

## **VTMS Most Recent Initiatives on Behalf of the Vancouver Traditional Latin Mass Community**

The coinciding of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei, the founding of the Fraternity of St. Peter, the founding of the VTMS and permission to celebrate the Traditional Mass in Vancouver convinced the VTMS that the time was appropriate for a renewed effort to obtain full participation in the Traditional Liturgy of the Church.

For Easter the VTMS successfully petitioned Archbishop Adam Exner, with the help of Msgr. Monroe, to permit Fr. Devillers to perform the Easter Triduum Sacrum for our Community. On this visit Fr. Devillers was able to meet and renew contact with our Archbishop. In July of this year Fr. Creurer also paid a visit to Vancouver, and was able to meet with the Vicar-General Msgr. Monroe.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Letter to Archbishop Adam Exner**

On July 26<sup>th</sup> 1999 the VTMS formally petitioned Archbishop Adam Exner.

Most Reverend Adam Exner, OMI

Your Grace:

The Vancouver Traditional Mass Society wishes to express, on behalf of the Traditional Latin Mass Community, their congratulations on the twenty-fifth anniversary of your Episcopate. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered for your intentions!

This letter, Your Grace, is to keep the lines of communication open and to express the sense of frustration, which our community is experiencing because of its inability in the last ten years to move forward beyond the point at which we literally first started. To put it into concrete terms:

- we have just recently lost another member of the community to the Society of St. Pius X;
- young families are being refused Baptisms in the Traditional Rite;
- young couples are refused the Sacrament of Matrimony with Mass in the Traditional Rite;
- Priests called to give Extreme Unction cannot confer this Sacrament in the Traditional Rite;
- we are permitted the Traditional Mass to fulfill our Sunday obligation, but not on major feast days;

- Our community lacks spiritual direction by a Priest sympathetic to traditional spirituality;
- we still do not know where we stand with respect to having Traditional Funeral Masses for ourselves and family members; and
- community members have moved out of BC; one of the contributing factors was their pursuit of a stable Traditional Parish.

We think we have, over the years, established our loyalty not only to the Chair of Peter, but also to your predecessor and to yourself, as well as to the One, Holy, Roman, Catholic and Apostolic Church. We have patiently over the years continued to express our needs, hopes and desires both practical and spiritual even when rebuffed.

Our community, at this time, wishes to make some pertinent observations followed by specific requests for Your Grace's consideration:

- the motu proprio "Ecclesia Dei" of Our Holy Father Pope John Paul II in no instance refers to the Tridentine or Traditional Mass of the Roman or Latin Rite. In fact, in "Ecclesia Dei" the Holy Father was most careful to refer to access "to previous liturgical forms of the Latin tradition" and, elsewhere in the text, to "the Latin liturgical tradition". So we are talking about the liturgy which includes the Mass, the Sacraments, and the Divine Office. This point is borne out by Roman legislation that flowed subsequently from the Ecclesia Dei decree.
- Most important here is the erection in October 1988 by Pope John Paul II of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter which conceded them "the use of the liturgical books in force in 1962" -- the Missal, Pontificale, Rituale and Divine Office. Subsequently other religious communities have been erected, or whose previous existence has been formally recognized, with the same rights. For example: the Benedictine community of Le Barroux, the Benedictine community of Fontgombault (and its several daughter houses), the Institute of Christ the King and Sovereign Priest, the Fraternity of St. Vincent Ferrer, and there are many others. Not only do these communities have the right to use the Traditional Missal, Pontificale, Rituale, and Divine Office, so do all those Catholics who resort to them. The fact that Catholics are clearly free to resort to these religious communities -- and, indeed, their foundation was approved by Rome in the full knowledge that many Catholics would so resort to them -- indicates that all Catholics who aspire to have the benefit of the whole of the Latin liturgical

tradition must be entitled to realize this aspiration in the Mass, in the Sacraments and all the rest of this great heritage.

- In the Papal address delivered to the Ecclesia Dei pilgrims in Rome on Monday, October 26th, 1998, His Holiness, Pope John Paul II stated “the Church also shows her understanding for people ‘who feel attached to some previous liturgical and disciplinary forms.’ (Motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei, n.s). The Motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei must be applied in this perspective ... I therefore extend an invitation to Bishops to show understanding and renewed pastoral attention to the faithful who are attached to the former rite and, on the eve of the third millennium, to help all Catholics live the celebration of the Holy Mysteries with a faith that nourishes their spiritual life as a source of peace.”

Your Grace, the presence of the old liturgy does not disturb or break the unity of the diocese, but is rather a gift destined to build up the Body of Christ.

Having made the above observations, Your Grace, we respectfully request that:

- our community be provided full access to the liturgy of Holy Mother Church as set out in the pre-Vatican II liturgical books;
- our community be given access to full parish life with the establishment or the intention of establishing a ‘quasi’ parish for the Latin Mass Community; and
- a Priest from the fraternity of St. Peter be permitted to minister to our needs.

Sincerely Yours

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