

La NEWSLETTER

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IMPORTANT: Before beginning to read this newsletter, check your mailing label. Is the information there correct? If not, please notify our Treasurer so that we're mailing newsletters to an accurate address. **ALSO:** The expiration date for your membership appears above your name and address. If you find that you are delinquent in paying **dues**, please remit them right away. You may pay online at our web site or send your check to the Treasurer. Her address appears at the end of this newsletter along with dues rates.

From the President

In this column, I thought I'd reflect on what I have learned are common misconceptions about Mass in Latin among those Catholics who are not so familiar with it. These are issues that come up again and again. For those of us who have long been in the Latin Liturgy Association, it's important from time to time to step back and refresh our perspective. As I attempted to organize my thoughts, it turned into a "top-ten list" I'll call *The Top Ten Misconceptions about Latin in Today's Church*.

1. *Latin isn't allowed anymore.* This mistaken idea isn't seen so often in the wake of *Summorum Pontificum*, but it's still there for some people.
2. *Latin—what is that?* Many Catholics today have never heard any Latin at all in their experience. In some cases, when they may have heard Latin or heard of Latin, they have supposed it was something else, e.g. "Isn't the Pope's Midnight Mass in Italian?" – "Latin—is that some form of Spanish?" As an LLA officer (and it helps to have a sense of humor about these things), I have lost count of how many correspondents—some from Catholic enterprises that have been in existence for years—have sent me Spanish-language materials in the mail. Apparently, they think that the Latin Liturgy Association must be some sort of Hispanic liturgy organization. *Lingua Latina? Como?*
3. *Latin Mass is always the pre-Vatican II ritual of Mass.* There is at least some confusion about which is which. The various terms that have been applied to the older ritual—Tridentine, Traditional, 1962, and most recently Gregorian and Extraordinary, are used in contrast to Paul VI, Vatican II, Novus Ordo, Ordinary, and 1970. While our Association's members are well aware of the distinctions, this is definitely confusing for many who are not so familiar with Latin Mass. Recently, a friend noticed the blue spine of the Gregorian Missal on my bookshelf and asked, "Oh, is that the Missal for the Gregorian Mass I read about—the old Latin Mass?" I was a little startled, and replied "Well, uh, not exactly." I then explained how the Gregorian Missal was published in 1990 and contained much of the Gregorian Chant used in the Vatican II Mass. This was years before "Gregorian" had been applied to the earlier ritual. I could sense the friend was losing patience with the explanation, so I held back from more discourse about how, what for a long time had been applied mostly to a style of chant, was now being used to recall origins of the style of celebration with Pope Gregory I, who is really the source of much of what is contained in both later Missals. Clearly, these labels can be confusing, even, at times, to LLA people!
4. *Latin Mass is always said so that the priest is not facing the people.* While the custom for *ad orientem* celebration has prevailed through much liturgical history, this was—and is—not always the case. Of course, the newer Mass is very often celebrated in places where the priest faces the people regardless of the language being used, Latin or vernacular. It is also celebrated *ad orientem*. But this is really a separate issue from the language being used for the celebration. In

fact, there are places where pre-Vatican II Mass has been traditionally celebrated at altars that are situated so that the celebrant faces the congregation. The orientation that has become the most-used following Vatican II is sometimes called “basilican” because the celebrant in some major churches faced the people during pre-Vatican II celebrations. Examples are St. Peter’s in Rome and the cathedral at Lyons in France. Those altars are original fixtures—they were not resituated following the Council. They were used that way for Tridentine Mass.

5. *Mass before Vatican II was always said privately by the priest and the people did not participate.* This one has been discussed so much over the years in LLA newsletters, at our conventions, and elsewhere that it’s not really necessary to do more than cite it.
6. [A more specialized variant of number 5 above] *The laity do not and have never responded to the priest in Latin, just the altar servers.* Again, this newsletter over the years has considered numerous examples of the dialogue Mass, especially the fourth degree, the congregationally-sung Mass, and the newer Roman Missal.
7. *Latin was immediately and totally discarded after Vatican II.* Our members know that, for some time, the Roman Canon which was the only Eucharistic Prayer during the transition years of the 1960s, was required to be in Latin. The option to use the vernacular for it was given later. Some congregations continued to use varying amounts of Latin. The widespread abandonment of Latin in the early 1970s was the principal reason for organizing the LLA.
8. *Latin was used to keep the Mass secret from the people.* This is usually a comment heard from non-Catholics, but these days you might be surprised to find Catholics saying this, too.
9. *Latin is impossibly hard to learn and that’s why no one uses it.* <sigh>
10. *If you don’t know any Latin, you can’t really benefit from attending Mass in Latin because you can’t participate.* Setting aside the obvious theological principles involved, let’s just say, “It’s possible to begin to benefit even if it’s your first experience of Mass in Latin.”

Am I missing any points in the categories listed above? Write/email your thoughts.

James F. Pauer, President, Latin Liturgy Association, Inc.

The St. Michael Institute of Sacred Art in Mystic, Connecticut will present the first of three 2009 workshops in Gregorian Chant April 17-19. More Information: www.endersisland.com or (860) 536-0565

OBSTACLES TO SUMMORUM PONTIFICUM

In the previous newsletter, former LLA President Bill Leininger and I identified some continuing areas for concern in the wake of *Summorum Pontificum*’s call for more efforts to facilitate arrangements for the Traditional Latin Mass. Various opinions are still arriving. Our membership has responded and is continuing to submit comments. While some have been saying that the LLA itself should be contacting ordinaries regarding complaints about situations in particular places, others are saying that the LLA’s role is certainly not one of reaching into the processes for complaint within a particular diocese. Of course, the LLA has no canonical status for any direct administrative involvement, and that has never been our purpose as an organization seeking to support Latin in the liturgy of today’s Church. However, what we can do is to compile reports of situations and share these with other organizations with goals similar to the LLA’s for a better awareness of problem areas. This we are beginning to do. We can also facilitate access to information that will help persons seeking arrangements for Mass to plead their cause.

NEXT YEAR: 2010 CONVENTION IN DETROIT

Preliminary arrangements are in place for the 2010 Convention of the Latin Liturgy Association, our next convention. It will take place in Detroit, Michigan, July 16-18, 2010. Why Detroit? The newest chapter of the LLA, the Detroit Chapter under the leadership of Alex Begin, has been making spectacular progress in

supporting Mass in Latin. In a city with a sizeable Catholic population and numerous beautiful churches, four parishes in the Archdiocese of Detroit have Latin Mass in the ordinary form and five parishes have Mass in the extraordinary form on a regular basis. Detroit Chapter members and friends support a number of these directly. Many of these celebrations have just begun during the past couple years, while others have been maintained for decades. In addition, numerous area parishes have occasional Mass in Latin or have inquired about arrangements. There are more than a dozen such places.

The Detroit Chapter appears to be the only LLA chapter with international operations. They directly serve a congregation (extraordinary form) across the Detroit River in Windsor, Ontario, Canada (Diocese of London, Ontario). Servers and musicians cross the border most Sundays. Among the speakers we'll be hearing, Alex will explain how they have been so successful. In addition to our liturgies and speakers, there will be optional excursions to visit area churches and shrines as we did at our last convention in St. Louis. One of these optional trips will include a bus trip to the Canadian side, so, if you're interested in this option, apply for your passport if you don't already have one. It appears United States birth certificates will no longer be sufficient for travel across the border by the time of our convention. To reiterate, all major convention events will be in Detroit, but Windsor has some interesting churches.

The home base for our convention will be St. Joseph Church, a splendid nineteenth-century Gothic church with notable stained glass windows and other artwork. And, *mirabile dictu*, their parish hall where we'll have our convention sessions is a new air-conditioned building! St. Joseph Church has an excellent music program supporting their liturgies. This parish, founded in 1856, is part of a parish cluster that includes two other nearby parishes that host Latin Masses. More information will be forthcoming over the next few months, but plan NOW to attend. Mark your calendars and look into travel arrangements.

RECONCILIATION OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. PIUS X

On January 24, the Holy Father, in response to requests from the bishops of the Pius X Society, lifted the excommunication against them dating back to the time of their consecration by Archbishop LeFebvre. More information is expected to appear in upcoming weeks about the nature of this wonderful step toward full reconciliation. It's noteworthy that the four bishops are being referred to as bishops in the announcement. In some cases in the past, bishops who were perceived as having irregular status were referred to simply by name. While there are many issues still to be addressed, let's pray that progress is made quickly in discussion between the Pius X Society and Rome so that the affliction which has been with us for a generation will be resolved in our troubled times.

At the time of the lifting, there was some consternation concerning the remarks of Bishop Williamson regarding the events surrounding the World War II persecution of Jews. In many secular press outlets, this appeared to be more interesting than the end of the excommunication. The Bishop later apologized for his remarks. An intriguing fact that has come to light is that, ironically, the father of Archbishop Marcel LeFebvre, René Lefebvre, died in 1944 in the Nazi concentration camp at Sonnenburg (in East Brandenburg), where he had been imprisoned by the Gestapo because of his work for the French Resistance and British Intelligence. (Reference: <http://leflochreport.com/site/?Rene-Lefebvre-and-the-Holocaust>)

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