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The

“Instaurare omnia in Christo”

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THE VOICE OF TRADITIONAL CATHOLICISM

TRADITIONAL CATHOLIC DEVOTIONS

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Devotional Headwaters

The Liturgy as a Source of Devotion

Fr. Ian Andrew Palko, SSPX

At the summit and center of the Christian Liturgy¹ stands the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in which the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross at Calvary is sacramentally renewed. So essential was this Sacrifice of the Cross that Catholics profess dogmatically that all graces that God would ever give to mankind were merited by this Sacrifice. While the Crucifixion happened at a specific moment in time, graces and merits granted before Calvary were *ex ante facto*—granted in view of what Christ would merit.

If all graces flow from Calvary, logic then would show us that all true devotion, as an act of the virtue of religion—a supernatural act, founded on grace—must also flow from that same Sacrifice. Continuing that logic, the other parts of the Christian Liturgy—being the official prayer of the Church Herself, and therefore the prayer of Christ to His Father—also form the primary devotional source for all Christians.

Pope Pius XII insists on this point, teaching

that the liturgy is “the public worship which our Redeemer as Head of the Church renders to the Father,” but also “the worship which the community of the faithful renders to its Founder, and through Him to the heavenly Father,” and therefore, “the worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ in the entirety of its Head and members.”² Nevertheless, he labels as erroneous those who would make the liturgy a merely external rite, writing, “God cannot be honored worthily unless the mind and heart turn to Him in quest of the perfect life, and that the worship rendered to God by the Church in union with her divine Head [*i.e.* liturgical prayer] is the most efficacious means of achieving sanctity.”³

If Christian devotional life does not have the liturgy, at least indirectly, as its source, and thus “withdraw [the faithful] from the stream of vital energy that flows from Head to members, it would indeed be sterile, and deserve to be condemned.”⁴



High Mass at a Fishing Village on the Zuyder Zee, Holland.
George Clausen (1852-1944).

to allow the faithful to follow more closely the texts they often could not understand from hearing alone.

Beginning in the 1860s, Fr. Giuseppe Sarto began teaching the faithful of his small parish church to sing the Gregorian Chant of the Mass and Office. When he received his own parish in Salzano, he opened a school for Latin and sacred music. He would continue these works throughout his time as a bishop, then cardinal-patriarch of Venice before issuing, as Pope Pius X, his famous apostolic letter *Tra Le Sollecitudini* on sacred music and the liturgy, setting down clear guidelines for sacred music. The Ordinary of the Mass was to be sung by the faithful. The more difficult variable parts, by a choir of men trained for such a purpose.

The Liturgical Movement was, in this way, trying to promote what Dom Alcuin Reid, O.S.B. calls, “the principle of liturgical piety,” writing that this principle “seeks not to reform liturgical rites or prayers, but the spiritual dispositions and practices of the Catholic faithful.”⁸

In this vein, Dom Lambert Beauduin proposed some practical means for developing liturgical piety in his 1914 *La Piété de L’Église*. Though Beauduin would later become a “true machine of war to propel the liturgical movement”⁹ in the wrong direction, his suggestions in this work are perfectly orthodox. Some of his ideas are reworkings of the *motu proprio* of St. Pius X or logical derivations from these same principles and ideas.

Beauduin suggests, for instance, that the Sunday Sung or Solemn Mass should be emphasized along with communal singing of the liturgical chant. He recommends that Vespers and Compline of Sunday be sung in parochial churches, where possible. The solemn singing of the Office of the Dead with all of its ceremo-

nies for the faithful who have died, was suggested as a way of uniting the faithful, and teaching the Catholic doctrines on the body and soul as a means to help combat the rationalism of the time which would deny the eternity of the soul. It is also a great work of charity for the deceased.

Private devotions were also encouraged, but with a particular emphasis on basing such devotions and practices of popular piety on the liturgical seasons, feasts, meditation on the liturgy or its components such as the Psalms. The use of the liturgy as a central element of Christian education and study was to be promoted in schools, especially by the teaching and study of sacred music and other arts.

Msgr. Lefebvre, even well before a New Mass was on the horizon, saw the value of the Mass as a means by which the faithful can learn their Faith, and draw many spiritual benefits.

The liturgy is a very effective means of ministry. If the liturgy is first and foremost the praise of the Blessed Trinity, an oblation and sacrifice and source of divine life, it is also the most vivid and effective form of catechesis. We can never do enough to enhance our liturgical ceremonies and to make our faithful and catechumens participate in these mysteries, which are the great means of apostolate, the only means that is really and truly efficacious, because it is the one Christ Himself chose as He chose us, too.¹⁰

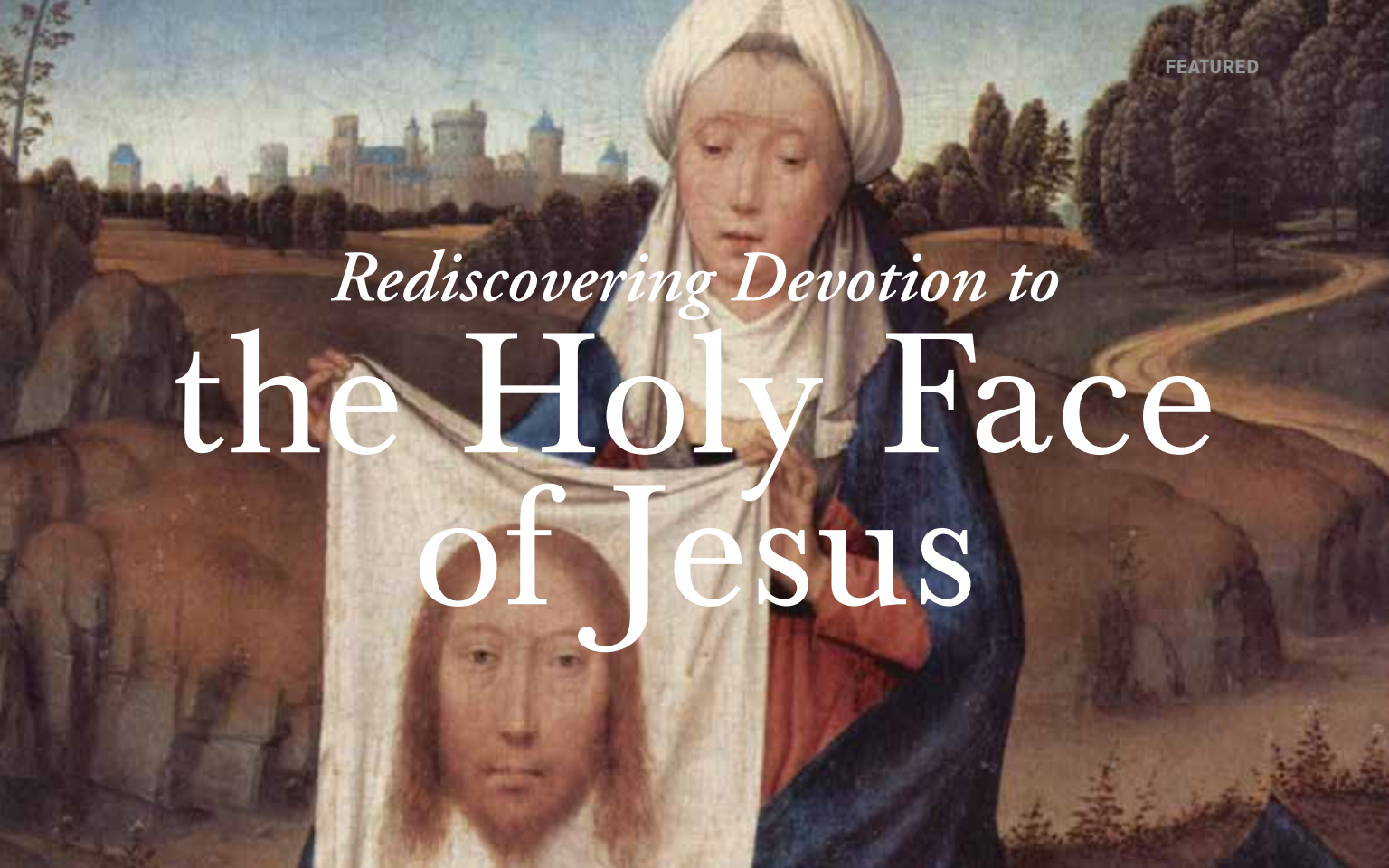
If this is true, it also behooves the faithful to then allow the liturgy to inform their Catholic devotions and spiritual life. No changes to the liturgy are needed, only to drink deeper from this “source of divine life” as deeply as possible, and apply these “living waters” to the field of the domestic Church that is the home, and one’s own spiritual life.

Present Practical Proposals

1. Sacred Music and the Faithful

The singing of the Kyriale (*Kyrie, Gloria, Creed, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei*) and sung responses at Mass and the Office by all the faithful—not merely a select choir—were repeatedly and widely encouraged.

St. Pius X as a parish priest taught chant to his faithful; later as a Cardinal he would further encourage this in Venice, and then as Pope he would insist that “[s]pecial efforts are



Rediscovering Devotion to the Holy Face of Jesus

Sarah Damm

Many Catholics have a beautiful and strong devotion to special attributes of Our Lord: the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Precious Blood of Jesus, the Holy Name of Jesus. Catholics observe holy days and pray litanies in honor of these beloved characteristics of Our Lord. After every Low Mass, we implore the most Sacred Heart of Jesus to have mercy on our souls. Yes, among Catholic devotions, these are some of the most revered ones because through them we call to mind the most tender heart of God, burning with love for us; we contemplate His precious Blood poured out for our salvation; and we cannot help but bow in reverence upon hearing the very Holy Name of Jesus.

Yet, how many in the world turn away from the love poured out of His Sacred Heart? How many sins were the cause of His bloodshed? How many souls, created in the *imago Dei*, curse His name instead of praise it?

The Holy Face Devotion

At one point in Catholic history, another devotion was as well-known and beloved as that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus—the Holy Face devotion.

This devotion was given to the Church by Our Lord Himself, who said it is “the most beautiful work under the sun.”¹ As with many devotions, the process of official Church approval was slow. But unlike devotions that have maintained a steadfast adherence over the centuries, this devotion encountered too many disturbances, causing it to nearly disappear and go unknown among most devout Catholics. Why?

Jesus warned “about the fury of Satan against this holy devotion” ... He said that “Satan will do all in his power to crush this Work at its roots.”² But recently, it is once again gaining traction. Perhaps this devotion has been hidden “for such a time as this,”³ when our society needs saving like never before.

According to Blessed Pope Pius IX, “repa-

ration is destined to save society.”⁴ And the primary purpose of the Holy Face devotion is to make reparation for sins against the first three commandments, which are sins against God Himself and therefore most offensive to Him:

- Denial of God (atheism/communism)
- Blasphemy
- Profanation of Sundays and Holy Days

The sin of blasphemy “wounds His divine Heart more grievously than all other sins ... by blasphemy the sinner curses Him to His Face ...”⁵ In addition, the Holy Face devotion makes reparation for the evils of communism. Christ promises that this devotion will save the Church and the world, not from natural consequences like flood or famine, but from revolutionary men who want to destroy what is good, true, and beautiful. “Sometimes God punishes with the elements. Think of the flood, locusts, and the ground opening up. But sometimes God punishes with revolutionary men as is seen in Leviticus 26.”⁶

In Leviticus 26, God clearly states that He blesses those who follow His commandments:

I will look on you, and make you increase: you shall be multiplied, and I will establish my covenant with you ... I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people.⁷

But God also gives a warning:

But if you will not hear me, nor do all my commandments ... I will set my face against you, and you shall fall down before your enemies, and shall be made subject to them that hate you, you shall flee when no man pursueth you.⁸

The Face of God

The word “face” is mentioned 840 times in Scripture. When God faces us and we face God, it is a sign of blessing. But when God turns His face from us, it is a sign of punishment.

In Psalm 83:10, King David prays, “Behold, O God our protector: and look on the face of thy Christ.”

During the Passion, after Peter denied Jesus three times, He turned and looked at Peter. Peter wept bitterly, but that encounter—face to face with the Lord—was a moment of conversion for him.

The Holy Face devotion invites us to look

upon the face of Christ that we, too, may experience a deeper conversion of faith. “Lord God of hosts, convert us; shew us thy face and we shall be saved.” (Psalm 79:20)

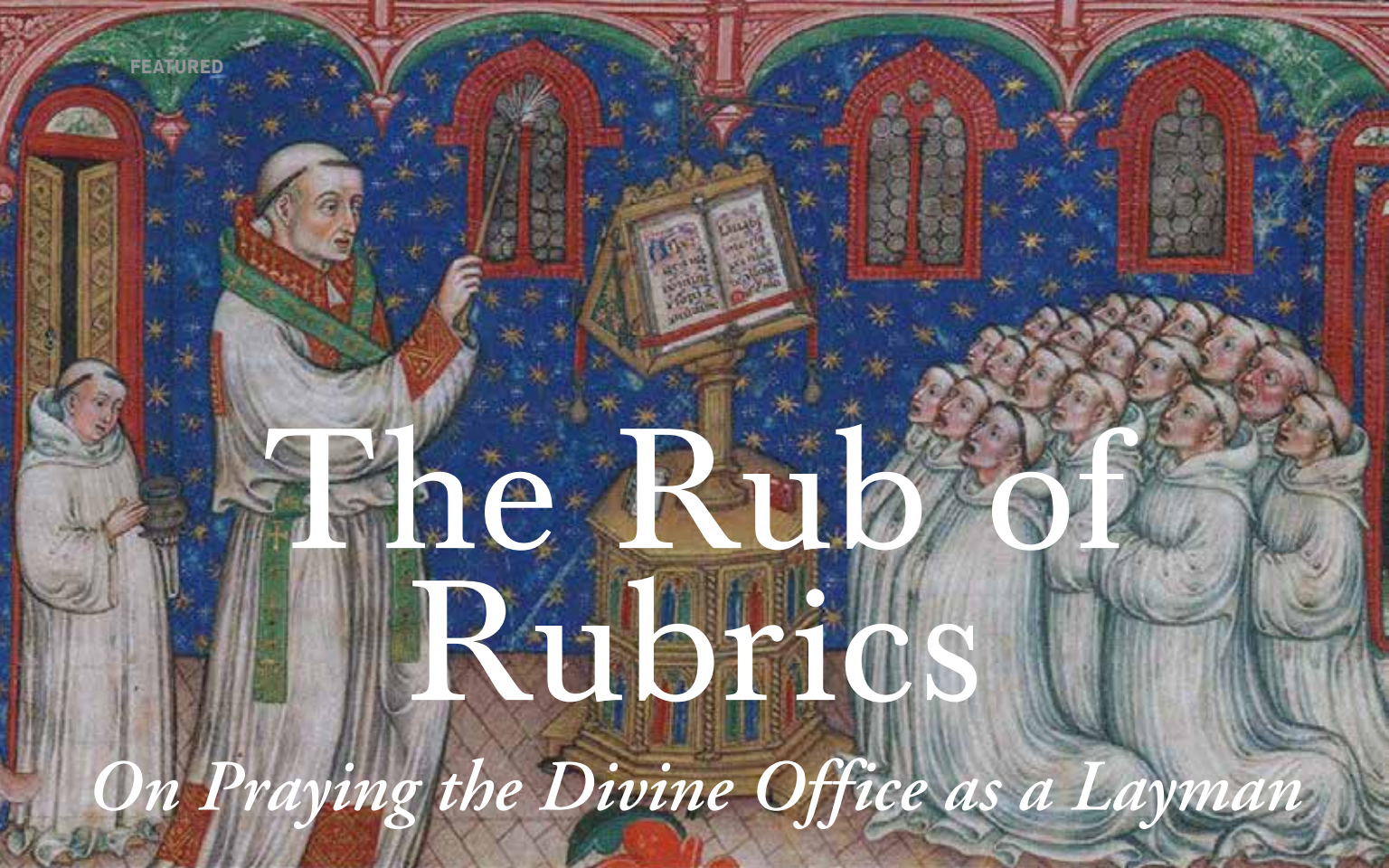
And through our own devotion to the Holy Face, we learn that reparation for the offenses and blasphemies against the first three commandments is vital, but we also must make reparation for the evils of communism. “God is angry with idolatry, irreverence, and blasphemy, and He is punishing the world chiefly because of sins against the first three commandments”⁹

Therefore, if we do not make reparation for the sins that most offend God, first, the world will continue to be overrun by revolutionary men and systems of power.

People have been fighting abortion among nations for about half a century to no avail. Why has man failed in fighting the abortion industry? Nations have committed sins against the first three commandments—the ones that deal with God: idolatry, blasphemy, and irreverence. If we cannot get these three right, how can we get the other seven that concern our neighbor?¹⁰



Sister Mary of St. Peter



The Rub of Rubrics

On Praying the Divine Office as a Layman

Julian Kwasniewski

Many among the traditional Catholic laity love to pray some portion of the Divine Office or have heard that it is a good spiritual practice to do so. Hearing that it is the “official prayer of the Church,” and “greatly meritorious,” you might feel like you are really missing out—perhaps even being a bad Catholic—if you don’t get on the bandwagon and start getting your ribbons in order.

But if using a hand missal presents difficulties, or does at first, navigating a Divine Office book can also be intimidating. One might spend a whole office trying to find commemorations, remember collect conclusions, or stumbling over unfamiliar Latin psalm verses. Anxiety arising from such a situation runs counter to the purpose of prayer in the first place: focus on God, rather than on the elements of the prayer itself.

In order to remove any possible trepidation in a layman thinking about praying the Office, I hope here to give some suggestions for slowly

becoming familiar with this beautiful prayer of the Church. Sharing thoughts and tips on praying the Office as a layman, I want to remind readers that you need not do everything right all at once. I want to provide you with encouragement to put the prayer before the prayer book, regardless of how familiar you are with it. This can be difficult, but it is crucial to a holy and peaceful approach to the office.

I will assume for the purposes of this article a basic familiarity with the day hours of the Roman or Benedictine Office, as found in a 1962 Missal, *The Monastic Diurnal*, Angelus Press’s *Divine Office* or *Compline* book, or one of the editions of *The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin* available from various publishers. I will also assume that you have read any introductions these books might contain and thus have a basic familiarity with the parts of the Office such as hymns, antiphons, or psalms. If you have not yet found one of these books, you can easily find them online. And if you have access to a nearby traditional parish or religious order that

accustomed to praying the regular ferial office, and incorporating the proper of Advent or Lent seems overwhelming, just wait until next year: you've got time!

Authors often speak of how rich the propers for feast days are in the Traditional Office. This is true, and a very good reason to take it up. However, keep in mind that while exposure to beautiful feast day propers is important, it is not an absolute. Prayer is for the "lifting of heart and mind to God," as St. Therese says, not a liturgy study session. If extensively following the propers is distracting or overwhelming, but you want to educate yourself with them, don't try to combine prayer with liturgical study. Give yourself enough time to do both properly, reading the propers on their own for your *lectio divina*.

A Child's Office

Growing up, I fondly remember praying an abbreviated form of Compline as part of family night prayers. While many encourage praying the office together as a family, I have not seen anyone comment on the fact that a full-length office, even a short one like Compline, may be a bit long for small children.

The psalms, whether in English or Latin, present a lot of the same sort of thing for a young attention span. I suggest selecting a few memorable and important elements from the office and teaching them to your children. For example, rather than praying Compline with all the psalms, just chant the reading (*Fratres, sobrii estote...*) and then skip to the hymn (*Te lucis*) and responsory (*In manus tuas...*) and conclude with the collect (*Visita quaesumus*) and Salve Regina. Or even choose between the hymn and responsory, alternating on different days of the week.

This way of abbreviating the office results in parts that the children can join in, such as the

hymn, and parent-led sections, like the chapter or collect. With multiple children, perhaps the privilege of reading the lesson can be also passed around, giving them a "job" in family prayers for them to anticipate.

In such family situations, the elements of Compline could also be treated as "book ends" to other forms of prayer. One could open night prayers with the Latin reading or hymn, then invite everyone to say something they are grateful for, ask for the intercession of patron saints, or offer spontaneous prayers, before closing with the Marian antiphon. Thus structure and spontaneity, formal and informal prayer are joined, and children learn that such things are compatible and need not be tedious.

I strongly suggest, based on my own and other's experience, that older children not be pressured into participating in fuller offices. However much a parent might think praying the Divine Office to be a good thing (and it is), forcing a child to participate will often backfire, even if they seem initially willing. If spouses have a desire to pray "family Vespers" or something of that nature, let the parents do that on their own, but with an open invitation to the children.

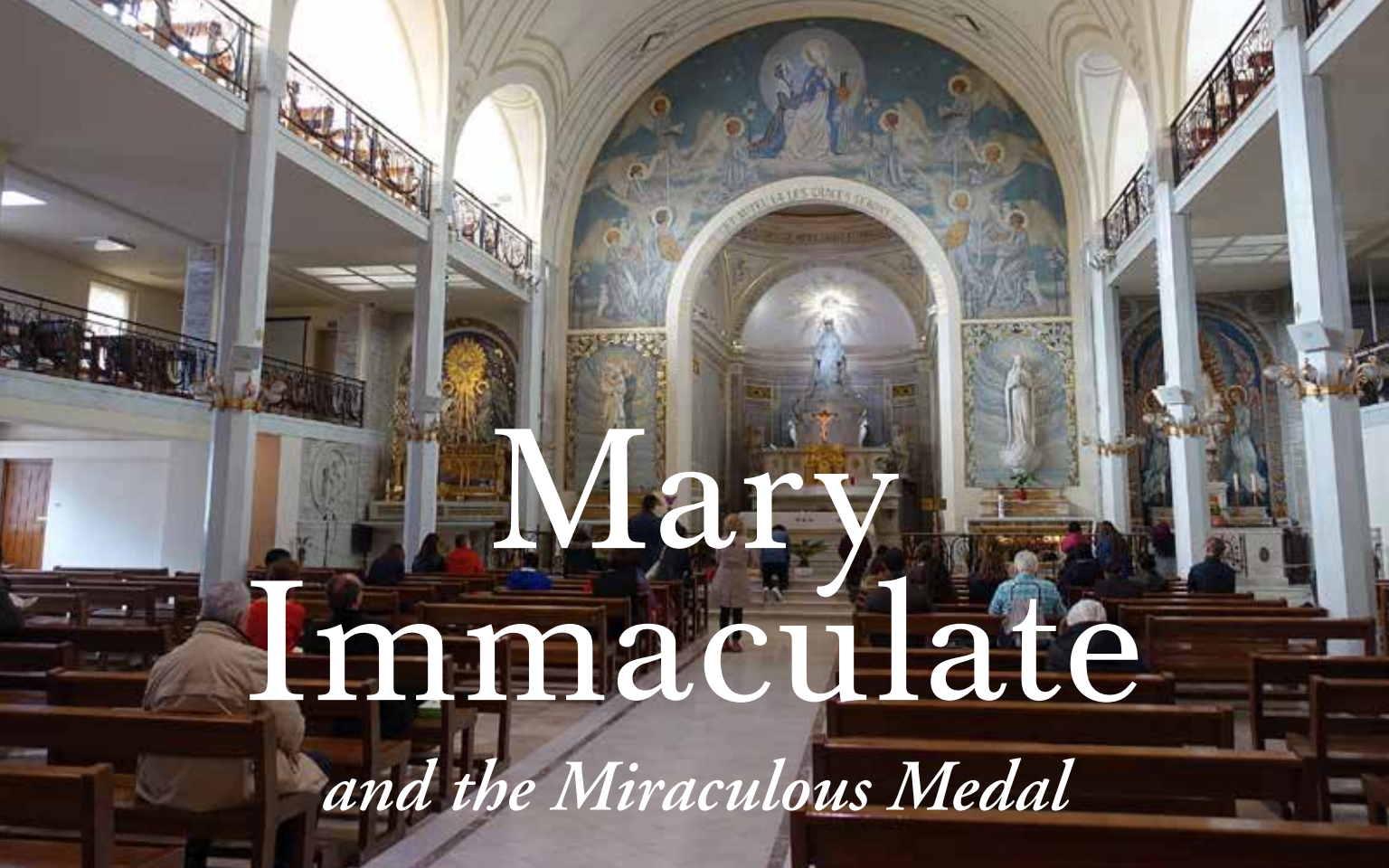
Going out to Church for Sunday Vespers is something of a different case, since it is not so much a private devotion, and only a weekly occurrence. Similarly, encouraging some form of short daily prayer is very good. But the more specific prayers required, the more likely the child is to dislike those prayers. In my opinion, *requiring* participation has too great a chance of souring the Divine Office for the children, making it difficult for them to pick up on their own motivation later in life. It is better for them to be familiar but not forced.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I hope that realizing that the private recitation of the Divine Office can be a flexible and enjoyable form of prayer will help laymen and women to approach this beautiful treasure with a peaceful heart.

Bringing flexibility and creativity to your private praying of the Divine Office will make it a renewed experience. Ride easy in the saddle of the traditional office; don't let the rubrics rub too hard. Embark with a holy liberty on these beautiful prayers of the Church, and may you find them nourishing for your spiritual life.





Mary Immaculate

and the Miraculous Medal

Michael J. Miller

The Marian Year 1954 saw a tremendous worldwide outpouring of devotion to Mary, the Mother of Christ. Unfortunately it was largely downhill for decades afterward. Most alleged Marian apparitions in the latter part of the twentieth century were more about curiosity, novelty seeking, and clever publicity than about communications from heaven.

A few counterfeits, however, must not make us lose sight of the genuine apparitions historically approved by the Church. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1972, Archbishop Lefebvre preached:

Throughout the life of the Blessed Virgin, we see her truly and completely filled with the Holy Ghost.... But Our Lady's influence has not ended. Even now in Heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary continues to be the Mother of the Mystical Body of Our Lord, the Mother of the Church, the Mother of our souls. She shows

this, she proves this, she proves it to each one of us. But she proves it also by her apparitions.¹

This article describes the apparitions of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, a story that is inseparable from the life of St. Catherine Labouré.²

Catherine was born in 1806 in the French village of Fain-les-moutiers (Burgundy), to a prosperous farming couple. With the birth of her little sister and brother in 1808 and 1809, the family had seven sons and three daughters. From her father she learned honesty, discipline, and hard work. Her mother, though a former schoolteacher, did not teach the younger girls to read or write, but instead set for her daughters a shining example of prayer and devotion to daily duty. Madame Labouré died in 1815. Shortly afterward a servant saw Catherine stand on a chair and take a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary down from a shelf. She embraced it and said simply, "Now you will be my Mother."

In 1818, the oldest Labouré daughter, Marie Louise, entered the Sisters of Charity, a religious community that St. Vincent de Paul had founded so that consecrated women could live in the world and serve the poor. This left the management of the large household in the capable hands of twelve-year-old Catherine. Despite her many responsibilities and endless chores, Catherine found time to attend daily Mass at a nearby chapel. Catherine patiently served as her father's housekeeper until she was twenty-two years old. Then, with the help of an aunt and an uncle who provided her dowry, she too entered religious life.

On April 25, 1830, during her novitiate with the Sisters of Charity at their Motherhouse in Paris, the relics of St. Vincent de Paul, which had been hidden for safekeeping during the French Revolution, were solemnly returned to the nearby church of the Vincentian Fathers. A few months later, on July 18, the eve of St. Vincent's feast day, the Mother Superior gave to each of the novices a piece of cloth from a surplice once worn by the Saint. Sister Labouré tore her piece in two and swallowed one part of it.

That night she was awakened by a beautiful child dressed in white and surrounded by a heavenly light. The child said, "Come to the chapel. The Blessed Virgin awaits you," then led Catherine through the halls and down the stairs. In the chapel all the candles were lit, as though for Midnight Mass. She heard something like the rustling of a silk dress, then saw a beautiful woman walk in and sit on the chair used by the chaplain. "My child," Our Lady said, "the good God wishes to charge you with a mission." (82-83)

During this first apparition, Catherine knelt beside the Blessed Virgin Mary and had the privilege of conversing with her for almost two hours about her vocation and her community. Our Lady spoke also about the sorrows that France would soon experience. "The throne will be overturned." To reassure Catherine, she added, "Do not be afraid.... Come to the foot of the altar. There graces will be shed upon all, great and little, who ask for them." (84)

Mary also promised that another community of Sisters would ask to join the Community of rue du Bac. The prediction was fulfilled in 1849, when [the Vincentian General Superior] received Mother Elizabeth Seton's Sisters of Emmitsburg, Maryland, into the Paris Commu-



The original Miraculous Medal, struck in 1830.

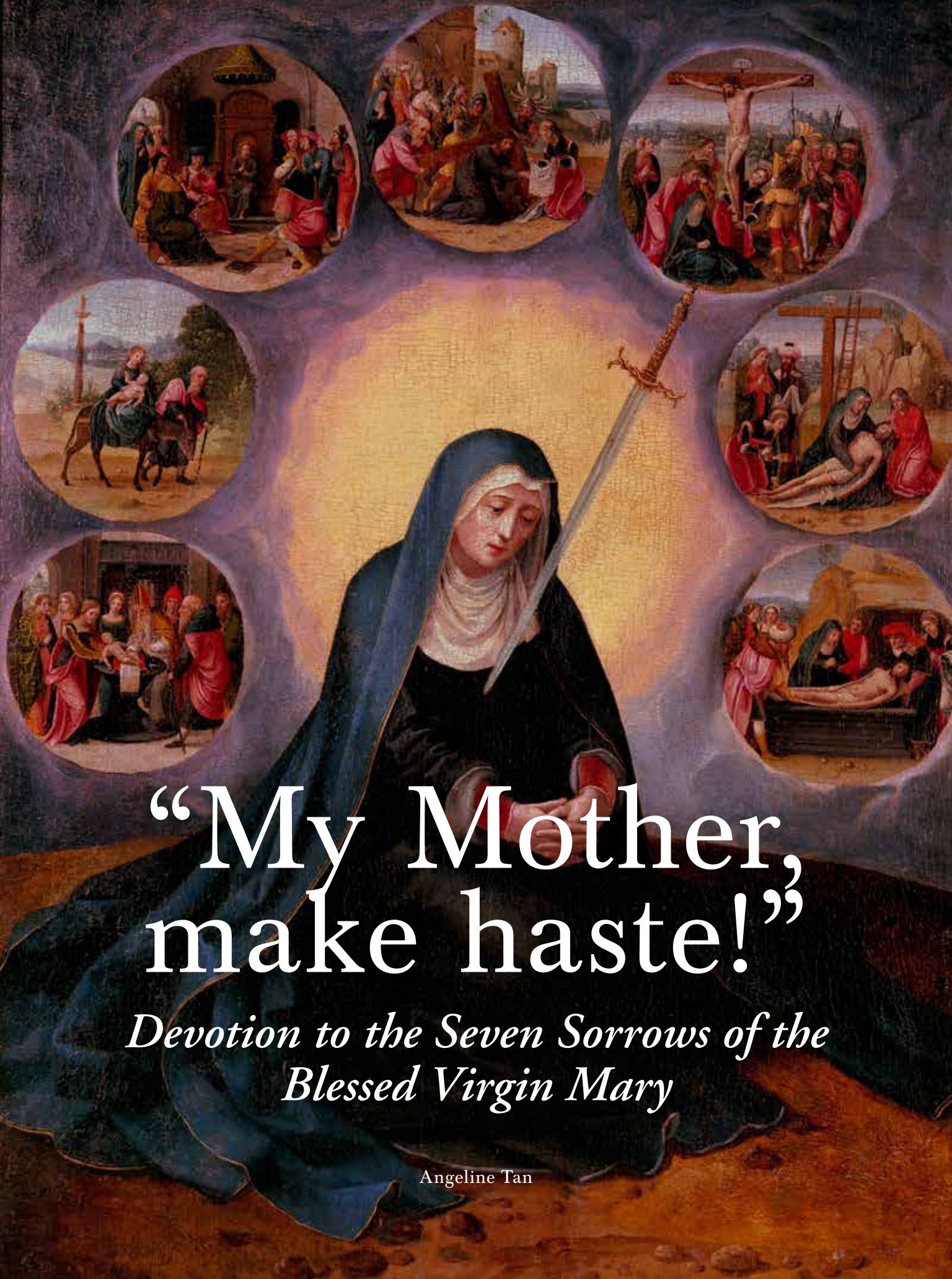
nity. These Sisters were the foundation stone of the Sisters of Charity in the United States. (85).

In a second and a third apparition on November 27, 1830, during the evening meditation of the community of Sisters, Our Lady revealed to Catherine the design for the Miraculous Medal. She appeared standing on a globe:

The Virgin held in her hands a golden ball which she seemed to offer to God, for her eyes were raised heavenward. Suddenly her hands were resplendent with rings set with precious stones that glittered and flashed in a brilliant cascade of light.... Catherine heard a voice. "The ball which you see represents the whole world, especially France, and each person in particular.... These rays symbolize the graces I shed upon those who ask for them. The gems from which rays do not fall are the graces for which souls forget to ask." (93)

Then the apparition was framed with an oval formed by letters of gold reading: "*O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.*" Catherine heard the words, "Have a medal struck after this model. All who wear it will receive great graces." (94) Then the scene revolved as though on a turntable, and Catherine saw the reverse of the Medal, with the cross, the large M, the Two Hearts, and the twelve stars.

Sister Labouré told her confessor, Vincentian Father Jean-Marie Aladel, all that she had heard and seen, then begged him to have a medal made according to Our Lady's instructions. She insisted on remaining anonymous, so Fr. Aladel informed the General Superior of the Vincentians and the Archbishop of Paris about the apparitions. After both authorities approved, the first two thousand medals were



“My Mother,
make haste!”

*Devotion to the Seven Sorrows of the
Blessed Virgin Mary*

Angeline Tan



St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows [Miyska] (frame not shown).

With regard to Francesco's youth, John Baptist, C.P. has these words to say in the *Passionist Bulletin* dated February 2, 1947⁶:

Francesco's devotion to the Virgin Mother of God could not be called notable. It was in fact such as might be expected of a boy reared in a devout Italian household. On the face of it, then, Francesco was as yet no more than one of many of the Virgin's clients. He was not altogether lacking in paying his respects to the glorious Madonna but neither was he a singularly ardent devotee.

At the same time:

His recourse to Mary should not be underrated, for it was a providential disposition for greater things to come as time and occasion would soon offer. Moreover, it was a source of grace that stayed him up not only in his boyhood days but also in his collegiate years, years that marked the greatest crisis of his short life and one in which the Mother of God played so dramatic and decisive a part.⁷

Notably, Francesco had been gravely ill twice, and appeared to be in danger of death. On both of these occasions the youth pledged to God that if his life was spared, he would

enter a Religious Order. His pledges were seemingly accepted, for each time he made them he rapidly recovered. After the second of his sicknesses and marvelous recoveries, Francesco approached the Father Provincial of the Jesuits, and asked to be received into the Society. Although the youth's request was granted, he procrastinated in his vocation.

In the meantime, Francesco began to think of becoming a Passionist and sought the advice of the holy Father Peter Tedeschini, S.J, who told him to pray for more guidance.⁸

After the Blessed Virgin Mary stopped a devastating wave of cholera at Spoleto in the year 1856, residents of the city carried her statue in a city-wide procession of thanksgiving that was witnessed by Francesco himself.

As the statue of Our Lady passed him during the Marian procession, Francesco lifted his eyes and through the eyes of the statue, the Holy Virgin Mary gazed at him with a look that was etched in his heart.

Simultaneously, Francesco heard the words deep within him: "Why! thou art not made for the world! What art thou doing in the world? Hasten, become a religious!"⁹

The procession soon passed on, but Francesco was rooted to the ground in prayer. Thanking the Mother of God for lovingly chastising him, Francesco was determined to become a Passionist. Two weeks later, Francesco was invested in the Passionist habit on the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows and took the name of Confrater Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows."¹⁰

On the day that he was first clothed as a Passionist, Gabriel sent a letter to his father that reads:

My dear father: The day has come at last. The Almighty had been calling me for a long time, whilst I ungratefully turned a deaf ear to His voice by enjoying the world and displeasing Him; but His infinite mercy sweetly disposed all things, and today, the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, our Mother and Protectress, I was clothed in the holy habit, taking the name of Confrater Gabriel, of Our Lady of Sorrows.¹¹

As the Rule of St. Paul of the Cross urges all Passionists to "entertain a pious and ardent devotion towards the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God; let them strive to imitate her sublime virtues and merit her seasonable protection,"¹² Gabriel's devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary,



Sodalities

Schools of the Catholic Apostolate

Patrick Murtha

Where will we train the good Catholic of tomorrow?—It is prudent and even practical, before we venture into this inquiry, first to resolve the defining question: what is meant by the term “good Catholic”? Is the good Catholic simply good because he is not bad, or, at the very least, not so bad? Or is the good Catholic merely he who is not an average Catholic—a Catholic who makes subtle and small-seeming concessions in music, movies, fashions or fads because “let’s be honest, it’s not a mortal sin and maybe not even venial”? Or is the good Catholic he who goes to Mass and the sacraments, keeps himself in the state of grace while paddling his way through the world without making a wave or even a ripple in the world? None of these are the good Catholic; rather this term refers to

exemplary Catholics, Catholics par excellence, men and women who may be pointed to as

typical instances of what members of the true Church should be and do in order worthily to show the Faith that is in them. The term “good Catholic” ... embraces all the piety, thought and action which should go to make up the life of a devoted follower of Christ.... Not the mere fulfillment of the obligations imposed by the Church on all her children is here intended, but the living-out in all its details of the holy ideal of Christian life and service.¹

In brief, the good Catholic is he who believes entirely in the teachings of Christ and simply lives as he says he believes, and whose living Faith becomes contagious to those in his sphere.

And so, where will we train such a Catholic? It is imperative to realize, that the conversion of the world, or even smaller worlds like the workplace or the home, depend upon such souls. As Pius XII said,

Our times demands fearless Catholics who consider it entirely normal to profess their

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Fr. Patrick Troadec

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On Wayside Shrines

Philomena Trause

Imagine you are a medieval Christian traveling along a dusty road on your way to a distant village. Suddenly, you see a small wooden structure ahead on the right side of the road, which, upon coming closer, is found to contain within it a small statue of Our Lady of Good Success. This beautiful little wayside shrine inspires you to persevere on your expedition, while bringing to mind the stories of countless saints who embarked on long and arduous earthly journeys in order to instill in souls a love for Christ and a desire to attain eternal life.

The practice of placing religious monuments alongside well-traveled roads goes back to ancient times. In the book of Genesis, after the Lord appeared to him in a dream on his way to visit his Uncle Laban, Jacob set up a stone “for a title” which he called “the house of God.” This stone was a symbol of Jacob’s vow to offer tithes to the Lord if He would protect and provide for him during his journey to and back from the home of his relative.¹

The Symbolism of the Cross

In the New Testament, the Cross of Our Lord became the preferred reminder for travelers of heavenly realities. Our Lord Himself wanted to encourage the use of the Cross as a symbol by having the emperor Constantine place it on his standards. Constantine had a vision in which he:

[S]aw the sign of the Cross, outlined in rays of light, and, with it, the words: “In this sign thou shalt conquer.” He did not at first understand this vision—so he maintained under oath to Eusebius—until Christ appeared to him in a dream and commanded him to copy the sign that he had seen in the sky and use it in battle as a talisman of defense.²

The Cross is a type of symbol to the world of the power of redemption, and it was for this reason that, as Sheen explains,



Three Ways to Approach Sacred Art for the Beginner

Andrew Latham

From the foundations of the world men have caught sight of His invisible nature, His eternal power and His divineness, as they are known through His creatures (Rom. 1:20).

Imagine that on three successive days in Rome, you visit three historical churches—St. Peter’s Basilica, the greatest of the Roman Catholic churches; the *Basilica di Santa Sofia a via Boccea*, mother church of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Italy; and the Catacombs of Priscilla, one of the earliest places of worship in all of Christendom. Excluding twentieth century brutalist constructions and Cistercian minimalism, one would be hard pressed to find three churches more visually distinct in the way they portray sacred art. Indeed, the story of both diverse Catholic liturgical praxis and Catholic universality are reflected in the nearly infinite stylistic choices of liturgical artists. But regardless of the genres, figures, and changing tastes of the times, it is

good for us to reflect, What is sacred art for? And on an even more vital question, *How* are we as faithful supposed to *read* this art?

Why Does Sacred Art Exist?

St. Thomas Aquinas states, “In the Divine worship it is necessary to make use of corporeal things, that man’s mind may be aroused thereby, as by signs, to the spiritual acts by means of which he is united to God.”¹ He asserts later that “all ways” of analogy are valid as is the imagination in coming to “unity with God.” Thus, the written or oral word, art, and architecture are all valid tools in coming to know God as well as in transmitting Tradition and mystery.

Councils, particularly Second Nicaea and Trent, spoke strongly about the importance of sacred art in the liturgical life of the faithful. Some inspiring and quite orthodox teachings on the vitality of sacred art even came from the Second Vatican Council—and have lamentably not been taken seriously by modern



Liturgy and Personality

How the Liturgy Forms the Human Person

Isabella Childs

Once visited the Catholic University of Notre Dame in Indiana for a conference on ethics and human dignity, and while on campus I visited the University's Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Though it was a weeknight, the Basilica was full of professors and students, including my group, who were visiting for the conference. The structure of the Basilica is impressive, with its tall pillars, Gothic arches, colorful and realistic 20th century murals, and stained-glass windows. However, the Liturgy held in the Church seemed disconnected from the awe-inspiring architecture of the Church, and this was unsettling.

The weekday Mass began with a crowd of people entering the sanctuary—a bishop, priests, male servers, and female servers—all wearing white robes. Our attention was soon drawn from the opening prayers to an attractive young woman who delivered a practical announcement from the pulpit in a carefully melodious voice. Other lay readers, college students, delivered the lessons of the day, the priest making way for them. When the priest did speak,

during his homily, he made references to pop culture, including Harry Potter, in an attempt to explain some aspects of the spiritual life. When we came to the *Agnus Dei*, the choir sang “Lamb of God...” with beautifully pure voices, but the melody they sang was strangely rhythmic, and in style was some cross between a folk melody and a pop melody.

This celebration of the Mass was disjointed and distracted, and I was disjointed and distracted. I realized that the New Liturgy is out of place, not only in the classical architecture of older churches, but also in the soul's sense of the proper act of religion, the sense of reverential and ordered worship of God. Often in churches like the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, the traditional Mass is held only in the crypt of the church and very early in the morning, if at all. This is a tragedy. The Liturgy, in the form that the Church performed it for nearly two millennia, glorifies God in a fitting, beautiful, and timeless way. It has also nourished generation upon generation of saints because, in conveying the spirit of Christ, it clearly carries the right

love and glory. The entire Liturgy—the sacrificial act of the Mass, the prayers, antiphons, hymns, the “structure and construction” of the Mass, rites, sacraments, and the overarching structure of the liturgical year, all form the basis for acts of adoration of God, and at the same time convey the spirit of the true personality, the spirit of Christ, teaching us and forming us. Von Hildebrand discovers and describes several specific aspects of the liturgical spirit which especially reflect the spirit of Christ.

“The Spirit of Communion in the Liturgy”

The spirit of true communion, with oneself, with others, and with God, is essential to living a human life. Isolation, Von Hildebrand points out, “is proof of narrowness, limitation, even stupidity” and “presupposes a certain egocentric attitude toward the world and God” (39). In the Liturgy, the Catholic enters “into the wider stream of prayer...tak[ing] part in the prayer of the Head and through Him also of the Mystical Body of Christ” (25). Other devotions—even the Rosary—do not join members of the Mystical Body in such a way. The Liturgy surpasses the individual, but that does not mean it lacks

emotion or character—it is, rather, full of “the deepest emotion, holy fear with holy joy and winged peace” (27).

The Propers of the Mass bring us in contact with different saints throughout the year, all united in the Mystical Body, and the Common prayers of the Mass unite us with each other in their emphasis on “We.” Von Hildebrand notes the plural pronouns in several prayers of the Mass, as in the “*Laudamus Te, Benedicimus Te, Glorificamus Te*” of the *Gloria*, the “*Nobis quoque peccatoribus*” of the *Communicantes*, the “*Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum*” of the *Holy Thursday Antiphon*, and the “*Fratres, sobrii estote et vigilate*” of *Compline*. Above all, in the Liturgy, we become one with Jesus, one with God Himself. In the Liturgy, each of us comes into what Von Hildebrand calls the “I-Thou” relationship with Jesus, especially in the reception of Holy Communion. Only the personal communion of each of us with Christ allows for the greater “We” of the Mystical Body. “The man who has been melted by the sun of values, and above all, the man who has been wounded by the love of Christ, is also lovingly open to every man and has entered into the objective unity of all” (32). The Liturgy, and particularly, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, not only teaches communion, but is itself communion between the members of the Mystical Body and the Divine Head.

“The Spirit of Reverence in the Liturgy”

The members of the Mystical Body, if they are to be true personalities, open to communion with others and God, must first possess “a spiritual vision, clear and open to the fullness of the world of values, above all, to the world of supernatural values” and be surrendered completely to Christ, and through Christ, to the Father, says Von Hildebrand (35). A clear view of values, ultimately a view and acceptance of the values of God, and a surrender to God, presupposes reverence. Reverence, Von Hildebrand says, is “the mother of all virtues...the foundation... [of] real knowledge...the knowledge of values” (35). Reverence places us in the context of the Divine, grounding us in our humble human identity of creature, while moving us to praise God, our Creator and Redeemer.

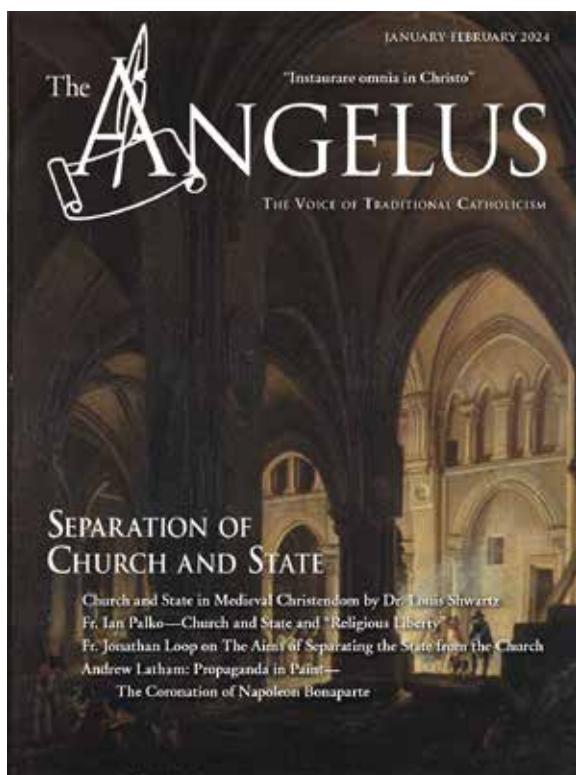
“The Liturgy is penetrated more than anything else by the spirit of true reverence, and it draws those who live it directly into this spirit.



A girl praying in church, Jules Breton, 1854.

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Fr. Paul Robinson, SSPX

Did Joan of Arc attend the Traditional Mass as I know it, before Vatican II?

Traditional Catholics make the claim that the Mass that we love and hold onto is essentially the same Mass as that known by Latin rite Catholics going back to the earliest centuries of the Church. Fr. Palko, for instance, made that case in his article “From Peter to Gregory” in the May-June 2023 issue of *The Angelus*.

When discussing this question, it is important to note two things:

1. While the 1962 missal is essentially the “Mass of all time,” as Archbishop Lefebvre called it, there have yet been many accidental differences in the Mass throughout time, according to period and location. These accidental differences include small additions to the ordinary of the Mass, variations in the propers, different

local emphases on certain feast days, more complexity in the chant and staging of the Mass, and different architectural elements such as rood screens, retables, and before the fifteenth century, often a lack of pews.

2. The differences between the New Mass and every permutation of the Latin rite are orders of magnitude beyond the accidental differences of #1. This is because the text of the Ordinary of the Mass of the Roman rite remains recognizable and substantially unchanged across these earlier rites, but is recognizably and substantially changed in the New Mass. A modern attendee of the 1962 rite, attending a medieval Mass, would find himself at home; a medieval observer would say the same, were he able to travel forward in time. The New Mass, on the other hand, would be foreign to him.

We may rightly ask ourselves why it took the Church so long to standardize the Latin rite,

A detailed white architectural drawing of a Gothic cathedral is overlaid on a dark blue background. The drawing shows the intricate stonework of the facade, including a large rose window, pointed arches, and a cross on top of the spire. The lines are fine and precise, typical of a technical drawing.

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