Fr. Yves Normandin Visits Vancouver

The history of the Mass in Quebec is inseparably tied up with the history of Fr. Yves Normandin and Sainte-Yvett's parish in Montréal. On 14th May 1975 Fr. Normandin decided to revert to the Mass of his ordination. On April 18, however, the CCCB had decreed that, effective 30th June 1975, only ill and elderly priests could thenceforth celebrate the traditional Mass, and only in private.

Oct. 27th 1975 in a meeting with Abp. Grégoire Fr. Normandin was told 'I must demand your resignation because you stubbornly insist on celebrating the Mass of St. Pius V, contrary to the ordinance of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops…… You are to resign immediately. Otherwise, effective Nov. 5, you shall lose all jurisdiction in this diocese."

Nov. 9th Abp. Lefebvre celebrates pontifical high Mass at Sainte-Yvette's. Nov. 12th Mgr. Grégoire published a letter which declared the Mass of all time is no longer the Mass of today, and that the cure of Sainte-Yvette's is deserving of his removal by virtue of his unrepentant disobedience to the Church.

To cut a long story short the battle moves on to court, to the barricading of the rectory doors and the changing of locks; to Fr. Normandin having to leave the rectory, on Dec. 15th by stepladder from the balcony to escape notice of the guards and attend court. The rectory doors are broken down and Fr. Normadin starts a new phase in the 'Traditional Latin Mass Movement' in Canada.

This phase is what I would characterise as that of a wandering priest. Fr. Normandin 'As a young man, I had dreamed of an apostolate as an itinerant missionary in the jungle, with the White Fathers of Africa. Now, at 52 years of age, I discover that Canada, thanks to our own post conciliar bishops, has become a missionary frontier, once again a spiritually barren land, offering itself to priests loyal to infallible and indestructible Tradition.
'Every Sunday about 400 continue to attend the Traditional Latin Mass in spacious quarters in Montréal and we have found the means to expand our ministry, to Ottawa and to Northern New Brunswick, to Toronto, London and Stratford, to Winnipeg and to Vancouver and Victoria and even as far away as Florida.'

After the expulsion of Fr. Normandin there arose a movement under the leadership of Mr. Roman Liturgy the Abbot Real Bhattacharya. It is from this movement's fidelity to the traditional Roman Liturgy that formed primarily the faithful group, which is at the origin of the community Saint-Paul in Montreal. Their first "priest",

providentially, was Fr. Normandin who for nine years after the expulsion from his Parish, led a heroic life of missionary activity providing access to the traditional liturgy across the Canada. It is at this point that Fr. Normadin visited Vancouver to offer the Mass.

Fr. Normandin was parish priest of the Latin Community Catholic St-Paul October 7, 1985, to January 1, 2010, i.e. for almost twenty-five years before finally retiring.

In the 1990s when Fr. Tepoorten was our parish priest for the traditional Mass at Holy Spirit he invited in Fr. Normandin on a number of occasions which is when the community got to meet him again.