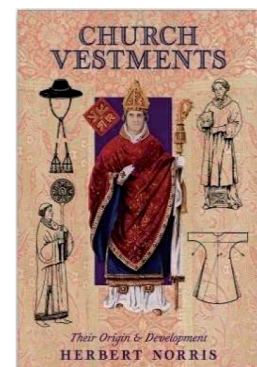


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The Newman Parish promotes sacred music outside the liturgy as well. In November 2023, the parish presented its inaugural oratorio, *Praise and Lamentations: A Concert of Sacred Choral Music*, with works by Lotti, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and others. The oratorio was an evangelistic initiative, and parishioners were encouraged to invite non-Catholics who might have been unwilling to attend a Mass. (You can hear recordings of the St Aloysius' choir at <https://newmanparish.org/sacred-music.html>.)

In Queensland, in Australia's north, the Brisbane Oratory in Formation is a flourishing centre for the Latin Mass. The Oratorians, established seven years ago as a congregation under the guidance of the Confederation of the Oratory in Rome, have charge of the fine church of Mary Immaculate in the suburb of Annerley. In 2021 their first new priest was ordained by the Archbishop of Brisbane.

The Oratory's music program, drawing comprehensively on the Church's resources of sacred music, follows the inspiration of St Philip Neri, who founded the Oratory in the sixteenth century, promoting and restoring sacred music to help people experience God through musical harmony. The Brisbane Oratory Vespers Schola, a professional choir, sings weekly Sunday Vespers with Latin psalmody, ancient hymns, polyphonic music, and English and Latin motets. It sings a weekly *Novus Ordo* Mass with traditional hymns, as well as



Brisbane Oratory choir singing at 2023 Lessons and Carols Service

more recent Australian compositions in a traditional style. All of these are accompanied by the Oratory's professional organist.


The Brisbane Oratory holds free Musical Oratories throughout the year 'to share the power and beauty of sacred music'. In November 2023, it presented a concert of music of John Byrd and Thomas Weelkes in the 400th year since Byrd's death.

In the Archdiocese of Adelaide, South Australia, Latin Masses are celebrated at the Church of the Holy Name in Stepney, served by the Priestly Fraternity of St

Peter. The Fraternity was invited in 2008 by the then Archbishop, Philip Wilson, to assume responsibility for the community. The current chaplain is Fr Michael McCaffrey, FSSP. It is a thriving parish with over 300 Mass-goers each Sunday.

There are two choirs in the parish: the Holy Name Schola and the Men's Schola. The Holy Name sings at the 9:15 a.m. Solemn Mass on Sundays, at Easter and Christmas, and in Holy Week and other feasts throughout the year. Its repertoire comprises sacred polyphony from both modern and ancient composers.

The Men's Schola sings at the 8:30 a.m. Sung Mass on Saturday mornings and on Sunday mornings joins the Holy Name Schola. The Men's Schola also assists the priests in chanting Vespers on Sunday nights. The choirs at Holy Name, in addition to their primary objective of enhancing the beauty of the liturgy, make a valuable musical contribution to Adelaide, a city known for its varied cultural life.

There are a number of other Australian parishes and Latin Mass communities with a *Missa Cantata* on Sundays. For further information, please visit the Latin Mass Directory website at <https://www.latinmassdir.org/country/au>. 



The choir at the Newman Parish in the choir loft at St Aloysius', Caulfield. David Duckett (second from left) was recently appointed Director of Music

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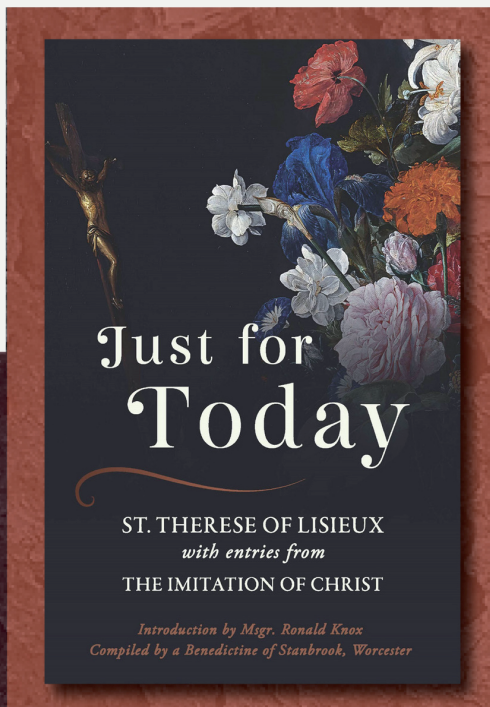


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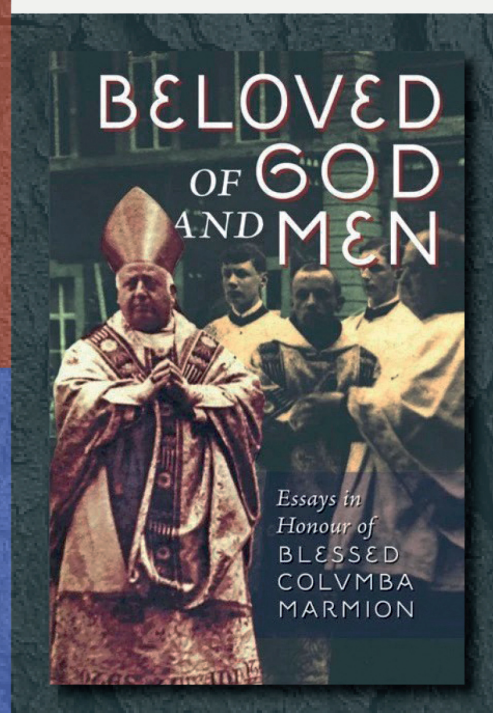
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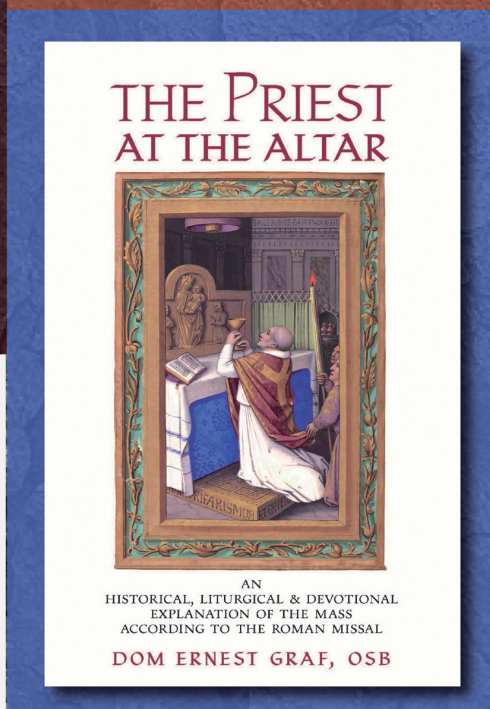


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# A Traditional Catholic School in Nigeria

by Uchenna Okezie


On 2nd October 2023, we started a school for the children in the village and I am in charge of running it. We have forty-three boys and girls aged three to fifteen. The patron saint of the school is St Therese of the Child Jesus, and we are blessed to have Fr Angelo Van der Putten, FSSP, as our chaplain. We also have Fr Charles Ike, FSSP, and six former sisters of the Franciscans of the Immaculate among our sixteen teachers. The boys' school is separate from that of the girls', and so far it has been quite a joy seeing their eyes light up and watching them learning how to read and learning Catechism, Grammar, Math, Science, Geography, Art, Music, Literature, Bible History, Igbo, and sports.





The Catholic Faith is young here. It was just about 100 years ago that Irish missionaries came and converted us, and they were sent away by the military government in the early 1970s. Most Catholics today do not know about the Latin Mass. Forming Catholics who are truly balanced and seeking virtue has been the goal of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter here, especially over the last ten years. The mission of Una Voce Nigeria, therefore, is hampered by the need to first achieve unity in seeking the True, the Good, and the Beautiful. We

refuse to pander to the more popular position of ideological indifferentism or to side with one of the larger groups. So the growth of our apostolate is relatively slow because many traditional Catholics in Nigeria have not practically accepted our leadership. We understand this and we are focusing on building a Catholic community one place at a time, and nurturing Catholic culture one marriage at a time.

*Uchenna Okezie is the President of Una Voce Nigeria.* 

# A Meditation on the Last Gospel

by Dickson Leong, Traditional Mass Society of Malaysia

The gift of Redemption, epitomized in the unbloody renewal of Christ's Passion in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, never ceases to draw us to penetrate the symbolism and beauty of its ceremonies. Of all the ceremonies of the Mass, perhaps the most easily overlooked part is the Last Gospel. When I attended my first Traditional Mass years ago as a teenager, I found the Last Gospel to be the most puzzling element since the presence of a second Gospel reading is completely alien to the revised liturgy after the Second Vatican Council. This, combined with the fact that the Last Gospel comes at the very end of the traditional liturgy, is the reason why it is often underappreciated and not well understood. Worse still, there are those who see it as a pesky post-Tridentine accretion to be excised from the liturgy altogether, which evidently has happened in the liturgical reforms. A defence is thus necessary, which I will attempt to provide in this article.

The origins of the Last Gospel can be traced to the Middle Ages. The great restorer of the French Benedictines, Dom Gueranger, says: 'Why is this reading made? The custom originates from the Middle Ages. At that period, as in earlier times also, the faithful had a great devotion to the having a portion of the Gospel read over them, and the commencement of that of St John was a special favourite. Demands at last became so multiplied, that the number of priests was insufficient to satisfy all: to simplify the matter, it was decided to recite it over all those assembled, at the end of the Mass. The devotion of the faithful, therefore, alone originated this addition'.<sup>1</sup>

This may seem to be a rather odd devotion to modern readers, but the concept is not as bizarre as one might initially think. As Catholics, we are well aware of how sacramentals such as rosaries, sacred images, scapulars, medals, and crosses are signs of God's protection for those

who use them devoutly. These holy objects are universally treasured as instruments that convey God's blessings. Sacramentals also include the blessings given by priests, and any other sacred sign that instils piety in the people. Through the use of sacramentals, we are able to receive actual grace, which in turn disposes us and prepares us to receive sanctifying grace in the Sacraments. In this context, it is easier to understand why people of the Middle Ages not only desired to listen to the Gospels often (most people could not afford Bibles at that time) but also saw the reading of the Gospels by priests as a means by which God imparted His blessings to them, analogous to how blessings are given from the consecrated hands of priests.

As Dom Gueranger noted, the beginning of St John's Gospel was the favourite reading that was used as the Last Gospel. This Gospel reading is taken from the Day Mass of Christmas, and its primary theme is the Incarnation of Christ. Although the Last Gospel does not always have to be the prologue of St John (there are different readings of the Last Gospels for certain occasions, especially in the pre-1962 liturgy), it is the most fitting and commonly used text on account of its sublimity and depth. The special esteem for St John's prologue is very ancient, for even St Augustine favoured that the opening of St John's Gospel 'should be written in letters of gold, and hung up in all churches in the most conspicuous place'.<sup>2</sup>

St John begins: '*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*'. The opening of the Gospel powerfully lifts the mind and sets it upon the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. The use of the term 'Word' here obviously does not refer to the Scriptures but to Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who is the summit of divine revelation. The profundity of St John's Gospel on the divinity of Christ is why St John is associated with the

symbol of the eagle, for the eagle soars to the skies, just as John's Gospel lifts our minds to the sublime consideration of Christ's divinity.

*All things were made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made*. Although the work of Creation is most fittingly ascribed to God the Father, all three Persons of the Blessed Trinity worked to create the world, since the Three Persons are of one substance and their work is never truly separated from one another.

*In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it*. The shining of the light over darkness reminds us that despite the fall of mankind, Our Lord does not abandon us, but instead He wills to save us and bring us out of the darkness of sin and of slavery to the evil one. This verse is the reason why this Gospel passage is sometimes read as a prayer of deliverance from evil. Coming back to the medieval view of Gospel readings as instruments of blessing, the *Rituale Romanum* still recommends that priests read the prologue of St John when they visit the sick, since the final agony of a person is the hour of greatest temptation by the devil.

*There was a man sent from God, whose name was John*. This verse speaks of St John the Baptist, not the Evangelist. *He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light*. This is a beautiful reminder of the humility needed as Christians. It can be so easy for us to get carried away and end up turning the faith into a means of self-gratification to promote our own interests. However, this verse is a reminder to imitate the abasement of Christ, Who came not to be served but to serve, for the greater glory of God.

1. Dom Gueranger, *Explanation of the Prayers and Ceremonies of Holy Mass*
2. St Augustine, *City of God*, Book X, Chapter 29



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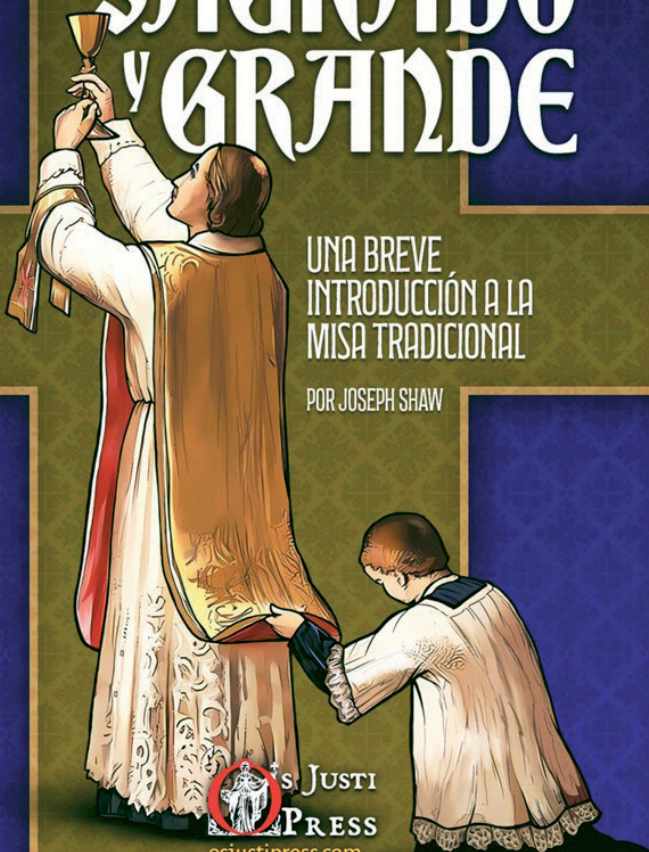
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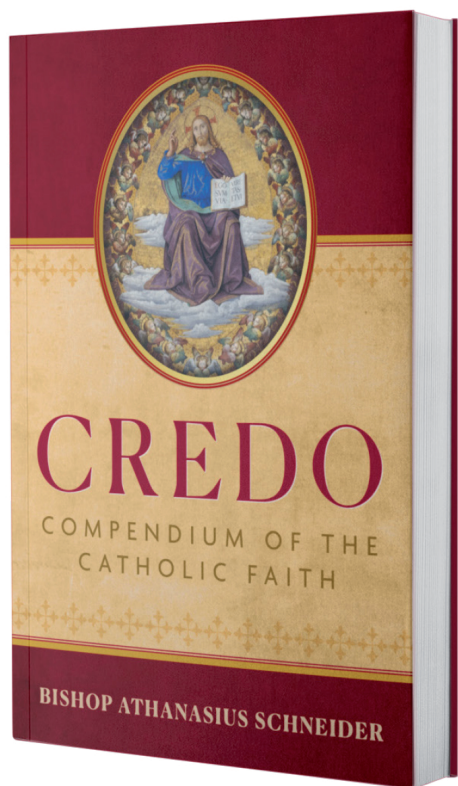


*Last Gospel at Milton Manor House, 2018, with Fr Anthony Conlon*

*‘That the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.’* How sad it is that so many in the world either do not know Christ or voluntarily choose not to receive Him.

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*‘But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God’. God’s grace not only saves us from eternal death but also grants us a divine participation in God’s life. We should never give up our divine sonship by exchanging it for the vain pleasures of sin.*

*‘To them that believe in his name; who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God’. It can be so easy at times to take our faith for granted, especially those of us who were raised in a Catholic household. However, we must not make the mistake of thinking that the reason we are Christians is simply because our parents were Christian, or because we came from a country that is culturally Christian; rather, each one of us is loved by God, Who first called us to share in His divine life through grace. Hence Our Lord taught us: ‘You have not chosen me: but I have chosen you’ (Jn 15: 16). And although we are called to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, we should never become prideful and credit our ability to persevere in the faith to our own strength, but we must always remember that grace is gratuitously given by God. Cut off from Him, we can do nothing.*

*‘And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us’. This is one of the most striking verses in Christian piety since it is also found in the Angelus prayer. The fact that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity took on human nature is a stupendous event, and together with the doctrine of the Trinity constitutes the two greatest mysteries of the faith. This verse is why this Gospel is sung at the Christmas Mass in the Day, since the invisible was made visible when the Messiah came forth from the womb of the Blessed Virgin. Similarly, at Holy Mass, the invisible God also becomes visible and tangible under the forms of bread and wine. The link between Transubstantiation and the Incarnation is why the Church uses the Preface of the Nativity during the Mass of Corpus Christi in the pre-1962 liturgy. This verse reminds us of what has taken place in the Mass, and thus it is easy to see why the prologue of St John is such a fitting reading for the Last Gospel.*

*‘And we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth’. This verse ends the prologue of St John when used as the Last Gospel reading. It is a fitting end to*

the Gospel passage, since it summarizes the earthly ministry of the Word of God. In His priestly prayer at the Last Supper, Jesus cried out: ‘I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do’ (Jn 17: 4). The glory of God is manifested most significantly in His love for us, and the greatest display of that love was the Crucifixion. This is why Our Lord said: ‘The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified’ (Jn 12: 23). The hour of glory, in which the love and obedience of the Messiah most eminently showed forth, was the hour in which He hung upon the Cross. Thus, the Mass, which renews this sacrifice in an unbloody manner, also gives great glory to God. We who are witnesses of that glory are also called to bear witness to Him through a holy life.

Taken as a whole, the prologue of St John summarizes the entire Gospel. The reading begins by illustrating the transcendence of the Word, while the end of the reading, in speaking of the Word becoming flesh, speaks of His immanence in the world. The middle of the reading encapsulates the need to accept the Word and to bear witness to Him in our lives. When this reading is used as the Last Gospel, it reminds us of the commission Our Lord has entrusted to the Church – to preach Him to all the nations and to baptize them. The prologue of St John, when used as the Last Gospel, thus evokes a sense of the missionary character of the Church Militant.

The next time you go to church and hear this reading at the Last Gospel, whether it is read audibly at a Low Mass or inaudibly at a High Mass, be sure to evoke in yourselves the most tender sentiments of love for Our Eucharistic Lord, Who has just moments ago descended upon the altar and into our souls in Holy Communion. Piously meditate upon the words of the Last Gospel, and at the words ‘et verbum caro factum est’, bend the knee with the greatest reverence in memory of the abasement of the Word at the Incarnation. Consider also the Last Gospel as a sacramental, and be mindful that the benedictional character of the Last Gospel should also transform us into instruments that God uses to impart His blessings upon the world. ⑥



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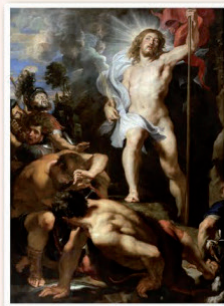
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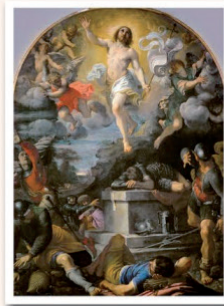
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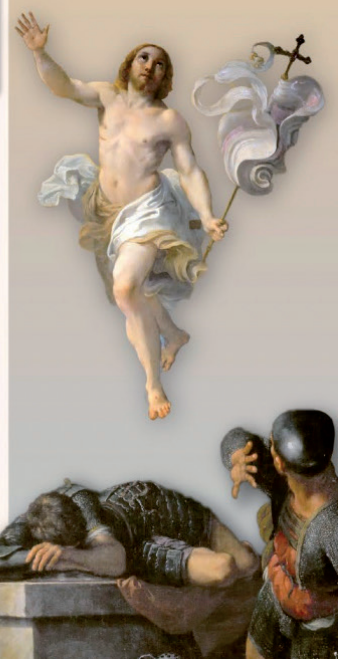
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# T.S. Eliot and Tradition

by Robert Lazu Kmita

Published towards the end of 2023, Joseph Shaw's work *The Latin Mass and the Intellectuals* is, for me, as captivating a read as a detective novel by Arthur Conan Doyle or Gilbert Keith Chesterton. Its rich content of information and ideas, articulated in an elegantly written text, qualifies it as a must-read for all those interested in the fate of the Roman Catholic Liturgy and Christian Tradition. The multitude of theological, philosophical, liturgical, and historical issues discussed by the author allows for various perspectives. Given its importance, I decided from the first reading to give it an extensive review. Until its completion, in this article, I opt for a 'cross-cutting' approach, focusing on one of the most important modern poets, writers, and critics: T.S. Eliot (1888–1965).

My personal interest in Eliot is, first and foremost, of an aesthetic nature. I read the Anglo-American author's poems with an emotion comparable to that provoked by the works of William Butler Yeats, Tudor Arghezi, Ezra Pound, Adrian Popescu, or Gabriel Chifu. Alongside the joy of encountering a true 'craftsman' of words, there is also a motivation linked to the depth of his conceptual texts. The margins of the pages of my personal volume of Eliot's essays are filled with notes and comments. I read and learn, like a student in the university lecture halls.

The lines that Joseph Shaw has dedicated to him reveal sympathies – both aesthetic and intellectual – similar to mine. He does not hesitate to talk about Eliot and 'his modernist masterpiece, *Four Quartets*,<sup>1</sup> which he describes as 'a work of art at once technically brilliant, beautiful, and the expression of traditional spiritual values'.<sup>2</sup> His interest and genuine appreciation for the poet of 'the waste land' are not, however, solely of an aesthetic nature. For 'the nature of and justification for artistic modernism is explored in Eliot's superb *Four Quartets*', from which he quotes those verses that suggest the motives behind the poet's attitude:



That was a way of putting it – not very satisfactory:

A periphrastic study in a worn-out poetical fashion,  
Leaving one still with the intolerable wrestle  
With words and meanings.<sup>3</sup>

And yet, despite his modernism, Eliot is an authentic lover of 'tradition'. As in the case of other thinkers and writers presented in Shaw's book, the reasons for his adoption of such an intellectual stance seem obscure and sophisticated. After all, the ways of Holy Providence are mysterious.

What surprised me is that the portrait sketched in the discussed volume appears even more than that of a 'conservative' author. In some moments, eloquently described, Eliot can be cautiously categorized as a 'traditionalist' in biblical and liturgical matters. As Dr Shaw is a true encyclopaedia with regard to all the liturgical discussions and debates of the last century, here is what he reveals about Eliot:

Invited onto a committee to discuss the revision of the Psalms for use in worship, he proved to be the most stubborn traditionalist present, even more so than his committee

colleague C.S. Lewis. Lewis, an artistic traditionalist, had always disliked Eliot's poetry, but became friends with him through this collaboration.<sup>4</sup>

For those familiar with the poet's work, testimonies like this might be surprising. However, the exegesis dedicated to modern literature and poetry has meticulously documented the 'intellectual turn' that occurred after Eliot's conversion. Some go so far as to say that, in fact, the way he understood the notion of 'tradition' was directly influenced by Christian teaching. Here is what Stephen Spender, for example, asserts:

Eliot's own opinions are not merely related to his poetry. They qualify his whole critical attitude, and they make him to some extent a preacher. His aim as a writer has been to be a traditionalist, the tradition which he has adopted, being derived from the Church, has also sociological and educative implications. It is his object to show that the application of these principles in social life is as just as it is correct to apply them to literature.<sup>5</sup>

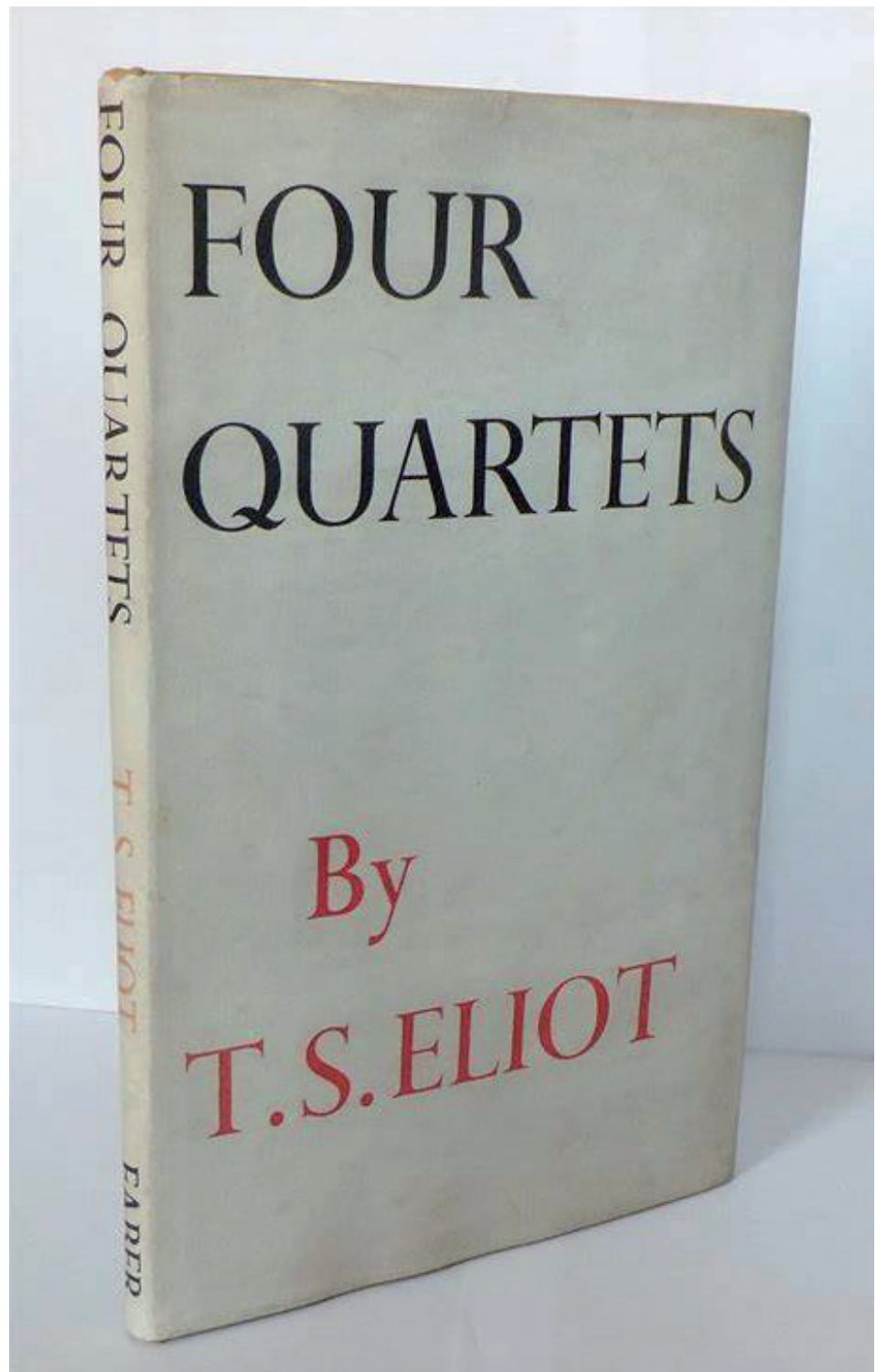
Discovering all these things, I myself was surprised. Knowing Eliot primarily from anthologies of modern poetry or editions of his works, I had detected a certain 'hint' of religious themes in some of his creations. However, I had never suspected that he had developed extensive explanations of literary Tradition that confirm the description given by Spender. The most significant surprise occurred recently when, for the first time, I read an anthology of his essays. In the first of them, I found a substantial passage in which Eliot discusses the notion of 'tradition'. The quote, which I present in its entirety below, decisively shaped the essay you are currently reading:

Yet if the only form of tradition, of handing down, consisted in following the ways of the immediate generation before us in a blind or timid adherence to its successes, 'tradition' should positively be discouraged. We have seen many such simple currents soon lost in the sand; and novelty is better than repetition. Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited,

and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to any one who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year; and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature

of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. This historical sense, which is a

1. Joseph Shaw, ed., *The Latin Mass and the Intellectuals: Petitions to Save the Ancient Mass from 1966 to 2007*, foreword by Martin Mosebach (Arouca Press, 2023), 269.
2. *Ibid.*, 289.
3. *Ibid.*, 284.
4. *Ibid.*, 282.
5. Stephen Spender, *The Destructive Element. A Study of Modern Writers and Beliefs* (London: 1935), 164-65.



sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity.<sup>6</sup>


There are so many important ideas in this text that it is not easy to present them without losing any. Let us take them one by one. First, Eliot argues that being ‘traditional’ does not mean just considering the immediately preceding generation. For a creator, this would, eventually, mean a kind of cheap imitation that should be avoided. However, before telling us what ‘tradition’ means, he insists on the effort required to properly embrace it. If we think strictly about poets, they must have extensive and, above all, complete knowledge of significant authors from all previous generations. The scope of the effort is evident from the explicit mention of the beginnings: we start from Homer and ascend to our times, traversing Greek and Latin lyric, then the creations from early Christianity and the Middle Ages, followed by the Renaissance, and finally the modern world. If we truly want to communicate with the poetic tradition, we must dive, like deep-sea explorers, to the lowest layers of the world of beautiful words. The most important part, however, comes now.

The crucial concept around which Eliot’s reflections are developed is that of ‘historical sense’. This involves the ability to ‘slide’ between different historical periods and moments so that what was created in the past somehow resonates in the present. Indeed, one of the exceptional features of literature and poetry arises from what we could call their ‘timeless horizon’. When we read a poem by Pindar, a dialogue by Plato, the *Confessions* of St Augustine, Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, or any of Shakespeare’s plays, we step out of our time to meet the content of the experiences of those who lived once. The temporal horizon to which the reader has access is not that of the content of the work being read, nor that of the author, nor their own. It is a temporal horizon of that ‘world’ that unfolds before his astonished and delighted eyes. It is the ‘poetic time’ (or ‘narrative time’) in which the content of any work woven from words unfolds. Lived appropriately, this time could be, similar to liturgical time, a foretaste of eternity, of that *nunc stans* that concerned St Augustine.

In Eliot’s conception, the ‘historical sense’ allows the discernment of these temporal horizons, a capacity accompanied by an awareness of the discrete continuity that no one can do without from their predecessors. If we apply this conception to the

liturgical and sacramental continuity, we would easily understand *why* both the Protestant Reformation and the replacement of the Traditional Catholic Liturgy with the Liturgy of Pope Paul VI are profoundly ‘anti-traditional’. Under various pretexts, these ‘revolutions’ ignore not only *continuity* but also *the completeness* of the transmitted content. The ‘historical sense’ of those who carried out these reforms was severely distorted: they perceived only fragmentary and partial content of the countless saints who contributed to the enrichment and, above all, the preservation of a content beyond any individual or community.

The much-invoked principle of ‘updating’ tradition (*aggiornamento*) to the modern context cannot, in any way, according to Eliot’s conception, involve abandoning the content of an era, of an author. We do not become Christians by seeking to ‘adapt’ old content to a new context but by seeking – like a true poet – to express in our current words an experience lived in the proximity of a content that, for thousands of years, has been faithfully transmitted to us. We become what we must be by seeking to resemble as closely as possible those Christians who came before us – in the beginning. And the ultimate (or primordial) model is the God-Man himself, Jesus Christ. Perhaps more vividly expressed, the image is not the ascending one of resurfacing but the descending one of diving in search of the depths that hide the ‘root’ (or origins) of things and of creation.

To the question raised by the classicist Aram Frenkian, ‘*La perfection est-elle au debut ou à la fin?*’ (‘Is perfection at the beginning or at the end?’),<sup>7</sup> we respond, along with St Augustine, that it – the perfection of knowledge – is at the beginning. This is why we are not allowed to ignore anything between us and these beginnings. For any of our predecessors, whether saints or poets, were closer to these beginnings than we are, inhabitants of a twilight world that ignores its roots. 

**T.S. Eliot and other literary figures, many of them artistic modernists, and their support for traditional liturgy, are discussed in**

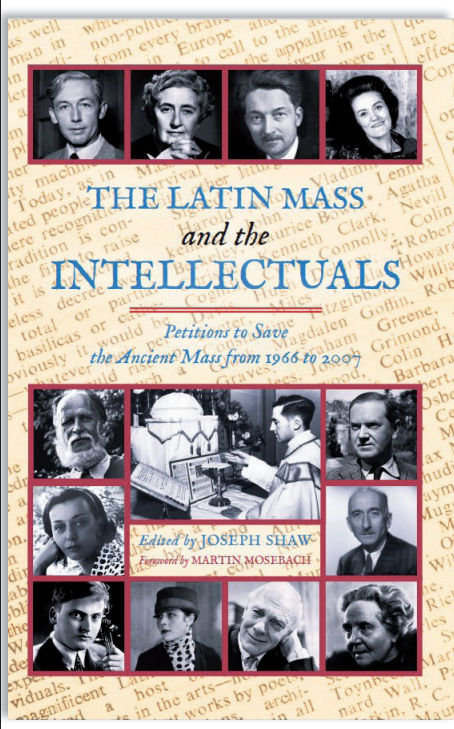
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edited by Joseph Shaw (Arouca Press, 2023)

With a Preface by Martin Mosebach

With contributions from Leo Darroch, Fr Gabriel Diaz Patri, Philip Maxence, Sebastian Morello, Matthew Schellhorn, Joseph Shaw and Erik Tønning

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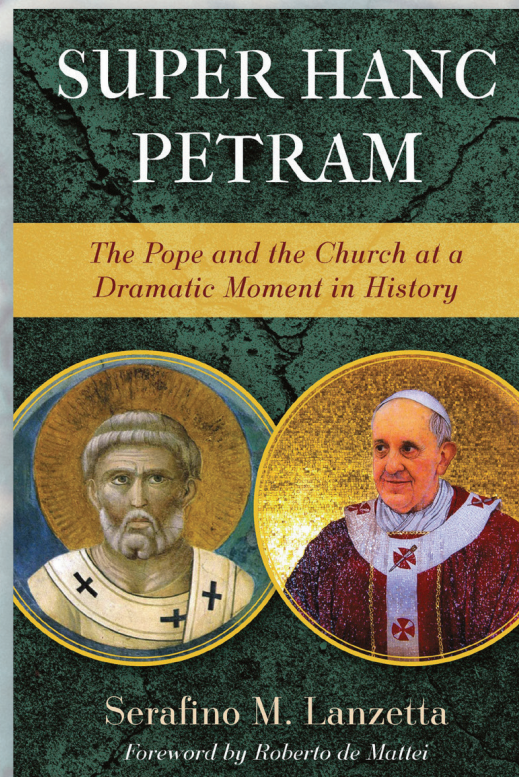
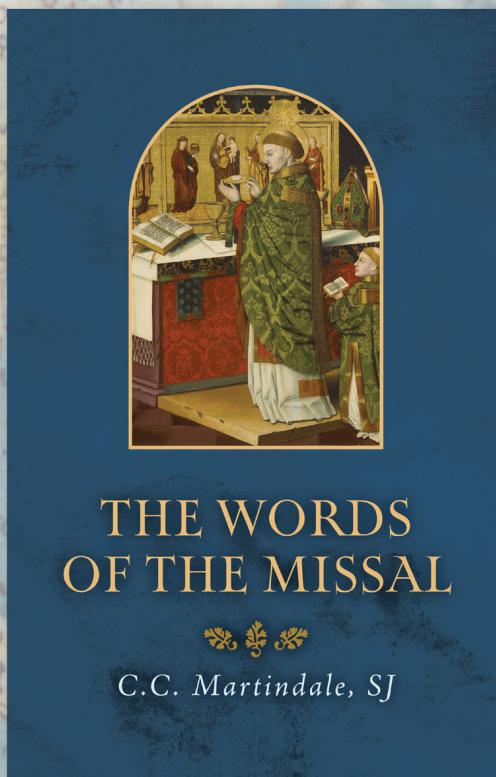
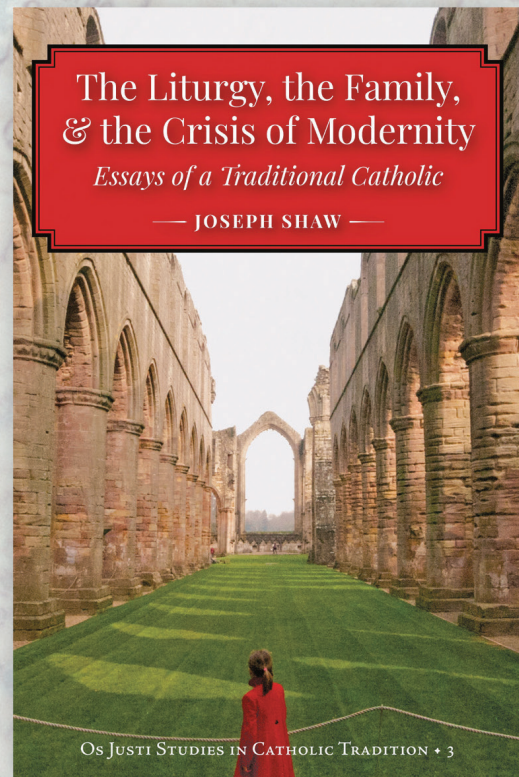
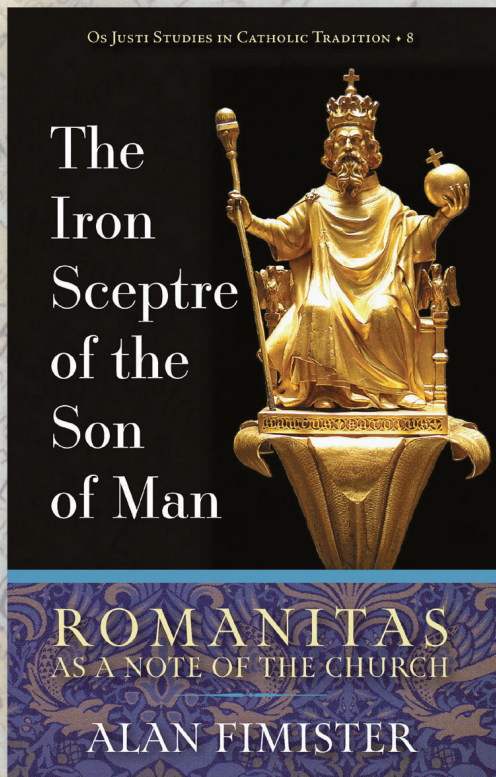


6. T.S. Eliot, *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1964), 4.

7. This key question is the motivation for a short but very interesting study of Greek philosophy titled *Le postulat chez Euclide et chez les modernes* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1940).



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# Sigrid Undset's Genius and Olav's Hallowed Road to Contrition

by Thomas Colsy

Norwegian novelist Sigrid Undset's Nobel Prize-winning *The Master of Hestviken* could be the greatest work of Catholic literature you've never read. I really insist you do and am quite confident you won't regret it.

I here do my best to give it the honours I believe it is due, and of which it has so unjustly and inexplicably been deprived in our era.

Undset was a superbly catechised laywoman and a Third Order Dominican. Writing following her controversial conversion to Catholicism in 1924, the author carefully interposes fragments of her profound knowledge of the spiritual life, and the effects of sin and grace and the mysterious, throughout her saga. This makes her storytelling indelibly unique.

Readers concerned with making a departure from devotional materials to read this volume needn't worry. You will find it hard not to come away a wiser and more Catholic soul than when you began.

In *The Master of Hestviken*, Undset draws the reader quickly into the strange and immersive world of fjords, mountains, pine forests, monasteries, sacraments, marital problems, battleaxes, parenthood, atonement, fish offal, and blood feuds of thirteenth-century Norway.

It is in this milieu that we are introduced to a young Olav Audunsson, an orphaned petty noble, whom we follow from the point when he is taken in by the Steinfinnsson family, through his impetuous youth and his trials as a husband and father, and finally to the grave in this 900-page tetralogy.

It is a tale of life – but throughout that life it remains a story about the deeply Catholic struggle of one man

against his own conscience. After a murder, and the adultery consented to by his weak-willed and sickly wife, duty-bound Olav finds himself at an impasse.

Does he reveal the truth – but in so doing expose his pitiable and vulnerable wife to public disgrace and potentially expose a crime which may leave children without inheritance or shelter? Or does he live a lie and attempt to go it alone – unconfessed and without the aid of God and the sacraments – protecting and providing for his family by the power of his own well-endowed natural strength, diligence, and resourcefulness?

Olav makes the ill-advised choice of the latter path and bears the entirely realistic natural and spiritual consequences of his course. Yet while many things can be said of his poor choices, nobody can claim Olav only walked the wide and easy road. His time at Calvary with his Lord began early.

The ominously titled first book of the tetralogy, *The Axe*, gives us one of the most memorable and immersive openings in all literature (which I cannot rightly spoil), telling the story of Olav's adoption into an initially somewhat reluctant but cheery and well-meaning family which quickly becomes altogether internally cold, morose, embittered, dysfunctional, and distant only shortly after his arrival, thanks to an incident causing public humiliation. Growing up tenuously placed as a foster son of a dynasty which is not his own, his personality takes shape as he learns to be private, helpful, unimposing, and obedient, and to speak only when spoken to.

Soon we are led on to a dreamlike illicit teenage escapade into a nearby town with Ingunn, Olav's foster sister, through heavenly Nordic scenery in the perfectly clear skies and golden budding meadows of Summer – after which the two quickly fall in love. A long series of events tragic and human follow, and Olav finds himself on the run.

The prose is excellent – and I cannot praise enough the 1934 translation by Arthur G. Chater. The entire time, the story is narrated to us in language and style antiquated enough to make it feel we are being told it while gathered 'round a fire. Entirely befitting.

The second and third books are considerably and deliberately less adventurous. Undset, deeply cognisant of the patterns of the spiritual life, counterbalances consolation and desolation – as she does so, more masterfully, with long periods of dryness and moments of encounter and the unexplained.

In the fourth book everything seems to be going wrong and a weary, hardened, now greatly stubborn Olav seems impossible to change. However, in the conclusion no other work has tuned a more beautiful and intelligent ending than this – the seeds of which were planted long before.

Olav's world is enchanted and yet quite unromantic. This is no idealised medieval idyll. It is meticulously researched. The log cabins with their blazing hearths and smoke vents which barely withstand the frozen Nordic winters, the housecarls, the salted meat and fish, the feast days and festivals of the Church, the Nordic saga poetry and dances: all of this immerses us in a realm entirely alien and yet quite familiar.

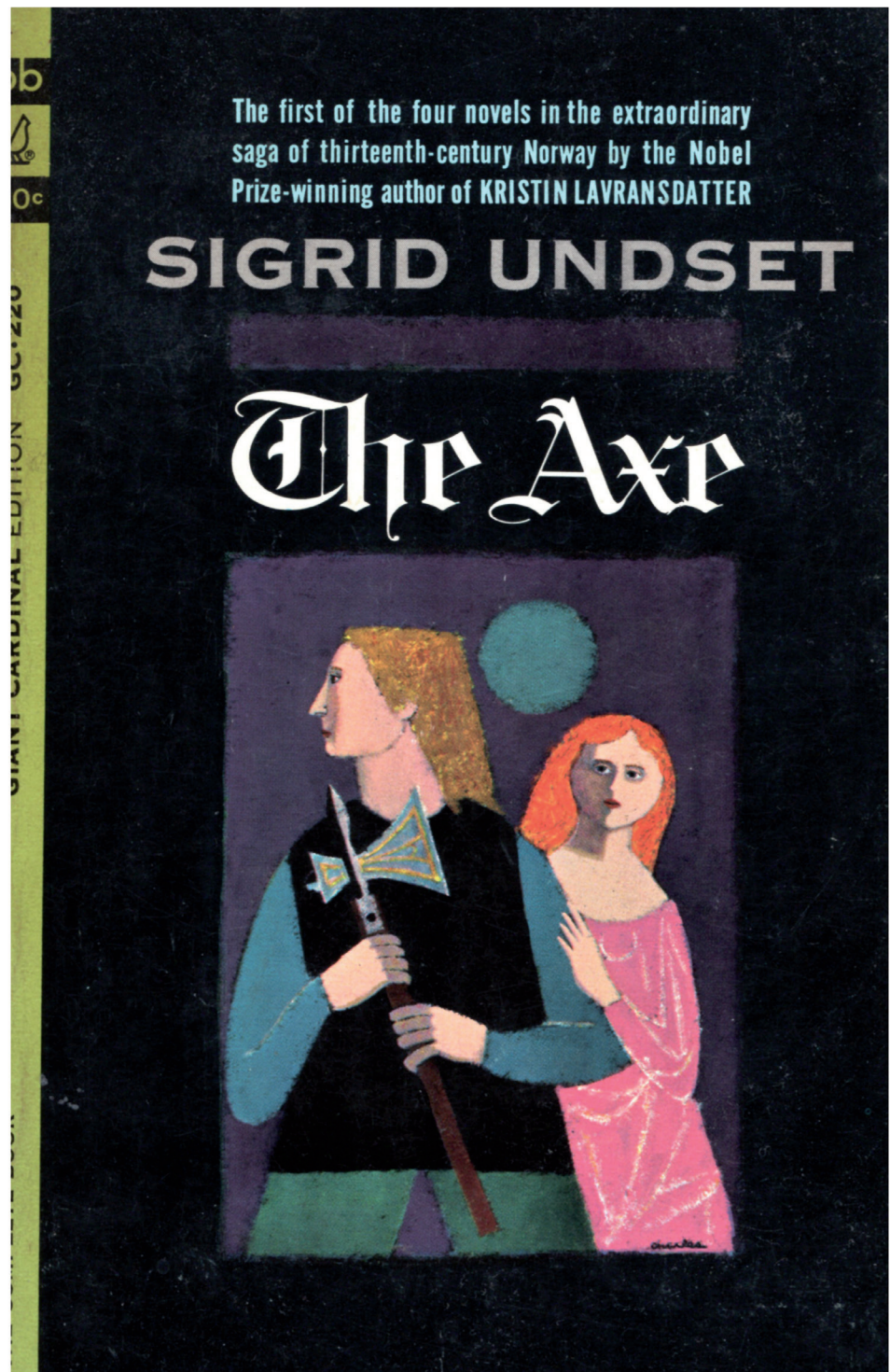
We are landed in a pre-industrial age, but the rhythm of life on the estates of Frettestein and Hestviken in Eastern Norway is simple and sensical. Only here, the summers are more splendid and shorter. The winters are bleaker and unforgiving – and skis are used to get from one town to another. It is a world nonetheless not too dissimilar to the setting from which a million and one fairy tales have begun and perhaps of which we have coded somewhere hidden deep within our consciousness some sort of innate ancestral memory. Perhaps instead the scenes tap into some ethereal platonic form. Olav's, nevertheless, is no fairy tale.

Vengeance. Ghosts. Curses. Romance. Childhood innocence. Masculinity. Angels. Priesthood. Virginity. Jealousy. War. Neglect. Shame. Self-control. Magnanimity. There is little in Olav's odyssey that is not addressed – and addressed profoundly at that. Yet the work is not overambitious. It is the believable chronicle of one man's quite conventional life. It is simultaneously about one's relationship with God, the Church, and neighbour.

The Norway in question is awash with a contradictory mix of genuine Catholic conviction and yet unchristianised barbarism. There are characters of varying piety, from the quietly saintlike, meek, and self-effacing Arnvid (something of an older brother to Olav) to the dissolute nature and non-existent piety of Kolbein (a less than benevolent uncle). In the background, a political conflict over the role and prominence of the Church in Norwegian society is taking place: there are many who see the (relatively) new faith as a nuisance which obfuscates their plans for conquest and gain.

There are also disagreements about the new 'preaching friars' and clerical celibacy – which filters out the more worldly-minded by asking for an initial sacrifice on the part of those who would pray *introibo ad altare Dei*. A nice attention to detail which draws us further into the historical world.

There are plenty of memorable and well-written characters. Ingunn, Olav's long-time romantic interest, is in many ways a foil to him.



While Olav is reserved, thoughtful, diligent, deep, and strong, she is undeliberately inconsiderate, fragile, and flighty.

The various priests and monks Olav meets along the way and from whom he accepts help and patronage – including the elderly Bishop Thorfinn of Hamar (a canonised saint in our timelines), who takes pity on Olav at an important time when his future looked bleak and his dreams dashed – leave a deep impression on our protagonist.

Olav is mesmerised by the Latin, the prayers, the Blessed Sacrament, and the chant – all of which feature prominently throughout the work. (It is not difficult to imagine what Undset would have thought of the liturgical reform.) A robust and manly sort of fellow, he recognises virtue and respects the piety of those around him who possess it. He listens to and seeks their wisdom but is left frustrated, believing he can follow them only so far. He oscillates between a deep desire to be reconciled to his Creator, to be absolved and live righteously, and indignation – convincing himself he doesn't need such a thing, scorning his prayers, and resigning himself to his (self-perceived) reprobate and lost state.

The Catholic reader is left agitating and urging Olav to surrender and resign to divine providence with a *fiat voluntas tua*.

But it is the precarious relationship Olav has with his son, Erik, and not his far more agreeable and beautiful daughter, Cecilia, that emerges as the most pivotal to the meaning of the story. Again, I should not betray how it develops without spoiling some expertly tuned twists, turns, resolutions, and tragedies. Can Olav bring himself to love this difficult child? Can they ever forgive each other? Or will they be each other's downfall?

Olav's weary middle-aged and unfruitful escape to London is one part which endeared the books to me most. We are exposed to a starkly different civilisation from remote Norway. His group moor their ship on the tempestuous medieval Thames (far more subject to the tide than now) and are moved by the

old London Bridge and the dynamic religious-cultural environment around him, including the presence of the Hospitaller and Templar Knights, and processions and music.


There is little I feel the work achieves poorly. As mentioned, there is a deliberate period of desolation, repetitiveness, and dreariness around book two – but stick with it. Life has these periods, and so must Olav's. But as with the passion of Our Lord, the lows must come in order that the victory be greater.

Norway appears to have a funny quirk. Sigrid Undset was not the last Catholic convert and Nobel laureate in literature that the great land of mountains and trolls and fjords would produce. This year, almost a century after her deeply Catholic works attained the international recognition they rightly deserved (and have since lost), John Fosse has repeated that same feat.

But it is not Fosse I am here to discuss. As fantastic as his writing may be, and I am sure it is, he has a great shadow to step out from. I would venture so far to say that so do all writers of fiction, if only they were aware of it. Undset's brilliance may be recondite, but it shouldn't be.

Hers is the most profound and moving work I've ever had the fortune of experiencing. I'm inclined to say it betters the likes of Wilde, Dostoevsky, Tolkien, and Waugh. Finishing this epic, I'm sure you will agree that Undset matches and surpasses the greats. I hope we meet her in heaven.

*Thomas Colsey writes for the UK-based Catholic Herald.*

*The Master of Hestviken* tetralogy by Sigrid Undset was published 1925–27, and comprises *The Axe*, *The Snake Pit*, *In the Wilderness*, and *The Son Avenger*, all translated by Arthur G. Chater. The University of Minnesota Press published a new translation with different titles in 2020; the older translations are available second-hand. 

# Position Paper: Prayers for the Persecuted Church and the Leonine Prayers

*This Position Paper was first published in February 2015, and like all the Federation's Position Papers is included in The Case for Liturgical Restoration (Angelico Press, 2019), edited by Joseph Shaw. They are also available on the FIUV website.*

This paper responds to the heartfelt appeal of Pope Francis:

We are witnessing a phenomenon of terrorism of previously unimaginable dimensions. So many of our brothers and sisters are being persecuted and have had to leave their homes, even in a brutal manner. It seems that awareness of the value of human life has been lost. It seems that the person does not count and can be sacrificed for other interests. And all this, unfortunately, with the indifference of so many.

This unjust situation also requires, in addition to our constant prayer, an appropriate response on the part of the international community. I am certain that, with the Lord's help, today's encounter will result in valid reflections and suggestions in order to help our brothers and sisters who are suffering and in order to face even the tragedy of a reduced Christian presence in the land where Christianity was born and from which it spread.<sup>1</sup>

The current persecution of Christians,<sup>2</sup> which has been likened to a 'global war on Christians', is of particular gravity in the Middle East, but is also acute in parts of Africa and Southeast Asia.

As well as private prayer,<sup>3</sup> Catholics attached to the *usus antiquior* will naturally wish to make use of public and liturgical prayer, the most perfect form of prayer ceaselessly offered to God by the whole Church. There are a number of options, in relation to the *usus antiquior*, that need not be mutually exclusive.<sup>4</sup>



Archbishop Bernard Longely celebrating Pontifical Low Mass in Holy Trinity, Hethe, in 2017.

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## Precedents for the Leonine Prayers

A noteworthy phenomenon of the medieval liturgy was the 'Holy Land Clamor' ('cry') for the liberation of the Holy Land, versions of which were initiated locally and by papal mandate, following the Battle of Hattin in 1187. The first recorded use of a form of this Clamor was in London in 1188, and they continued in use for three centuries.<sup>5</sup> It took place immediately after the *Pax Domini* and before the *Pater Noster*, or else after the *Agnus Dei*; a version could also be said in the Office. It was composed of the psalm *Deus venerunt gentes*, with versicles and a collect. It was omitted on feast days. During the Middle Ages, clamors existed for a number of intentions.

A longstanding precedent for adding prayers to the end of Mass are the Prayers for the Sovereign, *Domine salvum fac*. Where these are said – generally speaking, in countries with Catholic monarchies but also England and Wales – they are said after the principal Mass on a Sunday, whether this is low, sung, or solemn, led by the celebrant before he leaves the sanctuary.

## The history and intentions of the Leonine Prayers

The prayers after low Mass (*Orationes post Missam*) or 'Leonine Prayers' – also, though less accurately, called the 'Prayers for the Conversion of Russia' – were first instituted by Pope Pius IX in 1859, for use in the Papal States. In their original

1. Francis, Address to the Ordinary Public Consistory, 20th October 2014.
2. John Allen, *The Global War on Christians: Dispatches from the Front Lines of Anti-Christian Persecution* (New York: Image Books, 2014).
3. The collect of the commemoration 'For Holy Church against persecutors' was enriched with an indulgence for private recital in 1934: 'Graciously hear the prayers of Thy Church, we beseech Thee, O Lord: that her enemies and all heresies be brought to naught, and that she may serve Thee in perfect security and freedom. Through Christ our Lord. Amen'. This prayer is not included in the *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum* of 1968 or subsequent editions, which are very much shorter than their predecessors. Older collections of indulgenced prayers include a number of other suitable private prayers.
4. In England and Wales, processions are authorized 'in time of war against enemies of Holy Church', with special prayers at their conclusion.
5. For a full discussion, see Amnon Linder, *Raising Arms: Liturgy in the Struggle to Liberate Jerusalem in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2003), 1–95.

form they comprised the Hail Mary (repeated three times), the Salve Regina, and four collects from the Roman missal. The intention of the prayers was the preservation of the Papal States, whose remaining territories were in fact seized by the Kingdom of Italy in 1870.

Pope Leo XIII made the prayers universal in 1884, replacing the four collects with a newly composed collect:

From the year 1859 Pope Pius IX, of holy memory, prescribed that in all the churches of the Papal States, certain prayers, to which he added indulgences, should be recited after the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in order to obtain the help of God needful in times of such difficulty and trial. And as the Catholic Church, surrounded by evils that are always grave (and which threaten imminently to become yet more grave) has so great a need of the special protection of God, our most holy Lord Pope Leo XIII has thought fit that these prayers, slightly altered in parts, should be recited throughout the whole world, that the prayer in common of united Christendom may implore from God that which concerns the good in common of Christianity, and that by an increase in the number of petitioners, the benefits of the Divine Mercy may be more easily obtained. Wherefore, by this present decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, his Holiness has commanded that for the future, in all churches of the City and of the Catholic world, the prayers that follow below, enriched with an indulgence of 300 days, shall be recited, kneeling, at the end of each Mass without music.<sup>6</sup>

In 1886, this collect promulgated in 1884 was substantially rewritten, and to it was added the Prayer to St Michael. A threefold invocation of the Sacred Heart was added by Pope Pius X in 1904.

In this way Pope Leo widened the intention of the prayers, but the sense of necessary defence, for the Church and for her members, remained. The historical context of the prayers was the 'Roman problem' created by the

loss of the temporal power. Following the creation of the Vatican City State in 1929, Pope Pius XI ordered (in 1930) that they henceforth be said 'to permit the tranquillity and freedom to profess the faith to be restored to the afflicted people of Russia'. This intention was reiterated by Pope Pius XII in 1952, who commented: 'We willingly confirm and renew this exhortation and this command, since the religious situation among you up to the present is certainly not improved, and since We are animated by the same most ardent affection and by the same concern for the peoples of Russia'.<sup>7</sup>

It has continuing relevance. Following the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014, Bishop Bohdan Dzyurakh, secretary-general of the Ukrainian Catholic Synod of Bishops, commented:

Greek Catholic communities like ours are denied rights in the Russian Federation, which we see as a violation of freedom of conscience and religion ... We hoped these restrictions wouldn't be applied to our Church in Crimea, but we've been told all religious communities must now re-register there. This means the local government usurps the power to reject those it sees as a threat. After the recent ethnic cleansing, this will amount to religious cleansing.<sup>8</sup>

When mandating them for universal use, Pope Leo XIII reiterated that the prayers could be said in the vernacular. However, the task of translation was left to local ordinaries, with the result that small variations exist between, for example, different English and German versions used in different places.

In the rules in force in 1962, the Leonine Prayers may be omitted on certain occasions.<sup>9</sup> They were abolished in 1964 by the Instruction *Inter Oecumenici* 14.

Pope John Paul II commented on the Prayer to St Michael as follows:

May prayer strengthen us for the spiritual battle that the Letter to the Ephesians speaks of: 'Be strong in the Lord and in the

strength of his might' (Eph 6:10). The Book of Revelation refers to this same battle, recalling before our eyes the image of St Michael the Archangel (cf. Rev 12:7). Pope Leo XIII certainly had this picture in mind when, at the end of the last century, he brought in, throughout the Church, a special prayer to St Michael: 'Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil ...' Although this prayer is no longer recited at the end of Mass, I ask everyone not to forget it and to recite it to obtain help in the battle against the forces of darkness and against the spirit of this world.<sup>10</sup>

Pope Francis consecrated the Vatican City State to St Michael in 2013, commenting: 'In consecrating the Vatican City State to St Michael the Archangel, let us ask him to defend us from the Evil One and cast him out'.<sup>11</sup>

On 24th January 2012, Bishop Daniel Jenky, of Peoria in the United States of America, ordered that the Prayer to St Michael be said in the Prayers of the Faithful<sup>12</sup> at Sunday Mass in his diocese, 'for the freedom of the Catholic Church in America', in the context of the problem created by the Affordable Care Act (2010).<sup>13</sup>

6. Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites (1884), *Iam Inde*.
7. Pius XII, Apostolic Letter *Sacro Vergente Anno* (7th July 1952).
8. *Catholic Herald*, 8th April 2014.
9. The liturgist J.B. O'Connell lists (*Celebration of Mass*, 121–22) the occasions on which the Leonine Prayers may be omitted: when low Mass is celebrated with 'some solemnity', e.g., a Nuptial Mass or one preceded by the Asperges; when Mass is 'immediately and duly' followed by another function, such as Benediction; when a homily is preached, during, before, or after the Mass; when low Mass is said with a 'dialogue' on Sundays or feast days; and when another Mass follows immediately without the celebrant leaving the altar (e.g., on All Souls Day). O'Connell cites a series of decisions of the Sacred Congregation of Rites in support of these principles: SCR 3705, 3855, 3936, 3682, 3805.
10. John Paul II, Regina Caeli Address, 24th April 1994.
11. Address of Francis, *On the Dedication of a Statue of St Michael the Archangel in the Vatican Gardens*, 5th July 2013.
12. The *Oratio Universalis* or Bidding Prayers.
13. The occasion was the demand that Catholic institutions pay for 'abortifacients, sterilization, and contraceptive services' under the US Government's health care insurance mandate, the Affordable Care Act, a demand later lifted from dioceses.

The Leonine Prayers are clearly not part of the Mass, and have never been included in the missal. Nevertheless, they are said by the celebrant, vested, before leaving the sanctuary,<sup>14</sup> and are intimately bound up with the liturgy and the faithful's liturgical experience of low Mass. The Collect and the Prayer to St Michael are both fine examples of prayer composition, and are much loved by Catholics attached to the *usus antiquior* of the Roman rite.

In practice, the Leonine Prayers act as a thanksgiving after Mass, and help to form in the faithful an important habit of immediate thanksgiving for Mass and for Holy Communion.

### Masses for particular intentions

A Mass itself can, of course, be said for an intention such as the lifting of persecution; furthermore, the missal includes votive Masses and commemorations<sup>15</sup> for this intention.

Under the rules in force in 1962, votive Masses, in general, can be said only on ferias and on 4th class feasts;<sup>16</sup> commemorations can in general only be used at low Mass.<sup>17</sup> However, the Holy See and local Ordinaries can and historically have encouraged specific votive Masses and commemorations to be said by granting wider permission for, or mandating, their use. An example of a favoured votive Mass is that of the Sacred Heart on First Fridays.<sup>18</sup> Commemorations for the Propagation of the Faith, the bishop, and the pope also have a privileged status, allowing them to be used more often.<sup>19</sup> Ordinaries have the authority to institute *oratio imperata*, commemorations that must be added to Masses for a period of time under specified rules.<sup>20</sup> The 1960 rules on commemorations are more restrictive than the rules they replaced.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to Masses, public processions are another very longstanding form of public prayer for a particular intention. In England and Wales processions are authorized 'In time of war against enemies of Holy Church', with special prayers at their conclusion.<sup>22</sup>

### Conclusion and practical proposals

The Leonine Prayers, which call for the 'liberty and exaltation' of the Church, remind us of the need to implore the assistance of heaven for the Church, which continues to be persecuted today just as she was in the days of Pope



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A private Mass at the Latin Mass Society's Priest Training Conference, Prior Park, in 2016.

Pius IX and Pope Leo XIII, even as the geographical focus of these and their predecessor prayers has shifted from the Holy Land, to Rome, and to Russia, as world events have unfolded.

Furthermore, priests and faithful can say and attend Masses offered for the intention of the persecuted, especially,

where possible, using appropriate votive Masses and commemorations, and the Foederatio Internationalis Una Voce urges all Catholics to take advantage of these opportunities. As noted above, the use of these could also be facilitated by mandate of the Holy See or local Ordinary. ⑥

14. Some priests take off the maniple before saying the Leonine Prayers, as for preaching.

15. Whereas a votive Mass is a complete Mass formulary, a commemoration adds an additional Collect, Secret, and Postcommunion prayer to those which are being said for the Mass of the day. There are numerous votive Masses and commemorations in the 1962 *Missale Romanum*, and votive Masses and commemorations are also found in the missal of the Ordinary Form.

16. See *Novum Rubricarum*, nn. 306-89.

17. *Ibid.*, nn. 106-14.

18. 'First Thursday', 'First Friday', and 'First Saturday' votive Masses, or a Requiem on the third, seventh, or thirtieth day after death or burial, have 3rd class status, meaning that they can be said on feasts of the 3rd class, as well as 4th class and ferial days.

19. Commemorations for the pope, the bishop, and the propagation of the faith can be said at sung and solemn Masses, and not only at low Masses.

20. On *oratio imperata*, *Novum Rubricarum* states (n. 459): 'During a public calamity or need which of its nature continues for a long time

(e.g. war, plague, and such like), the local Ordinary may indeed impose a suitable *oratio imperata* for the whole period of the disaster; but this prayer ... is said only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays', and not on feasts of the 1st and 2nd class. For short-term occasions, the restriction to Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays does not apply (see n. 457).

21. The rules before 1960 can be summarized as follows. In terms of 'private' commemorations, celebrants of Masses of simple feasts and lesser ferial days were free to add votive orations as long as the total number in each Mass was five or seven. On semi-double days when the third collect had to be chosen, such celebrants were free to add the oration of their choice. In collegiate churches, parochial Masses, and in religious houses, the rector or superior could specify the additional oration. Even public sung or solemn Masses on important feasts would allow the celebrant to add a third oration of his choice.

22. In the *Manual of Prayers*, the official guide to paraliturgical devotions authorized by the Hierarchy of England and Wales, in successive editions, up to the edition of 1954.

# FIUV Member Associations

## **Argentina:** Una Voce Argentina

Email: [info@unavoce.com.ar](mailto:info@unavoce.com.ar)  
Website: <http://www.unavoce.com.ar>

## **Australia:** Latin Mass Society Australia

Email: [ronanreilly@hotmail.com](mailto:ronanreilly@hotmail.com)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lmsaus.org/>  
X: @lmsaus

## **Bolivia:** Una Voce Bolivia

Email: [unavocebolivia@gmail.com](mailto:unavocebolivia@gmail.com)  
Website: <https://www.facebook.com/ALUnaVoceBolivia>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unavoce.bolivia.9/>

## **Brazil:** Una Voce Natal

Email: [unavocenatal@gmail.com](mailto:unavocenatal@gmail.com)  
Website: <http://unavocenatal.blogspot.com>

## **Canada:** Una Voce Canada (Vancouver Traditional Mass Society)

Email: [info@unavocecanada.org](mailto:info@unavocecanada.org)  
Website: <https://unavocecanada.org>

## **Chile, 1:** Magnificat Chile

Website: <http://asociacionliturgicamagnificat.blogspot.com>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MagnificatUnaVoceChile>  
X: @UnaVoceChile

## **Chile, 2:** Una Voce Casablanca

Website: <http://santabarbaradelareina.blogspot.com>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unavoce.casablancachile>

## **China (People's Republic of):** Una Voce Sinica

## **Croatia:** Društvo za promicanje tradicionalne Mise 'Benedictus' (Una Voce Croatia)

Email: [tradicionalnamisa.com@gmail.com](mailto:tradicionalnamisa.com@gmail.com)  
Website: <https://tradicionalnamisa.com>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sveta.misa.svih.vremena>  
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP0QbtSAR4nqrdxbiNgvUIA>

## **Dominican Republic:** Asociación Litúrgica Regina Pacis

### (Una Voce República Dominicana)

Email: [unavoce.rd@gmail.com](mailto:unavoce.rd@gmail.com)  
Website: <https://unavocerd.wordpress.com>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UnaVoceRD>  
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/UnaVoceRD>  
Telegram: <https://t.me/UnaVoceRD>

## **England and Wales:** The Latin Mass Society

Email: [info@lms.org.uk](mailto:info@lms.org.uk)  
Website: <https://lms.org.uk>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/latinmassuk>  
X: @latinmassuk

## **France:** Una Voce France

Email: [unavoce-france@unavoce.fr](mailto:unavoce-france@unavoce.fr)  
Website: <http://www.unavoce.fr>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unavocefrance>  
X: @una\_voce\_france

## **Germany, 1:** Pro Missa Tridentina

Email: [info@pro-missa-tridentina.org](mailto:info@pro-missa-tridentina.org)  
Website: <https://www.pro-missa-tridentina.org>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Pro-Missa-Tridentina-875651075860409>  
X: @missa\_pro

## **Germany, 2:** Una Voce Deutschland

Email: [vorstand@una-voce.de](mailto:vorstand@una-voce.de)  
Website: <http://www.una-voce.de>

## **India:** All India Laity Congress

Email: [aubyne17@hotmail.com](mailto:aubyne17@hotmail.com)

## **Ireland:** Latin Mass Society of Ireland

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/lmsireland>

## **Italy, 1:** Una Voce Italia

Website: <http://www.unavoceitalia.org>  
Email: [unavoceitalia@unavoceitalia.org](mailto:unavoceitalia@unavoceitalia.org)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unavoce.italia>  
X: @UnaVocetalia

## **Italy, 2:** Coordinamento di Una Voce delle Venezie

Email: [info@unavoce-ve.it](mailto:info@unavoce-ve.it)  
Website: <http://www.unavoce-ve.it>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/uvvenetia>  
<https://www.facebook.com/unavocevenetia.cuvve>  
X: @unavocevenetia

## **Japan:** Una Voce Japan

Email: [chairman@uvj.jp](mailto:chairman@uvj.jp)  
Website: <http://uvj.jp>  
YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRN9vGM5gxmgT\\_QZaJ6dj-w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRN9vGM5gxmgT_QZaJ6dj-w)

## **Latvia:** Una Voce Latvija

Email: [unavoceLatvija@inbox.lv](mailto:unavoceLatvija@inbox.lv)  
Website: <https://unavoce.lv>

## **Malaysia:** Traditional Latin Mass Society of Malaysia

Email: [tmmalaysia@yahoo.com](mailto:tmmalaysia@yahoo.com)  
Website: <https://www.latinmassdir.org/venue/traditional-latin-mass-society-of-malaysia-kuala-lumpur-malaysia>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TLMMMalaysia>

## **Malta:** Pro Tridentina Malta

Email: [pro.tridentina.malta@gmail.com](mailto:pro.tridentina.malta@gmail.com)  
Website: <http://pro-tridentina-malta.blogspot.com>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/629798243823117>  
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ProTridentina>  
LinkedIn: <https://mt.linkedin.com/in/pro-tridentina-malta-711874151>

## **Mexico:** Una Voce Mexico

Email: [unavocemx1@gmail.com](mailto:unavocemx1@gmail.com)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unavocemexico>

## **Netherlands:** Ecclesia Dei Nederland

Email: [info@ecclesiadei.nl](mailto:info@ecclesiadei.nl)  
Website: <http://www.ecclesiadei.nl>  
X: @Jack\_P\_Oostveen

## **New Zealand:** Latin Mass Society of New Zealand (formerly Ecclesia Dei Society of New Zealand)

Email: [contact@ecclesiadei.org.nz](mailto:contact@ecclesiadei.org.nz)  
Website: <https://ecclesiadei.org.nz>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EDSNZ.org>  
X: @EcclesiaDeiNZ

## **Nigeria:** Ecclesia Dei Society of Nigeria

Email: [unavocenigeria@gmail.com](mailto:unavocenigeria@gmail.com)

## **Norway:** Una Voce Norge

## **Peru:** Una Voce Peru

Email: [sanpiovperu@hotmail.com](mailto:sanpiovperu@hotmail.com)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Asociaci%C3%B3n-de-San-Pio-V-Una-Voce-Per%C3%BA-645823058790678>  
YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeKM32\\_g3rWa0BiqgMOhadg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeKM32_g3rWa0BiqgMOhadg)

## **Philippines:** Ecclesia Dei Society of St. Joseph (Una Voce Philippines)

Website: <http://unavocephilippines.blogspot.com>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SEDSI.UVPH>

## **Poland:** Una Voce Polonia

Email: [uwp@unavocepolonia.pl](mailto:uwp@unavocepolonia.pl)  
Website: <https://www.unavocepolonia.pl>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NRL-Ruch-Mszy-Tradycyjnej-w-Polsce-367705159902>

## **Portugal:** Una Voce Portugal

Website: <https://www.unavoce.pt/>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unavoce.portugal>

## **Puerto Rico:** Una Voce Puerto Rico

Website: <http://unavocepr.blogspot.com>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UnaVocePuertoRico>

## **Russia:** Una Voce Russia

Email: [info@unavoce.ru](mailto:info@unavoce.ru)  
Website: <http://www.unavoce.ru>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UnaVoceRussia>  
VK (вКонтакте): <https://vk.com/unavoce>

## **Scotland:** Una Voce Scotland

Email: [uvs@unavocesotland.org](mailto:uvs@unavocesotland.org)  
Website: <https://unavocesotland.org>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unavocesotland>  
X: @UnaVoceScotland

## **Slovakia:** Spolok latinskej Omše (Latin Mass Society of Slovakia)

Email: [peter.cambal@spoloklatinskejomse.sk](mailto:peter.cambal@spoloklatinskejomse.sk)  
Website: <https://www.spoloklatinskejomse.sk>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SpoloklatinskejOmse>

## **South Africa:** Una Voce South Africa

Email: [unavocesa@gmail.com](mailto:unavocesa@gmail.com)  
Website: <https://unavoce.co.za>

## **Spain, 1:** Una Voce España

Email: [unavoce@unavocespana.es](mailto:unavoce@unavocespana.es)  
Website: <https://unavocespana.es>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unavoce.espana>  
X: @unavocespana

## **Spain, 2:** Roma Aeterna

Email: [praesidium@roma-aeterna.org](mailto:praesidium@roma-aeterna.org)  
Website: <http://roma-aeterna-una-voce.blogspot.com>

## **Taiwan (Republic of China):** Una Voce Taiwanese

(Communitas Missae Litanae in Taiwan)  
Email: [dphanley@hotmail.com](mailto:dphanley@hotmail.com)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unavocetaiwan>

## **Ukraine:** Una Voce Ucraina

Email: [unavoceua@gmail.com](mailto:unavoceua@gmail.com)  
Website: <https://unavoceucraina.wordpress.com>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/tradycia>  
Telegram: <https://t.me/uvucraina>

## **United States of America:** Una Voce America

Email: [info@unavoce.org](mailto:info@unavoce.org)  
Website: <http://unavoce.org>

## National Correspondents

In countries where we have no Member Association, we sometimes have an individual as an official contact. You can get in touch with these through the FIUV Secretary ([secretary@fiuv.org](mailto:secretary@fiuv.org)) or, if details are given below, directly.

Angola, Estonia, Lithuania (Vytautas Bivainis, [vbivainis@gmail.com](mailto:vbivainis@gmail.com)), Romania.