

SHADOWS OF PSEUDO-REFORM

By Fr. John W. Mole, O.M.I.

Ecclesia de Eucharistia is the incipit (opening phrase) of John Paul II's latest encyclical. It announces that the Church lives by the Eucharist. It also points, we are told, to “the heart of the mystery of the Church.” The entire document off sixty-two sections the first ten of which are introductory, reverberates with the word “mystery.” Bugled by section #1 “Mystery of the Church” then followed by “paschal mystery” (#3 and #5), “mystery of the Faith” (#5 and #8) and “Eucharistic mystery” (twice in #9 and again in #10). The main text begins with the “Mystery of Faith,” elicited by the Eucharist in receptive hearts, this being the subject of Chapter I. Thus the Church is built (Chapter II), made apostolic (Chapter III) and is knit into ecclesial communion (Chapter IV). Chapter V extols the dignity of the worship that in consequence is raised to God. Chapter VI is devoted to the crowning mystery, the motherhood of the Blessed Virgin, “first tabernacle of the Eucharist” (#56). The concluding sections (#59 - #62) lift our gaze to the Everest of theology, St. Thomas Aquinas, soaring lyrically in song.

As this encyclical is unsheathed from its Introduction, it shines like a double-edged sword of God's word (Hebrews 4, 12) which fulgurates truth and cleaves away falsity. Indeed, according to section #52, it will actually be doubled with a document dealing juridically with liturgical disorder.

The announced springing into life of the Church from the Eucharist is followed in sections 1 to 5 by concomitant truths which coalesce into the mystery of the Eucharist. The promise - “Lo I shall be with you all days until the end of the world” - is fulfilled beyond measure by the Real Presence. Thus the Eucharist stands forth as “the source and summit of Christian life” (Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, 11). The implications of Christ's words of institution were veiled when spoken. They could only be fully grasped in the light of the passion, death and resurrect during the Holy Triduum (Holy Thursday evening to Easter Sunday morning). these three days of the Paschal mystery which transcend time and become the actuality of today, enveloped by the Paschal mystery whenever the Eucharist is celebrated.

The five sections conclude on the note, extended into section 6, of “great and grateful amazement” (stupor in Latin) felt by the Holy Father and which he wishes his encyclical to convey. Does it compare with the emotion aroused by the haunting strains of the Protestant Evangelical hymn “Amazing Grace”? It lacks the truth of the

sacramentality whereby Christ's grace flows tangibly into us. But to recall it is appropriate given that its composer, Rev. John Newton (1725--1807) collaborated with Wilberforce's campaign in England to end the slave trade, principal injustice of that time. Similarly, while the Eucharist orients us eschatologically towards Christ's coming in glory, section #20 of the encyclical exhorts us to keep our feet on the ground and combat injustice to the extent that we can.

Head into the deep

Ecclesia de Eucharistia is one of three documents comprising John Paul II's navigational chart heading the ship of Peter out on the sea of history at the dawn of the third millennium. Another is *Novo millennio ineunte*, the theme of which is our Lord's command *Duc in altum* - "Head into the deep" (Luke 5,4). There is also *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* urging that the setting forth be done with Mary's rosary in hand. The new encyclical bids in section #6 that the setting forth be undertaken "with the enthusiasm of the new evangelization." We will leave this enigmatic remark aside for the moment. What follows next is the tale of travellers from Jerusalem. Two of them listen with burning hearts to the third who has overtaken them. When on arrival they are at table in an inn, the two recognize the third by his manner in breaking the bread. Thus we are assured by the Eucharist that the risen Jesus is ever with us on our journey.

Also characteristic of this encyclical is its autobiographical vein which begins in section 2 with John Paul II's souvenir of personally celebrating Mass in the Upper Chamber at Jerusalem during the Jubilee Year 2000. This is resumed in section 7 wherein he speaks of commemorating the Eucharist each year of his pontificate by addressing a letter to all priests and in section 8 with reminiscences of celebrating Mass everywhere throughout his world journeys.

Section 9 shows that this encyclical bases itself on the Eucharistic doctrine and practice of the Council of Trent as well as pertinent Magisterial teachings of the twentieth century: Leo XIII's *Mirari Curitatis* (1902), Pius XII's *Mediator Dei* (1947), Paul VI's *Mysterium Fidei* (1965) and John Paul II's *Dominicae Cena* (1980). The Second Vatican Council averted to certain aspects of the Eucharist, but did not issue a specific document about it. By noting the lesser contribution of Vatican II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* turns away from the mirage of the Great Divide, the

preconciliar/postconciliar dichotomy, made to loom large by those for whom the history of the Church has only just begun in earnest.

Section #9 speaks in *ordine intentionis* - what is intended by the teaching of the Magisterium. Section #10 changes to the perspective in *ordine executionis* - what has actually happened. In two paragraphs, it presents a *chiaroscuro* tableau - a contrast of lights and shadows. The bright side in the first paragraph is summed up in the sentence: "Certainly the reform inaugurated by the Council has greatly contributed to the more conscious, active and fruitful participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar on the part of the faithful." The remaining and major part of the paragraph is, however, not about the liturgical but the devotional response of the faithful: the daily practice of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the yearly Corpus Christi procession. Here John Paul II's position is that of Pius XII in his encyclical *Mediator Dei* (1947) wherein he emphasized at length that the support of popular devotion is essential to the liturgy. Article 13 on devotion in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* is cautionary in tone. It is a far cry from the *quantum potes, tantum audes* (dare as much as you can) which St. Thomas Aquinas urges in the Office he composed for the feast of Corpus Christi. This de-emphasis of the document of Vatican II probably motivated its implementers to suppress the Feast of the Precious Blood by merging it with Corpus Christi. The two feasts do not have the same focus. That of Corpus Christi is the Real Presence and that of the Precious Blood is the Price of our Redemption. Both of these tremendous truths merited a special Feast instituted by the Holy See in the 13th and 19th centuries respectively. *Mediator Dei* was issued by Pius XII to combat, *inter alia*, an anti-devotional mentality that had become installed in liturgical circles in the 1940s.

Section #10 squarely confronts what it calls the "confusion with regard to sound faith and Catholic doctrine concerning this wonderful sacrament." The abuses it deplors are: almost complete abandonment of the practice of Eucharistic adoration; an extremely reductive understanding of the Eucharistic mystery, stripping it of sacrificial meaning; celebration merely being fraternal conviviality; obscuring the ministerial priesthood grounded in the apostolic succession, basing ecumenical dialogue on a sacrament only being an utterance of words. These descriptions are too terse to be sufficiently intelligible. Probably the best way to go further into the matter is to read the negative sections of the three books which Cardinal Ratzinger has written on the subject of the liturgy.

To these examples of section #10 should be added another which is implicit in the impressive emphasis of the encyclical on mystery and in regard to the “noble simplicity” envisaged by the Constitution on the Liturgy of Vatican II (Sacrosanctum Concilium, art. 34). The reductionism deplored by section 410 descends to a simplicity devoid of mystery. Thus the liturgy in our day is plagued with banality.

Finally, section #10 expresses hope “that the encyclical will effectively help to banish the dark clouds of unacceptable doctrine and practice, so that the Eucharist will continue to shine forth in all its radiant mystery.” Cardinal Ratzinger's formula for dealing with the shadows of pseudo-reform is “reform of the reform.” This should be undertaken with a sense of urgency for, while he considers the false liturgy to be seen on every side as too absurd to last very long, he fears that it can last long enough to destroy the true liturgy.

New evangelization

John Paul II hopes that *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* will prompt on the part of the faithful an apostolic response for which his term is “new evangelization.” But it is not explained in the encyclical itself, not even in its chapter on apostolicity. Section #10 begins by noting with satisfaction the spiritual response of the lay faithful to the general Magisterial teaching about the Eucharist. It commends also the liturgical response made to the reform advocated by the Council but makes no mention that it is on a minor scale. Indeed, it comes from an ever dwindling minority of people who still come to Mass and are served by a senescent clergy unable to renew its ranks. But whatever the response produced, major or minor, it is in danger of being smothered by liturgical abuse. The shadows can overcome the lights. This is the thrust of section #10.

John Paul II's initiative has been saluted by the Catholic Press with a plethora of laudatory articles. Many publications have supplied their readers with complete texts. A notable exception is an article in *The Remnant* of May 15, 2003, with the dismissive title “It’s déjà vu all over again.” The writer, Dr. Thomas A. Drolesky, apparently thinks the Pope is merely repeating what he has already said in his Holy Thursday letter of 1980: *Dominicac Cenac*, followed shortly after by *Inaestimabile Donum* which decried false liturgical reform.

The imputation that the Holy Father is ineffectual cannot be ignored. The magnitude of the crisis may well demand recourse to the power of the keys by a Pope with the liturgical genius of a St. Gregory the Great, a St. Plus V or a St. Plus X. John Paul II is not in that category and limits himself, for collegial reasons, to his personal power of persuasion. But he cannot be minimized. Even a cursory reading of the thousand pages of George Weigel's biography, "Witness to Hope" (Harper Collins, New York, 1999), confronts one with a colossus, clearly designated by Divine Providence to guide the Church into her third millennium. On page 554, Weigel characterizes the "new evangelization" as "the basic concept, central to the pontificate of John Paul II." Weigel apparently thinks that John Paul II has only lately coined the term for this concept. But he is said to have used the term in 1979 a few months after becoming Pope before an immense crowd, more than a million, at Krakow. It was the beginning of the end of communist rule in Eastern Europe, bringing into view the task of re-evangelizing countries persecuted for fifty years by anti-Christian regimes. Later on, the need became equally evident to think in terms of the "re-evangelization" of countries of Western Europe de-Christianized by a tide of secularism and consumerism. On whom is this task incumbent? On the laity. So it is deemed by John Paul II and so it was determined at the Synod of Bishops of 1987, in which sixty Catholic lay leaders participated. In December, 1988, John Paul II issued the exhortation *Christifideles Laici* as the conclusion of the Synod. Wishing no doubt to remain within the vocabulary of the Synod, he did not use the term "new evangelization." But the concept thereof predominates throughout the document, as Weigel amply demonstrates (*Witness to Hope*, pp. 552-555).

This response of the laity, if it is to be articulate and effective, must be organized. *Christifideles Laici* commends the forming of appropriate lay associations and the new Code of Canon Law sanctions them. To put it in a nutshell, the "new evangelization" requires "new ecclesial movements." John Paul II counts on them. He convoked them to Rome at Pentecost in 1998 and they filled not only the Piazza St. Pietro but the whole of the Via della Conciliazione and adjacent streets. There were about sixty movements all told, including the ones most famed such as Focolare, Neo-catechumenate and *Comunicazione e Liberazione*. Their leaders spent three days of study together, prior to the great gathering, under the direction of Cardinal Ratzinger who issued a document establishing criteria of authenticity.

Does John Paul II count in vain on new ecclesial movements to launch the “new evangelization” he calls for as the Church moves into the new millennium? Whatever specific purposes they may have, they are exhorted to work together by *Christifideles Laici*. Fr. Daniel Ange in *L'Homme Nouveau* (July 8, 2003, p. 20) describes how new ecclesial movements band together to organize week-long campaigns of “new evangelization” of capital cities of Europe. The bishops concerned not only consent but participate fully. They began with Vienna, May 23 to June 1, 2003. In 2004, the city to be evangelized is Paris. Thus new ecclesial movements demonstrate that they can render possible the organized response to John Paul II's call for “new evangelization.”

Source and summit

The appreciative phrase “source and summit” (*fons et culmen*) has come to be favoured in Magisterial documents speaking of the sublimity of the Eucharist. Pius XII's *Mediator Dei* (1947) began by describing the Blessed Sacrament as “the source and summit of the liturgy” while sublimely defining liturgy as the worship offered by Jesus Christ, both in his personal and in his mystical body, to his heavenly Father. The phrase was adopted in two documents of Vatican II: *Lumen Gentium* #11 refers to the Eucharist as “source and summit of Christian life” and the Decree on the Priesthood #5 has “source and summit of the whole work of evangelization.” In *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* the phrase recurs in sections #1, #13 and #22. A variant “centre and summit” is found in section #31. Moreover, it devotes its chapter V entirely to the “Dignity of the Eucharistic Celebration,” and asserts that the reprehensibility of abuses consists chiefly in depreciating and reducing it.

The problem was all the more dangerous because it emanated from the very agency set up within the Holy See to implement the Constitution on the Liturgy of Vatican II. The abuses lamented by the second sentence of section #52 as “a source of suffering for many” appeared in the early years of “the postconciliar liturgical reform as a result of a misguided sense of creativity and adaptation.” The English text inaccurately speaks of “the years following” the said reform; whereas in the Latin and French texts, they were “the years of reform which followed the Council.” The postconciliar reform in question is in fact the Pauline reform which began in 1964 by setting up a Consilium of forty bishops and two hundred experts. It was given the jurisdiction over the liturgy which, since 1588, had resided with the Congregation of

Rites. In 1969, Paul VI erected this Consilium into a new Congregation of Worship. Msgr. Annibale Bugnini was the mastermind of both agencies. In 1975, Paul VI abruptly dismissed Bugnini and dismantled the new Congregation while handing back jurisdiction over the liturgy to the Congregation of Rites, now renamed Congregation of Worship. These acts of repudiation acknowledge that the Pauline reform was vitiated between the years 1964 to 1975.

Bugnini maintained that “the key to liturgical reform” is “pastoral” liturgy. Whatever the term “pastoral” may mean in regard to the liturgy seems to require a vast quantity of literature to elucidate. But the term certainly implies control and guidance which should have been exercised by, the Holy See, during years 1964 to 1975, over the worldwide liturgical establishment (international, national and diocesan commissions, etc.). In fact, control was lost. The unleashing of “creativity” caused a proliferation such that by 1971 about 200 unauthorized Eucharistic Prayers were published and in use. Total vernacularization, contrary to the directives of the pastoral Council (which Vatican II was supposed to be) was justified by “pastoral” necessity. It was “adaptation” by *fait accompli*.

What looms large therefore as the prime purpose of *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, as shown by section #111 concluding its “Introduction,” and section #52 concluding its chapter on the “Dignity of the Eucharistic Celebration,” is to banish the shadows of pseudo-reform. In approaching this task, heed must be given to section #27 calling for exactitude in terminology, as well as in doctrine. At the outset, the term “reform” must be carefully scrutinized. The perspective of the encyclical extends over the past four centuries, during which the Catholic liturgy has been subjected to reformism of a radicality so extreme that eradication is the more accurate word for it. Radicality is supposed to mean renewing from the roots, not wrenching roots from the soil.

The meaning of “reform” has widely varied according to which of three procedures has been attempted: replacement, restoration and revision. And in each case, the problem of distinguishing between authentic and pseudo-reform has arisen.

The purpose of the 16th century Protestant revolt against the Roman Mass was not to reform but replace it with an entirely different mode of worship. So it should not have been called “reform” or “reformation.” It was pseudo-reform to the hilt and only succeeded by dint of armed violence waged for man, decades. A book by the historian Eamon Duffy of Cambridge, entitled: *The Stripping of the Altars* (Yale University Press, 1992), compiled from local records at the parish level, shows comprehensively

how, this process of pseudo-reform was carried out in England. The 18th century produced another barrage of liturgical reformism in Europe under the names of Gallicanism, Jansenism and Josephinism culminating in the pseudo-Synod of Pistoia in northern Italy in 1786. They all fall into the category of pseudo-reform.

Dom Gueranger launched a monastic movement in France in mid-19th century in order to restore the Roman Rite as well as raise it to the lyrical heights of Gregorian chant. This was taken under the aegis of the Holy See by Pope St. Pius X in 1903 and flourished until the eve of the Second Vatican Council. This is an eminent example of reform classified as restoration. It was named “the Gregorian reform” in order to indicate its lineage with the first major codification of the Roman Rite effected by Pope St. Gregory the Great, at the close of the sixth century.

To what category belongs the liturgical reform inaugurated by the Council? This is how it is phrased in the English text of *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* at the head of section #10. The Latin text simply speaks of *liturgica reformatio Concilii* - “liturgical reformation of the Council.” Adding “inaugurated by” is a misleading superfluity because whatever was intended by the Council did not actually happen. What happened was the Pauline reform. Its *modus procedendi* met with vehement objections of all three Cardinal Prefects of Faith concerned (Ottaviani, Seper and Ratzinger). Moreover, instead of revision of the Roman Rite, called for by the Council, what happened was replacement by a new rite (referred to as such by Paul VI) called the *Novus Ordo*. We do not doubt that the *Novus Ordo* can be considered as a welcome alternative to the Roman Rite. For who can say it is not needed in the third millennium? The western or Roman Catholic Church had two major rites in the first millennium: Roman and Gallican, which merged in the second millennium. What was highly objectionable, especially to Ratzinger, was the policy of abolishing the existing liturgy in order to confer a monopoly on a rite still in its puny infancy. It cannot be regarded as other than pseudo-reform. The Holy See upholds the *Novus Ordo* as an authentic instance of replacement reform. But ambiguity and confusion will surround this question as long as there are too many bishops and even prelates within the Holy See who think the Roman Rite should be abolished or, at best, prolonged temporarily as a sop to the “elderly and nostalgic “people who remain pathetically attached to the Mass of all ages, including their youth. They close their eyes to the fact that the median age of Latin Mass communities which are allowed to exist is lower than *Novus Ordo* communities in any given diocese. Young people tell us that they truly feel at home with the ancient Latin Mass.

Let us revert to the question of what the Council intended in the way of liturgical reform. The Council Fathers had two models before them: the liturgical movement to which St. Pius X had given a tremendous impulse. It was in the mode of restoration. The other was the Liturgical Commission set up by Pius XII in 1945, with Bugnini as secretary. Its purpose was revision and its principal accomplishments were the revised ceremonies of Holy Week and the revised Latin version of the psalms. Evidently this model predominated as Sacrosanctum Concilium calls for the revision of all Roman Rite texts "as quickly as possible." This has proved to be easier said than done. Bugnini was not the only influential member of Pius XII's Commission. There also belonged to it a scholarly liturgist, Antonelli by name, who later became cardinal. His memoirs and records have been published posthumously and show that he foresaw that the revision called for by Sacrosanctum Concilium would take generations to accomplish. The fact of legislating a change does not mean that it will become rooted as a custom in the psyche of the people. The revision of the Holy Week ceremonies was anchored on the Easter Vigil beginning at midnight. In fact, the Easter Vigil Mass has drifted back to four o'clock in the afternoon and the drift may well continue until we are back to Easter Saturday morning. This is an example of custom prevailing over statutory law. Or take the latest Roman Rite text to be revised, that of the ceremony of exorcism. The result is a text that exorcists generally find they cannot accept. So the Congregation of Worship has ruled that they can continue to use the unrevised text.

Treasures: old and new

A man wisely versed in matters pertaining to the Kingdom of God can show forth treasures both old and new. So says our Lord. The liturgy is visible only as differentiated into concrete rites, rooted in the customs and psyches of various peoples. There are, presently two rites to which the Roman Catholic faithful are supposed to have access. On the one hand, there is the Roman Rite, which after a formative period reaching into apostolic times, became established in the fourth century. On the other, there is the Novus Ordo, promulgated by Paul VI on April 3, 1969. He spoke of it as a new rite. Actually it is only a rite in fieri (in the process of becoming) and hence not yet firmly established.

The Holy See seeks to stabilize the Novus Ordo through a series of General Instructions of the Roman Missal (GIRM). This process is complicated by episcopates seeking exceptions. That of the United States asked for fifty exceptions to the last GIRM, which, although officially counted as the third, was actually the fourth. The Holy See apparently wishes to forget the first one, duly promulgated, and published by Vatican Press in 1969, because it was botched to such an extent that it had to be withdrawn. At least it served a useful purpose in demonstrating the vulnerability to disorder of a new rite-to-be. The process of bringing the new rite to maturity is necessarily slow and difficult, and may well take a century of GIRM tinkering and adjusting. In the meantime, it will remain vulnerable to disorder. It was highly unwise therefore to seek to abolish the old rite in order to make room for the new.

For its part, the Roman Rite, having developed by normal organic growth for the better part of two millennia, is well established and comparatively immune to disorder. Hence it must remain visible as the norm of tradition which can illumine the formative period of the Novus Ordo, or indeed the revision of the Roman Rite itself, as proposed by Vatican II should it eventually be undertaken. Can the rites, new and old, count on the help of one or more new ecclesial movements? At least in the United States there has been for the past nine years a "Society for the Renewal of the Sacred Liturgy." Its large formatted and ample bulletin, *Adoremus*, ably edited by Helen Hitchcock of St. Louis, Missouri, is published ten times a year. Unafflicted by a phobia for Latinity and the old rite, it clearly exerts a beneficial influence in helping to distinguish between authentic and pseudo-reform.

For the last four decades there has been a new ecclesial movement dedicated to the Roman Rite, which sprang up in France and England as soon as it became evident that the old rite was in jeopardy. That was in 1964. What was new about this movement was its lay origin. For the rest it remained in continuity with the Liturgical Movement launched in a monastic milieu by Dom Gueranger in the 19th century.

The purpose of the new Liturgical Movement remains the same as that of the old: restoration of the Roman Rite, and raising it to the lyrical heights of Gregorian chant. The latter aspect is peculiar to the lay French movement organized appropriately under the name *Una Voce*. The English are organized as the Latin Mass Society for the purpose of preventing the extinction of the old Mass. In 1969, there was another bifurcation when Archbishop Lefebvre launched his St. Plus X Society for the purpose of organizing seminaries to train priests for the Roman Rite. While he also

mobilized many hundreds of thousands of lay people, thanks to which the building and financing of six seminaries became possible, he has the merit of being the founder of the priestly branch of the Traditional Mass movement, this being the generic name of the new ecclesial movement for the restoration and embellishment of the Roman Rite.

In the context of *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, our scope is limited to the lay branch. Its inception in England was not only in continuity with the continental Liturgical movement but also as the culmination of two centuries of the great movement of conversion to Catholicism, led in the nineteenth century by Cardinal Newman and in the twentieth century by G. K. Chesterton. This was essentially a movement away from Protestant and Anglican vernacularism back to the Latin Roman Rite. It was headed by a galaxy of brilliant men and women of letters who furnished it with an abundance of inspiring literature. A recent book by Joseph Pearce, entitled *Literary Converts* (Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2000) documents the latter part, in the 20th century, of this eager throng on the path to Rome.

The suffering which the new encyclical (section #52) admits was inflicted by the Pauline reform, was extremely acute among the English and Welsh converts in the 1960s. They were distressed by seeing the Catholic Church turn her back on Latinity to embrace a vernacularism dreadfully inferior to Cranmer's stately English. An anguished appeal on their behalf was made by the most notable man of letters and convert at that time, Evelyn Waugh. He addressed it to the Primate of England and Wales, Cardinal Heenan, who went to Rome to implore Paul VI to give heed. In consequence, Bugnini was asked by the Pope to draw up an indult for England and Wales, effective in 1971. Although plastered with mean and punitive conditions, much to Heenan's disgust, it was grasped as a hand of rescue. Thus the lay branch of the Traditional Mass movement set forth on the low road of humble petition. In the year when the *Novus Ordo* was canonically instituted (1970) forty of the English and Welsh martyrs, who had died for the Roman Mass in the 16th century, were canonized. No doubt they gave weight to the intervention of Heenan. After Heenan's death, abolitionist bishops tried to make his indult die with him but it survived and was extended to the whole Church in 1984, thanks to the lobbying efforts of *Una Voce Internationale*. Also, the restrictive conditions were mitigated. Four years earlier, in his Apostolic Letter, *Dominicae Cenae*, John Paul II asked pardon in his own name and that of all the bishops for the manner in which those attached to the traditional Latin Mass had been treated. After another four years, he set up the Pontifical

Commission *Ecclesia Dei* by way of offering “full ecclesial communion” to the priestly branch of the Traditional Mass movement.

The St. Plus X Society deemed the offer too limited, but several of its priests and seminarians accepted and thus was constituted the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter, which set up an international seminary. This was followed by other priestly and lay groups. Ten years later (1998) when the Pope received the great Pentecostal gathering of new ecclesial movements, three thousand members of *Una Voce Internationale* congregated at Rome and were well received, but not allowed to celebrate the traditional Mass in the Basilicas. A beloved Canadian priest, authorized to celebrate according to the 1962 Missal, was practically frog marched out of St Peter's Basilica when the sacristans discovered that he was carrying the *verboten* Missal for which St. Peter's Basilica was built. In any event, the Holy See, although impeded by many abolitionist bishops and even prelates of the same ilk within the Roman Curia, is showing determination to stay on the road back to magnanimity. The year 2003 has so far been a banner year. A most remarkable concession was recently made on behalf of a priestly society in Campos, Brazil, whose right to the Roman Rite has been officially recognized. It is a concession which of its very nature cannot be limited to a few. It must eventually be extended to all. The reduction of the Roman Rite to the status of an indult therefore cannot be allowed to stand indefinitely. Neither can the pretext that the *Novus Ordo* is the present form of the Roman Rite. Such an idea is patently absurd.

The proclivity to abuse of the *Novus Ordo* is greatly accentuated by the postconciliar phenomenon of the mega-Mass, propagated by John Paul II himself throughout his world journeys. It poses an inescapable question: is it physically possible in the time frame of a Mass, to distribute Holy Communion to a congregation of hundreds of thousands, a million or even more than one million without desecration? The aforementioned Drolesky article mentions sacred hosts scattered in the *Via della Concilione* at Rome on the occasion of the canonization Mass for Padre Pio. An anecdotal account may be unreliable but scandal of this sort seems to be an inevitable aftermath of a mega-Mass, held anywhere. The perfection of sacramental communication is in function of its immediacy. It pertains to the very nature of the liturgy that it be enacted in a perfect mode of communication. The mega-Mass relies on the mega-screen and the mega sound system to bind a mass gathering stretching out of sight. It is a mass-mediated and therefore imperfect mode of communication.

It surely should be asked if it would not be better to bind it with a para - rather than a mega-liturgy.

A final question of capital importance is that of motivation. Why belong to a Latin Mass community? One should be motivated not only by personal preference but by desire the good of the Church as a whole. This is a fundamental exigency of true reform stipulated by Sacrosanctum Concilium #23. But this motivation must not be frustrated by the local Latin community becoming isolated from the Traditional Mass movement as a whole. Moreover, members of a local community can only have clear and sound ideas of why they belong if they are well organized, with their own lay officers, and have regular meetings at which the work of scholars supporting the Traditional Mass movement is explained and discussed.

Also it is only on the national and international level that the Traditional Mass movement can be recognized as a new lay ecclesial movement, inspired by the Holy Spirit and on which the future of the Church depends. It can happen, unfortunately, that priests of the Fraternity of St. Peter treat a local community which they serve as an agglomeration of individuals unconnected with the larger movement as organized by Una Voce. The inevitable result is that members divide into this or that faction, especially that which is intent on opposing the Novus Ordo, tooth and nail. This is incompatible with the stand taken by the Traditional Mass movement in its representations made to Rome through Una Voce Internationale. It has based itself from the beginning on article 4 of Sacrosanctum Concilium: "Holy Mother the Church holds all lawfully acknowledged rites to be of equal authority and dignity."

The right of association accorded to the faithful by Canon Law obviously implies that they themselves define why they associate. Those who join the Traditional Mass movement cannot accept being relegated to the past by others defining them as attached to a previous form of the Roman Rite. Their attachment to the Roman Rite, is *hic et nunc* - here and now. Their assistance at Mass according to the rite of all ages is for the purpose extolled by *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, namely to meet the resurrected Christ as He is today.