



VIDERE PETRUM

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A PAPACY DERAILED?

We have heard much of late from the press both Catholic and secular about how the papacy of Benedict XVI has gone off the rails; how his every initiative ends in disaster and embarrassment.

The primary piece of evidence for this bleak assessment is of course the case of Bishop Richard Williamson.

Bishop Williamson has always been a problem. At Ecône he was seen as aloof, odd, and dangerous (a call to his room over the seminary loudspeaker was the harbinger of immediate expulsion); his seminary courses, particularly in metaphysics, were impressive more for their *ad hoc* quality than their brilliance.

And then there was the question of his *views*. His opinions on everything from Beethoven (a genius, but a dangerous one) to the Jews (smart too, but therefore even more dangerous) were perfectly clear to everyone, from Archbishop Lefebvre down to the most naive of first year seminarians.

How then is it possible that the Roman authorities were caught off guard?

Well, they weren't, not all of them, in any case. Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos seems to have been oblivious, and as the top man in charge of the case, will have to take the major portion of blame. But he can justly complain that the experts who ought to have kept him fully informed did not do so, and to ask: why, exactly?

The probable reason for their failure is not an honourable one: officials, both in *Ecclesia Dei*,

but even more so in the Secretariat of State, do not want a reconciliation with the Society of St Pius X, and are quite willing to sabotage the Pope's desires. Is it really likely that NO ONE had ever read Williamson's blog (yes, he writes one, even now, despite having been told to keep quiet by the long suffering Bishop Bernard Fellay, who is the most favorable of the four bishops to a reconciliation) or simply done a bit of research via the internet? Of course not, but those in the know kept quiet, and hoped for exactly what happened: the news of the lifting of the excommunications, which was meant to lead to a climate of gratitude and openness, was immediately overwhelmed by the stark reality of Williamson's spectacularly ill-timed interview.

The situation has now deteriorated so badly that progressive German bishops (no friends of our German pope) are seriously calling for the excommunications to be re-imposed if the Society ordains priests in June, as it has always done. Does it really need to be pointed out that the excommunications were an automatic penalty for the consecration of bishops, not for the ordaining of priests? Or that their lifting was meant to encourage a softening of attitude, rather than a hardening? An invitation to serious dialogue rather than a return to sterile polemic?

Benedict will have noted the reactions of his fellow bishops, and he will have drawn the proper conclusions. For his papacy is not derailed, but building up a full head of steam. He makes his decisions and then notes the reactions. Those who follow his lead are promoted, those who do not are left aside. It will take time, but this papacy marks the turning point, after long decades of decline
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Fr Emerson singing the "Ite Missa Est" in Newcastle Cathedral



Restored altarpiece at *San Gregorio dei Muritori*

ROME REPORT

Two Anniversaries, Two Surprises

March 23 this year is the first anniversary of the creation of the personal parish of *Santissima Trinità dei Pellegrini*, entrusted to the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter. The Fraternity has now spent nearly a year serving the diocese of Rome through this old-rite parish, after a previous eleven years of pastoral service in our former Mass centre, *San Gregorio dei Muratori*. The parish of Trinita is providing catechism, marriage preparation and preparation for first Holy Communion, as well as daily Mass, Confession and devotions. We hope to arrange Confirmation in the near future.

The parish priest, Fr Joseph Kramer, was recently honoured by *Inside the Vatican* magazine by inclusion in its Top Ten People of 2008. Fr Kramer came fifth in the list, just after Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg, who recently distinguished himself by refusing to sign a pro-euthanasia law.

October 18 of last year was the Fraternity's twentieth anniversary as a society of apostolic life of pontifical right. Pilgrims from various parts of Europe and America filled the parish church of Santissima Trinita dei Pellegrini for a Pontifical High Mass celebrated by Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos, with Fr John Berg, Superior General of the Fraternity, as assistant priest. The Cardinal's Master of Ceremonies was Fr Almir de Andrade, a member of the Fraternity's council, recently arrived as one of the parish clergy.

Fr Arnaud Devillers has finished his studies at the Gregorian and is now in charge of the Fraternity's new apostolate in Quincy, Illinois.

A further Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Pell of Sydney on December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Restoration has recently been completed on the seventeenth-century painting of the Madonna and Child with St Gregory in the church of San Gregorio. During the restoration, it was discovered that on the back of this painting is another, probably a few decades older. The

new-found painting is a representation of St Matthew, very close in its iconography to the statue of St Matthew above his altar in Trinita dei Pellegrini. In Trinita itself, we have discovered a tomb behind the altar, inscribed *Corpus S. Antonii M.* : the body of St Antony Martyr. Our Roman churches, venerable in age, can still delight and move us with surprises.

Fr Brendan Gerard

LIFE AFTER BRAIN DEATH

Brain death has been used internationally in the last four decades as a medico-legal definition of death. This has been commonly accepted, by Catholic bioethicists among others. The brain death criterion is crucial to current practice in the removal of organs for transplants. Vital organs are removed from human bodies where brain activity is deemed to have ceased, but where other vital functions are typically present. A UK National Health Service website acknowledges that organs such as hearts, which deteriorate very quickly without an oxygen supply, are usually only donated by a heartbeating donor, that is, a donor whose heart is beating and whose blood is circulating, supported by a ventilator.

But is brain death really equivalent to death? An international conference held in Rome on February 19 says No. This congress, attended by medical and legal professionals, bioethicists, clergy and religious, is one of several recent protests against the brain death criterion. The conference contends that people declared brain dead still fulfill other criteria of biological life, and that in some instances they have recovered and gone on to lead normal lives. Cases were cited of pregnant mothers said to be brain dead, but whose children were carried successfully to term. One participant referred to a four-year-old who was declared brain dead, but who nevertheless grew to normal adult size over the next sixteen years, while remaining comatose. Last year, Zach Dunlap of Oklahoma was pronounced brain dead after an accident, but was saved from death (his organs were to be removed for transplants) by a cousin who proved, with the adroit use of his pen-knife, that Zach was still alive. Zach has made a

significant recovery from his injuries. Moreover, neurologist Cicero Coimbra told the conference that the apnoea test, a key diagnostic tool for determining brain death, actually causes the severe brain damage it is supposed to identify. Dr Coimbra said that brain-damaged patients who might recover are deprived of oxygen for up to ten minutes in the apnoea test. This, he said, frequently causes brain necrosis, permanent and irreversible brain damage that is accepted as brain death.

The conference was held, scarcely by accident, close to the Vatican, where there are tensions over the adequacy of the brain death criterion. In 2000, Pope John Paul II said, in a highly nuanced statement, that 'brain death' criteria can be used, on the understanding that they provide a basis for reaching moral certainty of death. Last November, an international conference on organ transplants, held under the auspices of the Pontifical Academy for Life, did not include sessions that looked critically at the brain death criterion. However, in his address to the conference Pope Benedict insisted that organs may only be removed from a patient in the presence of his actual death. With reference to the determination of death, the Pope cautioned that there must not be the slightest suspicion of arbitrariness. Where certainty cannot be achieved, the principle of precaution must prevail.

Similarly, Magisterial texts have stated the principles which apply, leaving the determination of death to medical science. The revised text of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1997) encourages organ donation as an expression of generous solidarity, with the stipulation that it is not morally admissible directly to bring about the disabling mutilation or death of a human being, even in order to delay the death of other persons (para 2296).

Meanwhile, the situation in the United Kingdom is especially problematic. There, death is diagnosed not on the basis of 'brain death' but the end of functioning of the brain stem only. This approach has not been widely accepted in other countries.

While Church teaching clearly supports in principle the donation of vital organs, with proper consent, after the death of the donor, the adequacy of the current brain death criterion is under forceful attack from a concerned cross-

section of doctors, lawyers, philosophers and ethicists. Whether there will be any developments in the Magisterium's approach to the question, one way or the other, remains to be seen.

Fr Brendan Gerard

ELUANA: A TRAGEDY ALMOST AVERTED

All of Italy has been closely following the story of Eluana Englaro, the young woman who was called in the press Italy's Terri Schiavo. Eluana had been in a state of diminished consciousness since a car accident in 1992 and she died in a nursing care home in Udine, in north eastern Italy on February 9, after food and water had been withheld from her for three days. Despite news media consistently using the phrase allow her to die, Eluana was not ill and just days before her death, her physician reported that, apart from her brain injury, she was in excellent health. Many observers expressed surprise that she had succumbed to dehydration just three days after the withdrawal of all fluids.

The case became a cause celebre for euthanasia activists working to legalise euthanasia and/or assisted suicide in Italy. Eluana's father, Beppino Englaro, had petitioned Italy's courts for ten years to have her dehydrated to death, saying that she had once told him she would not want to continue to live in such circumstances. In November, Italy's highest appeals court, the Court of Cassation in Rome, refused to overturn the permission granted by the Milan appeals court. After a few weeks, Beppino Englaro succeeded in finding a nursing home that was willing to be used for the purpose and a group of pro-euthanasia volunteers to oversee his daughter's death. At the same time, Italy's health minister said that the withdrawal of food and water from helpless patients is illegal and that no publicly funded health care facility could do so.

When Eluana was moved to the La Quieta private clinic in Udine in preparation for her death, some Italian parliamentarians attempted to pass emergency legislation that

would have forced doctors to halt the dehydration. But while the decree law was supported in parliament, Italy's President, former communist party head Giorgio Napolitano, refused to sign, effectively killing the effort. While Prime Minister Berlusconi was working to fast-track the bill through the parliamentary process, it was announced that Eluana had died.

Since that time, euthanasia activists, encouraged by President Napolitano, have used the incident to press for this form of passive euthanasia to be legalised in an upcoming living wills law. But a clause in that bill that would define food and hydration as medical treatment, which under the constitution could legally be refused by patients, is strongly opposed in Italy's parliament.

Hilary White (Rome Correspondent for LifeSiteNews.com)

THE CASE FOR INCONVENIENCE

Few of us, I think, would be prepared to argue against conveniences, or hesitate to defend what we regard as the positive role they play in our lives. And would we not even be inclined to confuse conveniences with necessities, so dependent upon them have we become? Would we be able to do without them? Should we do without them? In sum, are we not justified in regarding our conveniences as unquestionably good?

Before we proceed any farther in this little meditation, I think it important that we pause at this point and get as clear an idea as we can of precisely what it is we are talking about. What is a convenience? One of my dictionaries defines a convenience as, "Anything that increases comfort or makes work less difficult." Another informs me that a convenience is something that provides "ease in use or action; material advantage ... favorable to one's comfort."

The basic idea seems uncomplicated enough: a convenience is something that makes life easier for us, that contributes to our comfort. Is there

anything in the very notion of convenience that should prompt us to give it more thought than we usually do? (I suspect most of us do not give it any thought at all.) I think there is. The first thing that has to be said, by way of clarification, is that there is nothing inherently wrong in making things easier for ourselves, nor is there something inherently wrong about comfort, just as such. That much established, we must look more closely at the matter. Before we set out making things easier for ourselves, we should ask two questions: (1) How are we making things easier for ourselves, what means are we employing? (2) *Why* are we making things easier for ourselves?

In responding to the first question, we might discover that the means we employ in making things easier for ourselves are either questionable or downright unethical. If the latter is the case, then of course making things easier for ourselves turns out to be a bad thing. For example, if I steal a motor scooter to avoid the arduous five-mile walk to the downtown area, I have made things easier for myself through illicit means. As a general rule of thumb, whenever our making things easier for ourselves ends up by making things harder for others, we are in a problematic moral state. If in a work situation I slack off and do not pull my own weight, thereby putting a greater burden on my fellow workers, then I buy my ease at the expense of others.

The second question- - Why are we making things easier for ourselves? - could strike us as unnecessary, for we might take its answer to be obvious. Is it not always right to make things easier for ourselves? Well, as a matter of fact, no, it is not, and sometimes it is positively wrong to do so. Moreover, sometimes it is positively right to make things difficult for ourselves. While comfort is not in itself a bad thing, my hierarchy of values would be seriously disordered if I were to make comfort-seeking the principal preoccupation of my life. I would be thinking deviantly if I were to convince myself that I am here to make life easier for myself, although a legitimate case could be made for the proposition that at least one of my purposes on this earth should be to try to make life easier for others.

We have to take a hard look at this whole business of conveniences. I think it can be said flatly that, taking them all in all, they do not

necessarily make our lives better, or more human. Looking at the matter from a purely natural point of view, conveniences tend to make us soft, both in body and in mind, as we become more and more dependent upon them. They separate us from the wondrously wide natural world created by God, and immerse us ever more deeply in the narrow, bloodless, man-created world of technology. And we should ask ourselves this, Just how convenient are our conveniences? We tell ourselves that they save us time, but we are only fooling ourselves in that respect, for the more we surround ourselves with machines, with electronic gadgets, the more time we have to give to them. How many families in this country have the "convenience" of a second car, or even a third? The literary scholar Joseph Wood Krutch once humorously observed that, "If one's own car is a convenience, everybody else's is a nuisance." There comes a point when our conveniences, instead of simplifying our lives - which should be our aim - make them ever more complicated.

We justify our conveniences by pointing to their labour-saving qualities, which, we say, provides us with more leisure. Is this really true? The British economist E. F. Schumacher conjectured: "The amount of real leisure a society enjoys tends to be in inverse proportion to the amount of labour-saving machinery it employs." In other words, the more so-called labour-saving machinery, the less real leisure. But, those considerations aside, we must ask, What is so sacrosanct about saving labour? Labour should not be saved, it should be spent. We are made to work, and work, by definition - if it is going to have any beneficial effects at all - is not easy. Moreover, work is one of the means by which, co-operating with God's grace, we sanctify ourselves. St. Benedict clearly saw the close connection between work and sanctification, as reflected in his pointed motto: *Ora et labora*, "Pray and work."

But if this issue is looked at from a supernatural point of view, and sooner or later every issue should be looked at from a supernatural point of view, a positive case can be made for inconvenience. Seriously living the Christian life, which means taking at face value the injunction that we should be striving to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect, can, in the final analysis, have nothing to do with convenience, with making things easier for

ourselves, with comfort seeking. The logician Susan Stebbing once aptly quipped that "thinking is hard work." If thinking is hard work, and it is, seriously living the Christian life has got to be the hardest work in the world. And of all the things we could do, what could be more thoroughly inconvenient than daily taking up our cross and Following Christ, which onerous task He laid down as the condition for discipleship? The cross and convenience are completely incompatible. We have to choose one or the other.

D. Q. McInerny, PH.D
Professor of Philosophy
Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary

BOOK REVIEW

PRIESTS OF JESUS CHRIST

"The mystery of the priesthood of the Church lies in the fact that we, miserable human beings, by virtue of the Sacrament, can speak with his "I": *in persona Christi*." With the Pope's Chrism Mass homily of 2006, in which these words occur, Fr Gerard Skinner begins his anthology of the Holy Father's reflections on the priesthood. Drawing on homilies, addresses, responses to priests questions, and the apostolic exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*, the editor produces a compendium of the Pope's thought on the significance and implications of holy orders. Here we find the wisdom of one who has been a priest himself for nearly fifty-eight years, and a bishop for thirty-two. Repeatedly, Benedict emphasizes the importance for the priest of a life centred on Holy Mass, the Divine Office and personal prayer. Most priests are not hermits; no priest is a secular social worker. So, on the one hand, the Pope insists that the priest must first be a man of God, so that time spent with God is in fact a pastoral priority; on the other hand, the priest exists for others, in Christ, so that even if little time is left for contemplation, in being for others, we are with the Lord.

This volume contains much that will be useful to all the faithful, not only by aiding their understanding of the priesthood, but through reflections and advice that apply to everyone. The Pope speaks of the place of regular

confession for growth in the Christian life. He points out that Catholicism is the religion of “*et...et, both...and*”: love of God does not exclude love of the good things of His creation. We cannot always live in exalted meditation; perhaps a saint on the last step of his earthly pilgrimage could reach this point, but we normally live with our feet on the ground and our eyes turned to Heaven.

But it is always the figure of the priest that is to the fore here. Christ needs priests who are mature, virile, capable of cultivating an authentic spiritual paternity; that is, capable of leading men to God, incarnate in Jesus Christ, and of being the representative of his love.

An index, or at least a list of all the homilies and talks reproduced, would have increased the usefulness of this volume as a reference-text. Nevertheless, the anthology itself is a fine selection, another illustration of Pope Benedict’s gift for returning to the essential, with humour, charity and wisdom.

(BG)

(Pope Benedict XVI, *Priests of Jesus Christ*, ed. Fr Gerard Skinner. Oxford: Family Publications, 2009, pp.272, p/b, ISBN 9781871217902, £12.95)

CARDINAL CANIZARES LLOVERA

Your Eminence, you were appointed Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments by the Pope last 9 December. There had been talk for some time of your summons to Rome...

ANTONIO CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: That’s how it was in effect. It became almost a persecution, I couldn’t appear in public without journalists, but not only them, asking me: when do you leave for Rome? But it was “gossip”. And so it remained until the Pope communicated his decision at the audience he granted me on 20 November 2008.

How are you facing up to this new post? Have you done studies in liturgy?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: From the very beginning of my priestly training I’ve always been passionate about the liturgy. Prior to my doctoral thesis in pastoral and catechetical theology I studied the Scriptures in the Paschal Triduum of Spanish liturgy. As priest I taught Liturgy and Catechesis. As bishop, first in Avila, then in Granada and then in Toledo, one of my main concerns was that in the dioceses that the Lord had entrusted to me the Liturgy of the Eucharist should be celebrated everywhere with sobriety and beauty, and always in compliance with the rules of Church. The mass in fact is truly the source and summit of Christian life – as we were reminded by Vatican Council II – and therefore cannot be celebrated in unworthy fashion. The Eucharist is truly the heart of the Church, and therefore Eucharistic adoration, in the liturgical celebration, but not only there, is decisive for the life of our communities.

Your priestly formation matured during the transition from pre- to post-Council...

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: In effect I entered the diocesan seminary of Valencia in 1961, at 16, and then from 1964 to 1968 I studied at the Pontifical University of Salamanca where I took a degree in theology. In 1970 I was ordained priest and the following year I took a Ph.D. with specialization in Catechesis at the same University.

What memories do you have of that phase of liturgical reform?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: I think that a deepening and renewal of the liturgy was necessary. But in my own experience it was not a perfectly successful operation. The first part of the *Sacrosanctum Concilium* Constitution did not enter the hearts of the Christian people. There was a change in the forms, a reform, but not a true renewal as required by the *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. At times change was for the mere sake of changing from a past perceived as negative and outdated. Sometimes the reform was regarded as a break and not as an organic development of Tradition. Out of that came all the problems raised by the traditionalists attached to the rite of 1962.

So was it a reform that, in actual fact, did not fully comply with the Council decision?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: More than anything else I would say that it was a reform

that was applied and above all was experienced as an absolute change, as if a chasm has to be created between the pre- and post-Vatican II, in a context in which “pre-Council” was used as an insult.

In fact that is usually the case even today. However, when your appointment was made known there were those who described your theological evolution as a parabola starting from rather progressive positions and coming down on conservative shores. In practice the same trajectory that is “imputed” to Pope Benedict. Do you recognize yourself in that?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: In 1967, when I was studying as a priest, I read an article by the then Professor Joseph Ratzinger on the renewal of the Church after the Council, an article that warned about certain drifts that were already taking place. I fully agreed with it. The Council has been a blessing for the Church. I have always lived it not as a break with tradition but as a confirmation of the Tradition, updated so it can be offered to the people of today. I don't believe I've changed in that. Those who know me well know that there have been no “u-turns” in my life. It's enough to read what Juan Martin Velasco wrote in *País* after my appointment.

In the media you are known as the “little Ratzinger”. How do you feel about the description?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: Well [he smiles, *ed.*], it will be because both of us have completely white hair... Perhaps the nickname arose between 1985 and 1992, when I was secretary of the Episcopal Committee for the Doctrine of the Faith. For me of course it's always been a great honor to be compared to Cardinal Ratzinger, even more so today. But let's be clear, I don't believe myself worthy. *Non sum dignus*. Sincerely.

When did you meet him personally?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: In 1987, during a meeting of presidents of European Bishops' Committees for the Doctrine of the Faith. Then my acquaintanceship deepened because of my collaboration in the drafting of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* published in 1992, and in its translation into Spanish. And, most recently with my appointment as a member of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

... In fact your voice has been raised more than a few times to criticize the actions of the government...

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: As bishop I have a particular duty to the faithful and to all Spaniards. I have the duty to defend the rights of the weakest, as the unborn are, I have the duty to defend marriage as is required by natural law, I have the duty to defend religious freedom, the freedom of parents to educate their children in accord with their own principles, the freedom of the Church. As you see, it's a matter of promoting the great “yes” to life and the family as we are required by the Gospel of Jesus. For the good of man and of the whole of society. We don't want to impose anything. We want to be free to propose. We love freedom. Without freedom a society has no future. The danger today is that this freedom may be annulled.

In what sense?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: Freedom is not possible without truth and without reason. The danger today is that of wanting to separate freedom from truth. In this sense it may be that some of my statements are perceived as criticism of some measures of the government. But on these issues, the Church cannot remain silent. It would betray Jesus. We are His Church we cannot go against what He said and against the commandments of God. We are respectful of the established power. We must be, the Epistles of St Peter and St Paul repeatedly remind us, but that is no reason why our word – on issues concerning faith and morals – can be chained. I hope I've been clear.

You are also a member of the Pontifical Commission “Ecclesia Dei”. What is your view of the *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum*?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: Even if it has upset some people it was an extraordinary gesture of ecclesial good sense. Whereby a rite that has spiritually nurtured the Latin Church for more than four centuries was recognized as fully valid. I think that this *motu proprio* is a grace that will fortify the faith of traditionalist groups that are already organically present in the Church and that it will help the return of so-called Lefebvrians... It will also be a help to everyone.

You have had contacts with the Lefebvrians: what do you think of the

withdrawal of the excommunication against the bishops and the controversies that have followed?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: I have not had any contact with the so-called “Lefebvrian” world. As for the withdrawal of the excommunication my thinking is simple. It was an act of gratuitous mercy by the Holy Father to aid their full inclusion in the Catholic Church. It’s obvious that this can only happen after they recognize the whole Magisterium of the Church, including that expressed by Vatican Council II and recent popes. But we must recognize that unity is inseparable from the cross.

What about the statements from Bishop Williamson denying or minimizing the Shoah?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: It’s nonsense that the Pope and the Holy See have repeatedly and firmly rejected. I hope and pray that it will be officially and firmly disowned by the person concerned as soon as possible. But I add that the way in which the Pope has been treated, even by those within the Church, in all of this, has not been a pleasant sight. Fortunately at least the Spanish Church has issued a fine communiqué of filial support for our great Benedict XVI.

Let’s go back to the liturgy. As archbishop of Toledo you have also celebrated in the very ancient Mozarabic rite...

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: Actually, every day in the Cathedral of Toledo the mass is celebrated and Lauds recited also in that ancient rite, which survived the Tridentine reform. One must remember – and maybe some people don’t like doing so – that the so-called Missal of St Pius V did not abolish all previous rites. Those rites that could boast at least two centuries of history were in fact “saved”. And the Mozarabic rite – together, for example, with the rite proper to the Dominican order – was among them. So after the Council of Trent there was not absolute uniformity in the liturgy of the Latin Church.

What, apart from what we have already mentioned, are the issues you will have to face in carrying out this new mission?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: Helping the whole Church to fully follow what Vatican Council II indicated in the *Sacrosanctum Concilium* Constitution. Helping to fully understand what

the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says about the liturgy. To learn from what the Holy Father – when he was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger – wrote on the matter, especially in the beautiful book *Introduction to the spirit of the liturgy*. To learn from how the Holy Father – assisted by the Office for liturgical ceremonies presided by Monsignor Guido Marini – celebrates the liturgy. The pontifical liturgies in fact have always been, and still are, exemplary for the whole Catholic world.

In an interview granted in Spain you praised the Pope’s decision to distribute the Eucharist, in the liturgy which he presided, only to kneelers and only in the mouth. Are changes on the matter expected in the universal discipline of the Church?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: As is known the current discipline of the universal Church normally requires that communion be distributed in the mouth of the faithful. Then there is an indulgence that allows, at the request of the bishops, communion to be distributed onto the palm of the hand. This is worth remembering. The Pope, then, to give greater prominence to the due reverence with which we should approach the Body of Christ, decided that the faithful who take communion from his hands do so on their knees. It seemed to me a beautiful and uplifting initiative from the Bishop of Rome. The current rules do not require anyone to do the same. But nor do they prohibit it.

Do you already know Italy and the Roman Curia?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: I know both less than I should. I hope to make up ground soon.

What impression of the Italian Church did you have from Spain?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: Very good. The Italian Church has been an example to us. And it has also been for me personally. It’s a people’s Church that knows how to speak with clarity and respect, and at the same time provides a great deal of assistance to the neediest fringes of Italian society.

You took up your office a few days after the appointment. But before settling in Rome you went back to Spain a couple of times, you had talks with the King and the Prime Minister Zapatero and

accompanied the Secretary of State, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, on his visit to Madrid in early February. What are the fears and hopes for your country?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: I fear that the secularist and relativist wave that is threatening society may continue to erode the fundamental principles and values on which our country is built: the Catholic faith, life, the family, education. I hope and pray that the Church be able to offer to the Spaniards the true face of Jesus, that the Spaniards open or reopen their hearts to Jesus, who offers everyone the hope of a new life, more beautiful and more worth living. I hope and pray that my fellow citizens open their hearts and minds to Jesus and not cut the Christian roots that are the basis of our history and of the unity of our country.

As Archbishop of Granada you were able to see close up the Arab-Muslim influence and legacy in the history of Spain. What did you think of it?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: The Muslim domination lasted centuries. It seemed over with. I won't hide that there is a certain concern, because in the Islamic world today there are those who would like to recover our lands for Islam. While we Catholics want to have good relations with everyone, including Muslims, these projects – which do not appear to be only theoretical – can't help but disturb us.

Do you fear for the unity of your country?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: The unity of Spain is a moral, prepolitical good, constitutive of our identity. It's not just a political issue. That unity had its origin in the Third Council of Toledo in 589, when the Visigoth king Recaredo was converted to the true faith and abandoned Arianism, thus encouraging full amalgamation between the Latin and Germanic components of the population. Cardinal Ratzinger recalled it in a talk in which he said that the Council of Toledo was also in some way the act whereby Europe was founded. For this reason I believe that the unity of Spain is a non-negotiable good.

However in the body of Spanish bishops there are different feelings among the prelates from the more separatist regions...

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: The Spanish

Episcopal Conference has approved a document in which the unity of the country is considered a moral good. And it did so with a clear vote.

What do you think of the cause for beatification of Isabella of Castile?

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: Isabella was a woman of great faith, an exemplary wife, a queen with a unique apostolic zeal, a great Christian. She gave permission to Colombo to cross the ocean only on condition that his primary purpose was to evangelize the lands he might discover. I believe and hope that as soon as possible she rise to the honor of the altars. I confess that often as Archbishop of Granada, especially when I had some important problem to deal with, I would go to pray at the tomb of Isabella, which is there in the Cathedral, and I always felt I had been helped.

In an interview given to *Razón* you said that the last movie you saw was *Life is Beautiful* by Roberto Benigni.

CAÑIZARES LLOVERA: It's a beautiful film, open to life and hope. To tell the truth I've seen it four times. And every time I do so it moves me more and more. Life is really beautiful because it is a gift from God.

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THE RETREAT FROM FAITH AND THE MODERNIST REFORMATION

It is only on looking back that we see how far we have travelled and how much the landscape has altered. One of the ironies of life is that it is possible to live through a period of profound change and only be aware of it in retrospect. The seventy years that I have spent on this Earth, I now realise, have coincided with changes in religion, culture and politics unequalled in Christendom since the Reformation.

On the positive side, we have, during this period seen the defeat of National Socialism, survived the real possibility of global

annihilation during the Cold War, and witnessed the peaceful collapse of atheistic Soviet Communism, thanks to the steadfastness of the United States and the moral authority of John Paul II.

Yet so much has gone. The British Empire which I took for granted in my childhood has vanished, as has so much else I thought part of my heritage. The house I grew up in, the two schools I attended, the two regiments I served in and with, and now the great company I worked for, once the bellwether of the UK economy, have all gone. The British people are now faced with the apparent need to blend into an ever more integrated EU, while at home they are confronted with foreign immigration on a scale unprecedented since, and greater than, the incursions of the 5th Century. This latter will fundamentally change the nature of our society, yet there was never any consultation, nor was assent sought. The Christian character of Britain and Europe, still acknowledged by a clear majority of the populations, is now ever more under assault by a wave of atheistic secular relativism and legislation, which seeks to exclude religion from public life, and uses consumerism and a self-centred distortion of human rights, bereft of the concept of duty, as its weapons. This in turn has resulted in materialism, hedonism and a widespread breakdown of family and therefore of society. Alongside this we have the ever widening gap between the rich and the poor. We have not only relative, but absolute poverty at home as well as in the underdeveloped world. The very country I have owed my upbringing and security to, the United Kingdom, is in danger of breaking up due to declining democratic standards at Westminster, exploited by third rate, self-seeking, provincial politicians.

The "spirit of the age" declares all this to be progress, although towards what end, is not explained. What is clear is that this new "enlightened" but morally relativist secularist world is more than ever beset with greed, selfishness, war, and state sponsored massacre, as of the unborn, which matches the worst excesses of the National Socialism and Marxist Socialism regimes of the 20th Century. Mankind clearly has not progressed towards its undefined secularist Utopia, and Western Secularism, a Godless and therefore ultimately meaningless belief system, now entrenched in nearly all European political parties, shows

every sign that it will be as dictatorial, oppressive and malign, if allowed to continue unchallenged, as its two major counterpart regimes of the 20th Century.

The State of the Church

Profound as these events are, of greater concern to me now, as a Catholic, is the state of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ on Earth, in which I was raised, and which I accept intellectually now, as in my teenage years, and which we are all obliged to nurture and preserve. The Catholic Church of my youth, in the pre-Vatican II days was a growing, confident, and respected establishment with full congregations drawn from all classes and occupations. It was notable for the number of converts including many writers and intellectuals. It contained the triumphant certainty of Belloc, and had satisfied the deep wisdom of Chesterton. One reason for this apart from its certain and confident teaching was the beauty of the ancient and transcendent Latin Liturgy, going back to Trent and beyond for some fourteen centuries.

Yet today, some 50 years later, our Church in the West, has shrunk to a shadow of its former self with all indicators such as baptisms, marriage, clergy and Mass attendance heading ever downwards. This is a grave matter indeed since the Catholic Church, composed as it has always been of imperfect human beings, but carrying the guarantee of Christ, is all that stands between Mankind, as fallen creatures, and ultimate barbarism.

As a cradle Catholic, typically accepting the Church without too much enquiry I have been aware of this trend now for some years. But retirement, with more time for reading and observation, has brought home to me the appalling state that the Church is in, and this has been instrumental in my taking a more proactive role in Church matters. A case of all hands to the pumps and perhaps, better late than never!

The numerical decline became marked after the Second Vatican Council. Sadly the Church is increasingly divided into so-called traditionalist and progressive wings which disagree on the role of the Council in this decline. Many of the former blame it directly, and of the latter blame the incomplete application of the alleged ideas of the Council. Both are arguing from entrenched positions. Having now studied many of the documents and writings, I find

myself inclined towards the traditionalist camp, but the situation is far from simple. As Catholics we are compelled to accept the outcome of the Council which was a gathering of the Magisterium of the Church under the direction of the Pope and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Whatever the machinations of the debates, and they were by all accounts quite violent at times, the written documents, insofar as they deal with definitions of faith or morals, are binding on Catholics. The agendas of the participants, hidden or otherwise, and which did not figure in the final documents, are not.

At issue here is whether the Council was essentially pastoral or doctrinal in intent. John XXIII stressed his pastoral intent in his opening speech and called for adherence to all teachings of the Church. The present Pope, speaking in 1988, confirmed that the Council defined no new doctrines and chose to remain as merely a pastoral council, clarifying attitudes, for instance, to ecumenism and engagement with the non-Christian world. This contradicts the progressive view, which has long argued, and still does, that Vatican II was doctrinal. In particular, they claim new teachings on conscience - but there were none. On the contrary, the Council re-confirmed already established teaching on informed conscience which can be traced to Newman and beyond. The much misunderstood and misinterpreted document on religious freedom, *Dignitatis Humanae*, is little more than an ecclesiastical confirmation of the United Nations ruling on this subject of 1948, and is more concerned with protecting the rights of the Church in the face of hostile political or religious persecution. The political background of the Council is important. The Cold War was at its height and the Church was being suppressed or persecuted in many parts of the world. In any case the document carries the usual *caveat* that all true belief subsists in the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Not surprisingly, for the subject is close to all our hearts, the document on liturgy, how we outwardly express our inward beliefs, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of 1963, has produced the most heated debate and disagreement. It allows for considered and measured liturgical change including limited use of the vernacular, something that was debated at Trent and postponed, but not forbidden, because of the danger of misinterpretation following the Protestant Reformation.

What went wrong

Whatever the Vatican II documents say, however, it was in the so-called period of "implementation" starting some five years after the Council that unprescribed change and possible false doctrinal interpretations occurred. Changes in the new liturgy, in and associated, with the *Novus Ordo*, were far in excess of anything laid down in the documents. Other changes such as the unauthorised, implied, banning of the Latin Mass, the method of reception of Communion, and the downplaying of traditional devotions to Our Lady, all suggest that something more than a mere process of updating of the Church's attitude to the world and other churches, was at work in this period. The result was a break with tradition resulting in contrived, artificial and banal liturgy which dismayed traditional Catholics and apparently failed, in the following years, to retain the interest of younger Catholics.

But more seriously, it is now clear that the liturgical changes became a vehicle for doctrinal interpretations which were in no way supported by the Council. Whether this was unintentional, or whether subversive forces obtained excessive influence, or whether the Church, lay and clergy alike, had absorbed to excess the relativist spirit of the age, is yet a matter of heated debate. What happened was a widespread retreat from orthodoxy, and a strong movement towards heterodoxy, that is, dissent from established teaching, often encouraged by clergy. Orthodox clergy were conspicuous only by their dispirited, self-effacing silence, reflecting the loss of nerve amongst the hierarchy. What is undeniable however is that the sum total of change, both liturgical and interpretative, failed to halt the precipitous decline of all aspects of Catholicism in the Western Church during the past forty years – and may well have contributed significantly to it.

Now it was inevitable that as we emerged from war with the loosened moral constraints that are inevitably associated with war, there would be an attempt to carry these perceived freedoms forward. Reaction against authority, both political and religious, are a common feature of such times and some decline in religious observance was inevitable. Affluence, leading to materialism and then hedonism, would inevitably have impacted on society and on the Church, aided and abetted by liberal socialism and exploited by commercial interests.

But there were deeper forces at work, namely, the scepticism of the so-called Enlightenment and post-Kantian ideas, rejecting an objective reality beyond direct human experience, which came to be known as Modernism, often now referred to as Secularism or Relativism. Pius X in his encyclical *Pascendi Dominicus Gregis*, 1907, warned specifically against Modernism and its exponents, enemies within the Church, including clergy and theologians, “they lie hid in her very bosom and heart”. He charged them a variety of errors, all of which are depressingly familiar in today’s Church, including a denial of absolute truth, and concluded that Modernism was the “synthesis of all heresies”. He explained it as a by-product of (unregulated) curiosity and pride.

Some 43 years later Pius XII reiterated this warning if anything more strongly in his encyclical *Humani Generis* of 1950. He warned specifically against a tendency of some theologians to minimise and dilute fundamental established doctrine in the interest of compromise with other Christian bodies. Particular targets of this *Eirenism*, as he identified it, being, for example, Original Sin, the Real Presence and the teaching authority of the Church. As with Pius X, he identified the personal motivation as being “desirous of novelty” and worse still “fearing being considered ignorant”, as for example by other Christian bodies.

When John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council in 1962 he must have been aware of these dangers. There was much resistance to the Council from the Curia, who were no doubt aware of barely contained theological rebellion in some quarters. Since traditionally Councils have been called to counter heresy or to define new doctrine, they argued that there was no need for a Council at this time, and how right they were!

Perhaps with this in mind, John XXII made it clear in his opening speech that the established teaching of the Church was to be preserved, and he emphasised the pastoral nature of the Council. No doubt he was confident he could handle the Modernist forces of reform. But he died in June 1963, and the Council continued for two years under Paul VI. Up to this point, the Council had not impacted significantly on the wider Catholic lay world, but as from 1970, and without any concerted attempt at explanation or justification, a series of profound liturgical changes were imposed on the Western Church which caused widespread dismay and

bewilderment. In the following years the resulting confusion caused a collapse in faith and certainty, particularly on the part of Catholic educators and clergy. Now this may well have given some satisfaction to “progressive “ elements within the Church but the effect on the laity was devastating and a process of defection and passive leakage started which continues today some forty years later, leaving the Western Church but a shadow of its former self.

Now this collapse of the Church was not the result of assault by external forces. Empires, and organisations such as the Church, are rarely overwhelmed from without, a notable exception being the loss of half of Christendom to the Islamic invasions in the 7th century. Rather, the danger is from within, when dissident and often initially well-intentioned reform movements overreach themselves and create revolution, as in the Protestant Reformation. Starting from the late 19th century and possibly before, such a movement of dissent, verging on heresy, grew within the Church, reaching its climax in the post-Vatican II period.

Pius X warned against it, Pius XII confirmed the warning, John XXIII underestimated it, but tried to allow for it, Paul VI fought it and was driven to tears because of it, John Paul II halted and started to reverse it, and now today, Benedict XVI continues the process of stabilisation, repair, and proper renewal, according to the true intent of the Council. There is a lesson here and it is that the Catholic Church holds its authority from Christ, through His appointed Vicar on earth, the Pope, and that, in the last resort, it is in the person and office of the Pontiff that our trust must be placed.

Retreat of the Supernatural

But the liturgical changes and even the relativistic post-Conciliar thinking do not alone explain the extent of defection of the laity and the collapse of vocations. There was a failure by the Hierarchy to counter the influence of secularist ideas both before, and more importantly after Vatican II, when the hedonistic culture of the sixties was at its height, and it is essential to understand what happened.

The UK Church’s education strategy in its Catholic schools, post-WWII, was directed at

educating the children of a large migrant Irish population to take their proper place in society, and in this they succeeded – perhaps more than they intended. Post-war Catholics proved to be intuitively conformist and took with ease to modern society, readily absorbing the fashionable materialism and secularist attitudes then prevalent. The concept of a Catholic counter-culture example, now increasingly called for by the Church, was not considered in those days of thoughtless ecumenism. The absence of a strong orthodox example on the part of the Hierarchy and clergy, had a profound effect on the commitment of the laity and therefore on the number of vocations. A range of factors can be identified. Increasing affluence promised a fuller and more exciting lifestyle. Birth control and the growing feminist movement promised an era of recreational sex with no downside, initially for women, and increasingly for men. Pharmaceutical drugs, antibiotics and heart-transplant/bypass surgery extended life expectation so that the possibility of death, that great concentrator of minds, became remote even for adults.

The Supernatural was receding from consciousness along with a decline in belief. In particular, there was a failure in the field of RE in Catholic schools, caused by low morale and widespread uncertainty, which produced generations of Catholics and Catholic parents with insufficient grounding in the Faith, producing a knock-on effect that is with us today. While teachers are often blamed, the real problem here was the lack of leadership on the part of the Hierarchy, unprepared to stand up to, or worse still, receptive to, this wave of fashionable relativistic ideas. This combined with a false understanding of ecumenism led to the abandonment of the Church's evangelistic role, her duty to "go therefore, teach all nations". Given this background, it is not surprising that the disappearance of the transcendental in liturgy raised few objections. It was indeed welcomed by many. Others, simply lost interest and turned away.

Of course the laity could hedge their bets, indulging in this exciting new lifestyle, while remaining nominally Catholic. But for those contemplating vocation, these developments presented real problems. A very strong faith was needed to resist this siren chorus, and the 60s and 70s were noticeable for the desertion not only of seminarians but also of young priests. In later decades, as the sacramental

nature of the priesthood was downplayed, and as the shock of the abuse scandal, predominantly homosexual in nature, became clear, the status of the priesthood fell to an all time low, thus exacerbating the vocation crisis that is with us today.

The perceived clash between Faith and Reason

But there is an even more fundamental problem which John Paul II referred to in *Fides et Ratio*, and which has so reduced the collective capacity in Catholics, for commitment to all forms of vocation including the celibate priesthood. It is the idea, originating with post-enlightenment thinkers that faith and reason (including science) are separate, incompatible and mutually antagonistic. This has sunk deeply into much of western thinking, as an inhibition at perhaps sub-conscious level, on educated modern man, including Catholics. It is the false premise that religion opposes science, and that science can disprove or make religion irrelevant. It has produced a hostile attitude to faith. More importantly it has induced a profound retreat from belief on the part of some Christian and even Catholic theologians leading them to question the place of reason and absolute truth in religion, and so to relativism. In particular, the attack on the traditional doctrine of informed conscience, has led, within the laity, to a widespread attitude of self-accommodating interpretation of Church teachings to suit personal circumstances or life style choice, often encouraged and advocated by dissident clerics who have been excessively influenced by these ideas. Against this background it is hardly surprising that so few young men now have the necessary faith in the prospect of eternal life and a beneficent God to enable them to devote their lives exclusively to the service of God

And yet this is a false intuition. No discovery in science can conflict with revealed truth since both are the product of the mind of God.

John Paul II explained that faith and reason are "mutually supportive of each other" and urged that philosophy should recover its relationship with theology and with ethics. The search for truth in philosophy and science, he insisted, gives access to Mystery. Professor John Haldane of St Andrews University offers a refreshing observation based on his contacts with scientists, "far from being hostile to religion, contemporary scientific theories are

often congenial to, and indeed may be supportive of, theistic viewpoints”.

From my own readings, as a scientist, I find that the time is perhaps ripe for a change in Western thinking in the light of new discoveries in science, which hint at truths concerning time, dimension and creation, which thinkers in the Judeo-Christian tradition over the past three millennia, have regarded as self evident. It is perhaps in these developments, that we can find hope for the future. Professor Haldane has called for Catholics to think more. If we do, and if we, laity and clergy alike, absorb the new understanding between reason and religion, then and only then will the churches and seminaries fill again. If we do not, then we should be aware that the resulting religious and moral vacuum will certainly be filled, and that there are plenty of eager potential successors, including an aggressive and expansionist Islam.

When I first thought about these events in the Church many years ago, my intuitive reaction, based on my Catholic upbringing, but little in the way of knowledge, was that in Vatican II, the Church had stepped too far back from tradition and certainty. I now believe that intuition to have been correct, although it was not in Vatican II itself, but rather in the aftermath, that the problem lay.

Modernist Reformation?

As a Catholic brought up before the Council, when the church was still in the process of recovering its confidence after the terrible assault and rending divisions of the sixteenth century, the idea of Reformation and its consequences are always in mind. So the question that arises is this: have we, in addition to all the other profound and indeed revolutionary events of the last seventy years, been subjected to an attempt at a second Reformation, a Modernist Reformation, traceable back through Kant to Hume and to Locke, which has attacked the teaching of the Church, not with the stark denials of the Protestant Reformation, which one could agree or disagree with, but with relativistic innuendo, all the more effective because of the retreat from faith and certainty which clergy and laity alike have inherited from post- enlightenment thinking? Equally as part of this or in addition to this, has there been an attempt to repeat or complete the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation by breaking with Trent and

Vatican I and by, as the Holy Father has indicated, establishing a hermeneutic of rupture as a prelude to establishing a relativised, personalised Catholic Church able to blend gradually into a widely accommodating new form of ecumenistic Christianity? And has this occurred, while so many of the laity failed to comprehend, and just got on with their affluent, busy, absorbing lives?

If so then Vatican II, unfortunate in its timing and contemporary with the heightened secular spirit of its time which influenced clergy and laity alike, provided the Modernist Reformers with their opportunity. And they appear to have seized it, firstly by means of strenuous and, by some accounts, excessively violent debate, during the Council. Having failed to bend the final written documents to their will, thanks to the orthodox, and let us be honest here, the infallible Papal instincts of Paul VI, they partially succeeded in pushing through significant relativistic liturgical and therefore doctrinal interpretation, in the years after the Council.

But it was some time before many thinking Catholics understood what was happening. After all, the Reformation in England waxed and waned over three reigns and many of the ordinary people simply kept their heads down and carried on as best they could, unconsciously absorbing the changes and only gradually realising the nature of what was happening to their Church. Reformation was more abrupt in Scotland, following the Protestant victory in the civil war of 1559-60, thanks to intervention by Elizabeth's troops, but even here large parts of the country continued Catholic for generations after the disruptions in the cities, and change in these areas would have come gradually.

Parallels can be carried too far, but if the attempted Modernist Reformation premise is correct, and no doubt historians and theologians will debate it well into the future, we should be looking for other signs of Reformation, and indeed they are there. We may not resort to war now as our forebears of the sixteenth century, faith undiluted with Relativism, did, but the orthodox/heterodox debate rages on in thinking Catholic circles, with the dissenters becoming ever more strident in their interpretations, the same process that led to separation at the Reformation. Iconoclasm has taken place in the stripping of the altars and furnishings of established churches, and in a more muted form, in the minimalist architectural styles of new churches.

The authority of the Popes, as successors of Peter, is challenged by national Episcopal Conferences, and corrective Vatican documents are ignored. Allied to this is a tendency to push for the emergence of “national churches” as happened at the Reformation.

And the signs of counter or Catholic Reformation are there in the actions of our Popes. In retrospect we can see that Paul VI, while he came close to losing control of rebellious bishops and liturgists, nevertheless held the orthodox line with difficulty in the final documents of the Council, although driven to tears by unauthorised liturgical abuse so widely practised after the issuing of the *Novus Ordo* rubrics. But he further upheld orthodoxy, notably on the doctrines of the Real Presence in *Mysterium Fidei* and on the transmission of life in *Humanae Vitae*, the latter much to the rage of the Modernists. John Paul II began the long, slow process of re-affirming and restoring tradition and orthodoxy, first with his emphasis on established doctrinal teachings, his several actions on traditional liturgy, and then by encouraging a counter-cultural role for the Church. We now have Benedict XVI, with his analytic abilities, his insistence on orthodoxy, his re-establishment of the Tridentine liturgy as a fully authorised and equal form of the Latin rite, his policy of “reform of the reform”, and his vision for the role of the young in carrying forward this renewal. The emergence of new Orders and “movements” is now a notable feature drawing heavily on lay participation, particularly of the young.

But the battle is far from over. As recently as February 2008, Benedict, addressing a gathering of religious superiors, commented that secularism did not spare religious communities, many of whom were suffering from a “weariness”. The following month he remarked that “secularism is destroying the Church from within, even at the level of the Hierarchy”.

That is a sobering and even shocking statement indeed. But the reality is that we of the pre and post Vatican II generations, religious and lay, progressive and traditional, have collectively failed in our duty during the period of the implementation of Vatican II to nurture and preserve Christ’s Mystical Body on Earth, whether from false judgement, preoccupation, timidity or indifference.

Conclusion

History does not come to a halt. Empires and kingdoms rise and fall. Heresy and Reformation are not only of the 4th or 16th century. They are alive and well today in the 21st century. In addition to the other changes and disruptions, political and cultural, mentioned above in the last seventy years, it may well be that we have experienced what amounts to second Reformation in the Western Church. It has been recognised and halted and is now being reversed to proper intended reform, something that is vital to the Church, and always will be so. But this episode is not reason to be disturbed, rather the opposite. We have Christ’s assurance that he would be with us “until the consummation of the world” and that the gates of hell would not prevail. And indeed we see, once again, that they will not.

The baton has already been passed to the next generation. The amazing phenomena of up to half a million young people led by Benedict XVI at the World Youth day celebrations in Sydney recently, is proof of that. We have the new orders and movements that are emerging, and the need to teach Catholic doctrine and apologetics in schools and seminaries has been re-discovered. The call to universal but separate vocation on the part of clergy and laity alike is increasingly recognised, as is the importance of Catholic witness and example in secularised society. Contact with Tradition and traditional practises and devotions have been re-established and the ancient liturgy of the Latin Mass will co-exist and increasingly intermingle with the *Novus Ordo*, as was intended by the Council and by Benedict XVI. The Barque of Peter is once again under way, and will sail on renewed, and manned, not by the weary old generations of the last century, but by the youth and faith of this new century.

Few things are permanent in this world. Please God, the family, founded on the institution of sacramental marriage, is one, for that is the basis of all civilised human society. The other is Christ’s Mystical Body on earth, that community of faith, hope and charity, composed of imperfect human beings, which is the Catholic Church, guided through the turbulent ages by the Holy Spirit, and, by the Successors of Peter, our Popes.



A view towards the choir at St Andrew's Church - Christmas Midnight Mass 2008



Easter Vigil 2009

(continued from title page)

punctuated by fitful and rarely followed through efforts at reform during the last few decades.

It is precisely because Benedict is seriously determined upon a recognizable and effective program of reform that the enemies of that reform deride both him and it.

As serious as was, the Williamson setback is no more than a sideshow. An apparatus is now in place for serious theological discussion between the Congregation for the Defence of the Faith (which means Benedict himself) and the Society of St Pius X. These will be conducted in writing and in private, which should assure a minimum of mischievous intervention by the media. All well intentioned Catholics will be praying for their success.

The secret of Benedict's long term success is his quiet temperament and his even handedness. Those who do not appreciate the old liturgy understand that he is not rushing to destroy what they value in the reforms, but only wishes gently to lead by example and encouragement. The result is that more and more bishops are accepting the old rites into the liturgical practice of their dioceses and, perhaps even more significantly, are finding themselves impressed by both the actual experience of the traditional liturgy, and its power to attract. The reform of the reform too is making significant progress. The recent appointment of a priest prominent in the old rite movement in England to the post of General Secretary of ICEL speaks volumes in this regard.

Benedict's lesson to us all is clear: patient application of the tools he has placed in our hands will bring forth lasting fruit, while the old habits of polemic and denunciation, having proven sterile, must be allowed to wither.

A derailed papacy? Rather, I think, an explorative one: the route may be tentative, but the goal is certain, and already in view.

MASS TIMES AND PLACES

EDINBURGH: Mass is said on Sundays at 11:30 am and on Great Feasts at 6:15 pm at St Andrews Church, 77 Belford Road, Ravelston. During the week Mass is at 8:00 am (Friday 6:00 pm) at 6 Belford Park.

STIRLING: Mass every first Sunday of the month at 5:00 pm at Holy Spirit Church, St Ninian's, McGrigor Rd.



The Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter is a registered charity (no. 1083419). Any and all donations should be made payable to "The Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter" and sent to Freepost RLYB-TZSZ-ASKE, 6 Belford Park, EDINBURGH EH4 3DP, or use the PRE-PAID envelope provided. Please do not make cheques out in the name of an individual priest (except for Mass stipends), nor to *Videre Petrum*.

All other communications concerning this newsletter should be sent to Fr John Emerson, 6 Belford Park, Edinburgh EH4 3DP.

The FSSP in Great Britain has recently undergone an administrative re-organization. There is no longer a "district" as such, but simply two houses: Edinburgh (Fr Emerson's address is given above) and Reading (Fr Armand de Malleray. 179 Elgar Road, Reading, Berkshire RG2 0DH).

VIDERE PETRUM is the newsletter of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter in Scotland. Its title recalls St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (1:15-19) where Paul relates how he responded immediately to the Lord's call to become an apostle, yet after three years he came to Jerusalem "to see Peter" (in the Latin Vulgate, *videre Petrum*), thus exemplifying obedience to God and communion with the Vicar of Christ.

