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### **ADVENIAT ENCYCLICA NOVA**

### ***Editorial***

We know it is coming but ‘we know not the day nor the hour’. We are speaking here of the keenly awaited encyclical from Pope John Paul on the Holy Eucharist. ‘Vatican sources’ were quoted as predicting its appearance in ‘early summer’ but now, we hear, it could be as early as Maundy Thursday. So it may well have been published before you read this Newsletter. But it is undoubtedly on the way and it will be the fourteenth encyclical of this pontificate, the first since *Fides et Ratio* of 1998.

There are more hopeful things taking place regarding the Sacred Liturgy than we may have dared to expect. We have spoken before of the Third Edition of the Missal, of its revised General Instruction (we hope soon to have recognition of the English translation, so that hierarchies will acknowledge its existence!) and of the valuable instruction *Liturgiam authenticam*. In addition to these and this important new papal encyclical, we are promised supporting documents from the Vatican Congregations headed by Cardinal Ratzinger and Cardinal Arinze. All this can only serve to inspire the drive towards ever better liturgical practice, not necessarily the ‘root and branch reform of the reform’ that some would prescribe, but sufficient, we hope, to secure much worthier celebrations of the Mass in our churches.

We may confidently expect wise words and welcome exhortations from the Holy Father and his principal advisers, but we must hope that local hierarchies in their turn will take up the torch and give leadership to the parishes. Regretfully, we recall the instruction, *Inaestimabile Donum* of 1980 which called for greater reverence and the ending of certain abuses, but is perhaps the best remembered example of a Vatican document that was obstinately ignored in the local Church. At this stage in his pontificate, however, Pope John Paul enjoys great authority and that he should focus on the Eucharist as the subject of possibly his last encyclical is clearly of great significance.

As a foretaste, he has spoken notably positive words about Music in the Mass at a recent Audience, which we have pleasure in reproducing in this Newsletter. Surely, few of us will have any doubt about the type and quality of music that the Holy Father has in mind. *Psallite Domino!*

**SPRING MEETING AT DERBY**

**Saturday 31 May**

Derby Day for the Association falls this year on the 31<sup>st</sup> May, with a full programme of events in interesting places, with a distinguished speaker and inspiring music. The schedule is as follows:

1:00 pm Solemn Sung Latin Mass at St Mary's, Bridge Gate, Derby

2:15 pm: Talk by Dr Mary Berry CBE on the Marcel Dupré's Antiphons for Vespers in the nearby parish centre, followed by Tea

4:00 pm Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in the Bridge Chapel, a short walk away.

5:15 pm Solemn Vespers in Derby Cathedral, a further short walk away

In view of the fairly late start of Mass, which we cannot avoid, we shall not be able to include an interval for lunch on this occasion. Although these locations are very close together, they are some distance from the railway station. Please see the enclosed leaflet for further information, including a map.

## **OCTOBER IN BARKING**

## **Annual General Meeting 2003**

This will take place on **Saturday 11th October**, at the Church of St Mary & St Ethelburga, Linton Road, Barking, Essex. The day will begin with Solemn Latin Mass, which will be followed by lunch and a talk, and is expected to conclude as usual with Solemn Vespers and Benediction.

This date is the patronal feast of St Ethelburga which is celebrated as a solemnity in the parish. The parish priest is Fr William Young, an enthusiastic member of the Association who makes a valuable contribution to our meetings. We were guests at the church for a successful spring meeting in 1998. Barking Abbey, from its foundation in about 666, was England's pre-eminent abbey for Benedictine nuns until the dissolution of the monasteries in 1530. Saint Ethelburga was the first abbess.

It was to this parish that the future Cardinal Heenan was sent in 1931, soon after ordination, in his first appointment as curate. In his autobiography, *Not the Whole Truth*, he tells the hilarious story of arriving there to find a crowd of local inhabitants dressed as monks and nuns, but behaving as anything but - smoking and eating ice cream in the street. They had been taking part in a historical pageant and a number came to confession that evening still robed in their habits!

## **PLUSCARDEN ABBEY**

## **Retreat in Easter Week 2004**

Members will remember that we first proposed this a year ago and received encouraging declarations of interest. It is now time to firm up our intentions.

At the suggestion of the guestmaster, we are planning to hold our retreat at Pluscarden Abbey, Morayshire, in spring 2004, from the 14th April, Wednesday in Easter Week, to the 18th April, Low Sunday. It may be possible for individuals to negotiate a longer stay.

The retreat is open to both ladies and gentlemen, and depending on numbers we could have the exclusive use of both guesthouses. We will supply our own spiritual director, but participants will be free to follow as much of the monastic routine as they wish. The Mass and Divine Office are

conducted in the new rite in Latin. Because of the distance involved, and to make it a worthwhile experience, a stay of some five days is envisaged.

Those who have already expressed an interest should have been contacted. Please let Ian Wells know if you have not been contacted. A booking form will be sent out with the next newsletter, but if you wish to put your name down in advance please let Ian know

## **COMPLAINING TO GOD OR MASKING THE GRIEF**

### **Old and New Liturgies of the Dead Compared by *Fr Richard Conrad***

*Address given at the Association's AGM on 19 October 2002 by*

*A hand-out was provided for members, with the old and the new Vespers and Lauds of the Dead in parallel, and elements of the old and new Matins and Mass of the Dead.*

When Bernard asked me to give this talk, I was delivering a series of lectures at Oxford on Eschatology, one of which was to be on the Liturgy of the Dead. I thought a version of that lecture might be of interest to the Association. And I knew what I was going to say: I was basically going to commend Eamon Duffy's article in *Priests and People* of November 1991, entitled "An Apology for Grief, Fear and Anger."

It is my task, then, to compare the old and new Offices and Masses of the Dead – not by any means the whole Liturgy of the Dead, for that would involve examining Viaticum and the Commendation of a Departing Soul. In the old Dominican Rite, and in the current Roman Rite, provision is made for services in the cell or home of the departed. There was, and is, a ritual for conveying the body to the Church. After the Office and Mass of the Dead, the "Absolution" (as it was called) is performed, and the body is taken to the cemetery and buried. I do not have time to examine all those services, despite their great interest.

Typically, the Office of the Dead would follow the reception of the body at the Church, though I wonder how often it actually was celebrated publicly in recent centuries, except for Bishops and other notable people. The Funeral Mass, of course, was and is familiar; though it should be noted that Mass formulæ for an anniversary and for other occasions were and are provided, which are perhaps not used as frequently as they might be.

It is not my concern to compare the old and new Rites of Mass in general – revision was needed, and the current Rite of Mass has great pastoral potential, even if that potential is not always realised. Nor is it my concern to compare the old and new Offices in general – again, revision was needed, and the new Liturgy of the Hours contains many riches, as well as a commendable Latin translation of the Psalms (though I rather regret the disappearance of *mons coagulatus mons pinguis*, just before it could be seen as a prophecy of the EEC butter mountain).

However, under the old Rite, there were certain occasions when the Office was marked by a dramatic and engaging *difference*. One occasion was of course the Sacred Triduum, when the Office of Tenebræ in particular was marked with many impressive features. The new Office for the Triduum has been largely forced into the standard pattern of the Office, perhaps through an excessive concern for “neatness” – but I am told the Vatican is considering a revision of this decision.

The other main occasion when, under the old Rite, the Office was engagingly different, was when the Office of the Dead was celebrated. One reason for that is simply that it was never intended as a “stand alone” Office, but was always an addition to the day’s own Office – except for All Soul’s Day when, from early in the Twentieth Century, the Office of the day was entirely the Office of the Dead. But the ways in which the Office of the Dead differed from the normal Office also fitted the general pattern according to which the Liturgy for sad and stark occasions tended to preserve primitive features.

The new Office of the Dead has been made to fit exactly into the standard pattern of the Office – it includes all the usual features of hymns, alleluias, the *Gloria Patri*, and so on. I would argue that, just as the Office for the Triduum should be made more distinctive, so should the Office of the Dead. Not simply because some of the features of the old Office of the Dead suited a time of grief, but also because an engaging and dramatic sense of *difference* somehow seems appropriate.

How, then, do the old and new Offices of the Dead work? Years ago, I remember hearing a priest remark, “Of course, the old Office of the Dead was not really a prayer for the dead; it was a meditation on death and judgement designed to frighten the living.” I shall argue that that assessment is incorrect. Nevertheless, it has some plausibility. The third

responsory for the old Matins of the Dead runs: *Domine, quando veneris iudicare terram, ubi me abscondam a vultu iræ tuæ?* \* *Quia peccavi nimis in vita mea. Commissa mea pavesco, et ante te erubesco: dum veneris iudicare, noli me condemnare.* [Lord, when You come to judge the earth, where shall I hide from Your wrathful countenance? \* For I have sinned exceedingly in my life. I am appalled at the sins I have committed, and I blush before You. Do not condemn me when You come to judge.] The seventh responsory runs: *Peccantem me cotidie, et non me pœnitentem, timor mortis conturbat me:* \* *Quia in inferno nulla est redemptio, miserere mei, Deus, et salva me.* [The fear of death troubles me, as I sin daily and do not repent. \* Since in hell there is no redemption, have mercy on me, O God, and save me.] And of course the *Dies iræ* is easily read as a prayer of the living frightened by the approaching Judgement.

On the other hand, in the old Office of the Dead all the Psalms ended with *Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis*; that text was also used in place of the *Gloria Patri* in the final responsory of each Nocturn. Likewise, the *Dies iræ* ended: *Pie Jesu, Domine, dona eis requiem*. That is a first indication that all the texts of the Office, and the Sequence, were to be *taken as prayers for the deceased* even when they read most naturally as meditations designed to frighten the living. By contrast, in the new Office all the Psalms are concluded with the *Gloria Patri*. Similarly, in the old Mass of the Dead the *Agnus Dei* ended: *Dona eis requiem (sempiternam)*. But in the new Mass, it ends as usual – *miserere nobis* and *dona nobis pacem*. At least on the surface, the new Liturgy for the Dead makes less effort to pray *for* the dead.

The new Office of the Dead contains hymns, apparently newly composed for the purpose. They are theologically rich, and full of Scriptural allusions, properly emphasising the Paschal Mystery. However, they read fairly clearly as meditations designed, not to frighten, but to *comfort* the living. In them, too, the living pray for themselves. Only one stanza in each is a prayer for the deceased; in the case of the hymns for Lauds and Vespers it is the final stanza, perhaps fulfilling the function of the old Sequence's concluding *Pie Jesu, Domine*, and making the hymn as a whole a prayer for the dead. My translation of the new Vespers hymn runs:

King of great power, O Christ, in your efforts for the Father's glory and our grace, you broke death's missiles. You subjected yourself to our infirmities and sought the great fight; thus by dying you trod

down and triumphed over the death by which Satan had won. Rising in might from the tomb, you ever and again bring us from sin's death to new life by the Paschal Mystery. Grant the life of grace, so that when you return as Bridegroom you may find us with lamps burning and ready for heaven. O glad Judge, welcome us, as those bound together by faith in the Holy Trinity and by charity, into light and rest. And call your servant, who is now deprived of his body and longs for the Father's Kingdom, that he may give you highest praise for ever. Amen.

And I translate the new Lauds hymn as follows:

O Christ, hope of our pardon, life and resurrection: our hearts and eyes turn to you when death's sorrow attacks. You too suffered death's horror and fearful sting: humbly you bowed your head and gave your spirit to the Father. Merciful shepherd, you truly bore our sorrows, granting us to suffer with you and in the Father's bosom to die with you. Hanging with open arms you drew into your pierced heart the dying whom distress and anxious grief oppress. Conqueror, who broke the underworld's gates and opened heaven's, raise us up, who now grieve; give us life after death. Our brother in the flesh who now sleeps in peace and rest: may he now be blest by sight of you, and render you praise. Amen.

The new Office of the Dead includes Intercessions of the usual form. At Vespers, they run (my translation):

Let us acclaim Christ the Lord, for we hope that through him our lowly body will be configured to his glorious body, and say: You, Lord, are our life and resurrection. Christ, Son of the living God, who raised Lazarus your friend from the dead, raise to life and glory the dead whom you redeemed by your precious Blood. O Christ, the comforter of those who mourn, who in your love wiped away the tears of the relatives of the dead Lazarus and the young man and the girl, comfort all those who mourn their dead. Christ our Saviour, destroy the reign of sin in our mortal body, so that as by sin we have deserved the wages of death, in you we may attain to eternal life. Christ, Redeemer, look on those who do not know you and so have no hope, that they may believe in the resurrection and the life of the world to come. You gave light to the eyes of the blind man and the

power to see you: reveal your face, then, to the dead who are still deprived of your light. You allow this earthly home of our present dwelling to be at length dissolved: grant us then an eternal home not made by hands, in heaven.

Only two of the petitions are for the dead; one is for those who mourn, one for those without hope, and two for the people actually reciting the Office. The Intercessions at Lauds include a petition for those who are in their last agony.

It seems, then, that the new Office of the Dead is in part *a prayer for the living*. In part, it is *a meditation on the Paschal Mystery designed to comfort the living*. Is it, then, a re-casting of the old Office of the Dead in a more positive mood, focussing more on resurrection and life than on hell and death, a re-casting designed to comfort those who live in an age when faith and hope are weak, by contrast with the old attempt to frighten the complacent in an age when faith could be taken for granted? Or is it actually the case that the old Office of the Dead was, through and through, a prayer for the dead? – in which case, we might claim that the new Office of the Dead marks a more radical break from the old, so providing us with less opportunity to do what we want to do when someone has died, namely, accompany him or her with our prayers.

The old Vespers of the Dead – like every Vespers in the old Rite – began with five Psalms from the last part of the Psalter. Each was recited with an antiphon that applied it to the day or season or theme. The first Psalm chosen for Vespers of the Dead was Psalm 114: ... *Circumdederunt me dolores mortis, et pericula inferni invenerunt me. ... O Domine, libera animam meam ... eripuit animam meam de morte ... Placebo Domino in regione vivorum* [... *The pangs of death surrounded me, and the perils of hell came upon me ... O Lord, deliver my soul ... He has delivered my soul from death ... I will enjoy the Lord's pleasure in the land of the living.*] The last of these phrases served as the antiphon. Originally a prayer of someone facing the danger of death, and prevented by God's providence from dying, this has become the prayer of one who *has* died, and *still* seeks and hopes for liberation from death and fullness of life in God's presence (in Hebrew idiom, the perfect, "He has delivered my soul from death," can indicate a *future* event of which one is confident). As used in the Office of the Dead, this Psalm therefore seems to be recited *in persona defuncti* – that is, the

living who recite the Office lend their voices to the person who has died, and pray on his or her behalf to God for resurrection.

The second Psalm in the old Vespers of the Dead was Psalm 119, with the following verse as the antiphon: ... *Heu mihi, quia incolatus meus prolongatus est* ... [... *Woe is me, that my sojourning has been prolonged* ... ] Is this a prayer of the living, impatient for death? Or does it make more sense to see it as another prayer spoken *in persona defuncti*, in the person of one who has died and is impatient to complete Purgatory?

The third Psalm in the old Vespers of the Dead, and the first Psalm in the new Vespers, is Psalm 120: *Dominus custodit te ab omni malo: custodiat animam tuam Dominus. Dominus custodiat introitum tuum et exitum tuum, ex hoc nunc et usque in sæculum.* [*The Lord guards you from every evil: may the Lord guard your soul. May the Lord guard your coming in and your going out, from the present and for ever.*] This seems to be spoken to the dead person as a prayer for God to guard his or her life, and to watch over the going out from this life and the going in to heaven.

In both the old and the new Offices the next Psalm is Psalm 129, *De profundis*, which is well known as a prayer for the dead, a prayer for God to overlook faults, and an expression of hope that He will do so.

The fifth Psalm of the old Vespers was Psalm 137. One might have expected the antiphon to read: *In conspectu Angelorum psallam tibi* [*In the presence of the Angels I will bless You*], but in fact the final verse was chosen: *opera manuum tuarum ne despicias* [*do not shun the works of your own hands*]. This ties in with one of the themes for the commendation of a departing soul: this soul is a creature of the one true God, and of no other “god” – and so we can call upon God to recognise and receive what He has made. In the new Rite, Vespers includes a New Testament canticle, and the one chosen for Vespers of the Dead is Philippians 2:6-11, which speaks of how Jesus Himself passed through death to glory, which St. Paul sees as an exemplar for us.

After the Magnificat, the old Vespers of the Dead included some intercessions, which sometimes included Psalm 145. This text alone does seem to read as a meditation on mortality: *Put no trust in princes, in the sons of men, from whom there is no salvation. His spirit shall depart and he shall return to his own clay: on that day all their plans shall perish* ...

The old Matins for the Dead is rather intriguing. When celebrated in full it comprised nine Psalms and nine readings, each followed by its own responsory. [The Psalms were numbers 5, 6, 7, 22, 24, 26, 39, 40 and 41. Two of these, 39 and 41, are employed in the new Office of Readings for the dead, Psalm 39 being slightly “censored”.] The readings were all from the Book of Job, except on All Souls’ Day when only the first three were from that Book. [The nine passages chosen were: 7:16-21, 10:1-7, 10:8-12, 13:22-28, 14:1-6, 14:13-16, 17:1-3 & 11-15, 19:20-27, 10:18-22.] Apart from the well-known passage from chapter 19 (“I know that my Redeemer liveth”) these are extremely strange. It makes little sense to read them to a congregation. The key to an understanding of these readings was suggested to me by a friend some years ago (though I can no longer remember to which friend I have to be grateful for this insight). Like the rest of the old Office of the Dead, the readings too are a prayer *in persona defuncti*.

The dead person cannot speak! His lips do not move. We must “take on that person’s role” – we must lend our voices to the dead person, and pray on his behalf *by speaking in solidarity with him*. We have seen that this is how at least some of the Vespers Psalms work. The same is true of at least some of the Psalms and responsories of Matins – but it is also true of the readings!

Let us recall how the Book of Job works. It begins and ends with “naïve” prose passages. At the beginning, Satan is allowed to test the righteous Job; at the end, Job is reinstated to a position of great wealth, and blessed with seven sons and three beautiful daughters, whose names might be translated as My Little Pigeon, Spice Girl and Mascara. The naïve style of these passages is of course deliberate: it is a device to say that, while God has His plans, they are obscure to us, hence any guess at them must be naïve. Suffering has its place, but we cannot really understand its purpose.

The body of the Book of Job is a long, poetic debate. Job's “comforters” keep on telling him he must have been naughty and so is being justly punished. He insists that he has not done anything that might deserve such suffering. He would like to know *why* he is suffering. He recognises that God can do as He will; he realises he cannot force God to reveal His purposes – all the same, he would like an explanation for what is going on. Out of the blue, God appears and says, “I’m bigger than you.” Job replies, “Oops, I shouldn’t have spoken.” God then says, “I’m bigger than you.” Job replies, “Oops, I shouldn’t have spoken.” God then tells off the

“comforters,” who “have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.” The “comforters” have misrepresented God by trotting out easy and neat explanations, pious platitudes that don’t match the reality. By contrast, *Job was not wrong to complain to God and even about God*. He had to be overwhelmed with the vision of God, with the mystery of God; this leads him to abandon his desire for an explanation. But his desire was not wrong. His anger and bewilderment were no sin.

And that is what happens in the old Matins of the Dead. Certainly, there is an awareness of sin; Job may have been remarkably upright, but no claim is made that the dead person for whom we pray the Office was sinless: *Alas for me, Lord! I have sinned exceedingly in my life. Wretch that I am, what shall I do? Where shall I fly but to You, my God? \* Have mercy on me when You come on the last day* (5<sup>th</sup> Responsory). Nevertheless, expression is given to anger and bewilderment – for, so it is implied, God is the Author of Life, and therefore *death does not make sense*. In fact, it makes less sense than did Job’s suffering, for Christ has defeated sin, and defeated death! We have been brought to life in Christ! So, *we have no business to be dying!*

In Readings 1, 2, 4 and 6, the dead person says:

Though I have sinned, what can I do to you, O watcher of men? Why have you set me up against you; or why should I be a burden to myself? Why do you not pardon my offence, or take away my guilt? ... I will give myself up to complaint; I will speak from the bitterness of my soul. I will say to God: Do not put me in the wrong! Let me know why you oppose me. Is it a pleasure for you to oppress, to spurn the work of your hands, and smile on the plan of the wicked? Have you eyes of flesh? Do you see as a man sees? Are your days as the days of a mortal, and are your years as a man’s lifetime, that you seek for guilt in me, and search after my sins, even though you know that I am not wicked and that none can deliver me out of your hand? ... Answer me. What are my faults and my sins? My misdeeds and my sins make known to me! Why do you hide your face and consider me your enemy? Will you harass a wind-driven leaf, or pursue a withered straw? For you draw up bitter indictments against me, and punish in me the faults of my youth. ... All the days of my drudgery I shall wait, until my relief comes. You will call, and I shall answer you; you will offer support to the work of your hands.

Through us, the dead person says, in effect, “What is God up to, letting me die? Why is He treating me like this? This is all wrong, and He had better do something about it”

The old Matins of the Dead is an angry Office – and the anger is not so much the anger of the bereaved, as *the anger of the dead person!* The dead person complains to God, and *demand*s that God rescue him from the ridiculous thing that has happened. The eighth reading represents a kind of climax, a cry of confidence that this demand will be met. The Latin may be translated:

The flesh has been consumed and my bones cleave to my skin, and nothing but lips are left about my teeth. Pity me, pity me, at least you my friends, for the hand of God has struck me! Why do you hound me as though you were divine, and insatiably prey upon me? Who will see to it that my words are written down? Who will do me the favour of inscribing them in a record, engraving them with an iron chisel in a lead plate or cutting them in stone? But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and that on the last day I shall rise out of the earth and be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God. It will not be some other being but I myself who see him: my own eyes shall look upon him. This my hope lies deep in my heart.

That text (“I believe that my Redeemer lives...”) is also used for the first responsory, as if to say, “We know what is coming later in this Office.” The third responsory, which I quoted early on in this talk, could be read as an expression of fear at the approaching judgement on the part of the living. But now that we have seen that many of the texts of the Office as best understood as spoken *in persona defuncti*, we can suggest that this text, too, is an expression of fear *on the part of the dead*, in whose person we also appeal, “Do not condemn me when You come to judge.”

One striking feature of the old Office of the Dead is how little explicit mention there is of Purgatory! Of course, the regular refrain, *Requiem æternam dona eis*, in fact asks that the dead may pass swiftly and sweetly through Purgatory to “a place of refreshment, light and peace.” However, the explicitly-made petition is more dramatic. A frequent refrain is: *A porta inferi erue, Domine, animas eorum [From the gate of the underworld, deliver their souls, O Lord.]* We do not often explicitly ask God to set the

dead free from Purgatory – we ask Him to set them free from *hell*. And that is hell in both senses: hell as the place of eternal alienation from the God whose life the damned do not want to share; and hell as Sh<sup>o</sup>l, as Hades, as the abode of the shades of the dead – the state they would be in if neither the Beatific Vision nor resurrection were on offer.

This brings us to a second interpretative key for the old Liturgy of the Dead – the sense that time is collapsed. The Liturgy of the Dead tended to treat as *present* two distinct moments, one past and one future. Throughout the long funeral liturgy, we used to speak as if we were still at the moment of death, which is also the moment of the personal, particular judgement. And we spoke as if we were facing the moment of the General Judgement at the close of the world. A similar sense is found in Newman's *The Dream of Gerontius*, in which most of the dialogue takes place within the single moment in which the priest cries out "Subvenite" and the cry reaches the Throne. The Old Rite Collect for the Funeral Mass prays to God *pro anima famuli tui N, quam hodie de hoc sæculo migrare jussisti [for the soul of your servant N, which you have commanded today to journey from this world]* – even though it would very often have been at least the next day, even in the years before refrigeration. There are elements of this feature in the new Liturgy of the Dead.

Praying for the souls in Purgatory is, after all, not an *urgent* matter. They need our prayers – but their salvation is assured, they are on their way to Heaven and nothing can thwart their journey thither. But praying for those who are at the moment of death is an extremely urgent matter. If, even in the moment of death, God convert a hardened sinner to Himself, that sinner is saved. If, at the last hurdle, the life-long faithful servant turn aside from the way to salvation... And so, what we hold before God in the old Liturgy of the Dead is that anxious moment of death. We pray repeatedly, and urgently, to God who is outside time, that He may have ensured that the dead person so died as to be securely on the way to Heaven. From where we are, we look back to the moment that has passed, when the person who is now dead began to face the particular judgement, at which was made clear to him or her what will be made clear to all mankind at the End. And we accompany the deceased with our prayers in that dread moment, sometimes by putting ourselves in the position of the dead person facing that anticipation of the Final Judgement, and speaking on his or her behalf.

This aspect of the old Office of the Dead is well brought out by the ninth responsory, for which there were two alternatives. One looks back to the Harrowing of Hell, when the souls of the just of the Old Testament were set free from Limbo: *Libera me, Domine, de viis inferni...* [*Deliver me, Lord, from the paths of hell, You who shattered the bronze doors, and visited hell, and gave them light, that they might see You, \* For they were suffering in darkness. 'You have come, our Redeemer,' they cried out.*] The other, which was re-used elsewhere in the Liturgy of the Dead, is a prayer made in the person of the dying soul approaching judgement:

*Libera me, Domine, de morte æterna...* [Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal death at that dreadful day \* when the heavens and the earth shall be moved: \* when Thou comest to judge the world by fire. That day, the day of wrath, calamity, and woe, that great and exceeding bitter day. When the heavens... I tremble and am afraid when the reckoning shall come and the future wrath, When Thou comest... [*In the Dominican Rite the following was sometimes added:*] O God, the Creator of all things, who didst fashion me out of the slime of the earth & wonderfully redeemedst me with Thine own blood, and wilt cause my body, although it shall presently decay, to rise again at the day of judgement from the tomb; hear me, O hear me, and command that my soul be placed in the bosom of Abraham Thy Patriarch.]

The old Office of the Dead is therefore a composition of high and awesome drama, and the drama is twofold. There is the consciousness of the peril of the moment of death, requiring urgent prayer. And there is the sense that something has gone wrong: a child of God has died, and that *can't* be right, it *can't* be the final word – God must show His hand and undo the apparent disaster.

Let us examine briefly the new Office of Readings for the Dead. Besides the hymn, already alluded to, and the two Psalms already mentioned, it contains two readings. The first is a Scripture reading in which St. Paul defends our faith in and hope for a future resurrection. It is chosen from three alternatives: I Corinthians 15:12-34 *or* 15:35-57, *or* II Corinthians 4:16-5:10. The second reading is from the Fathers. Two passages are offered, the first from St. Anastasius of Antioch, in which he affirms our faith in the final resurrection:

... They will share in the resurrection of Christ just as he shared in their death. For no other reason did he descend to earth, whose bars are barriers to eternity, except to 'shatter the doors of bronze, and cut in two the bars of iron.' He came to lead our lives away from corruption to himself and gave us freedom in place of slavery. If the work of this arrangement of providence does not seem to be finished yet – men still die and their bodies rot in the grave – this should in no way undermine our faith. In advance of all the good things already mentioned we have even now received a pledge through Christ our first-fruits ...

The alternative Patristic reading, from St. Braulio of Saragossa, concerns our attitude towards bereavement:

... May this hope of resurrection put heart into us since we shall see again in heaven those whom we lose on earth. All we have to do is to believe firmly in Christ and obey his commandments. Such is his power that he can raise the dead more easily than we can arouse the sleeping. We say this but then some emotion starts our tears once again and the feeling of selfish longing prevails over the believing heart ... It would take me a long time if I had to quote everything that scripture offers for our consolation ...

The responsory that goes with it runs:

Do not grieve for those who are asleep as others do who have no hope, \* for since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. Weep not for him who is dead, nor lament for him, \* for since we believe that Jesus died ...

The new Office of the Dead therefore strikes a consistently "positive" note. It is intended to reinforce in the bereaved a hope in eternal life and a final resurrection. And that makes sense in an age when many people are tempted to think that death is the end. But, I fear, it may also reinforce the tendency found in some clergy to tell the mourners at a funeral that they are not supposed to be sad. The new Office of the Dead could almost be read as saying, "There, there, it's all right after all." But the old Matins says, "It's *not* all right. We have no business to be dying, it's scandalous. What is God up to?"

If we return to the old Matins of the Dead, we find a curious feature. The final reading is taken from *early* in the Book of Job, and is the most bitter of the complaints:

Why did you bring me forth from the womb? I should have died and no eye have seen me. I should have been as though I had never lived; I should have been taken from the womb to the grave. Are not the days of my life few? Let me alone, therefore, that I may lament my sorrow a little before I go whence I shall not return, to the land that is dark and covered with the mist of death, the land of misery and of darkness, where the shadow of death lies, and there is no order, only everlasting horror.

Matins does not end on the positive note of “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” In effect, it ends on a question mark. I think the implication is that the Book of Job is an example of “the Old Testament awaiting the New.” It raises an important question, and one that cannot be dismissed by uttering platitudes. But the answer is not within the Old Testament; likewise, it is not found in Matins but in the continuation of the Liturgy of the Dead.

Matins was followed by Lauds. Lauds of the Dead (like every week-day Lauds before Pius X) began with Psalm 50, which is still the first Psalm in Lauds of the Dead. This Psalm is a prayer for forgiveness – but the verse chosen for the antiphon is, rather, a prophecy of resurrection: *Exsultabunt ossa humiliata [The bones that have been humbled shall rejoice]*. The second Psalm in the old Lauds of the Dead was Psalm 64, *Te decet hymnus*, again treated as a prophecy of eternal joy, in the flesh, for the elect:

A hymn is due to you, O God, in Sion, and a vow shall be paid to you in Jerusalem. Hear my prayer: all flesh shall come to you. The words of the wicked have prevailed over us: but you will pardon our transgressions. Blessed the one you have chosen and taken: he shall dwell in your courts. We shall be filled with the good things of your house: your temple is holy and of wonderful symmetry...

As at every Lauds before Pius X, Psalm 62 was sung: ... *Sitivit in te anima mea, quam multipliciter tibi caro mea ... adhæsit anima mea post te; me suscepit dextera tua... [My soul has thirsted for you, and in how many ways my flesh for you! ... my soul clings to you; your right hand has raised me up...]*

Lauds contained, and contains, an Old Testament canticle. For Lauds of the Dead, Isaiah 38:10-20 is employed. This is the protest of Hezekiah, who finds himself dying before his time, and then, with thanksgiving, finds himself rescued from Sh<sup>o</sup>l. In the new Office, however, the central verses are omitted: *Domine, vim patior ... [Lord, I suffer violence: give answer for me. What shall I say, or what answer shall he make to me, since he himself has done it?]*

Were the compilers of the new Office afraid of making people say rude things to God? (Is it right to be embarrassed by the words of Sacred Scripture?) Or were they afraid of giving the impression that God is somehow responsible for suffering and death? (Though, as St. Thomas explains, He does not *directly* will or cause “evil suffered” {and merely permits “evil committed”}, it remains true, as Julian of Norwich put it, that “God does all that is done” – and in a scientific age it is more essential than ever to emphasise that truth known by all the greatest Jewish and Christian thinkers).

The final Psalm of Lauds was always 150, before Pius X. In Lauds of the Dead its antiphon was, and is, *Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum [Let every spirit/everything that breathes praise the Lord]*.

The antiphon for the *Benedictus* was, and is, *Ego sum resurrectio et vita ... [I am the resurrection and the life ... everyone who lives and believes in me shall not die for ever.]*

So, in the dynamic of the old Office of the Dead, the complaint made at Matins begins to be answered at Lauds, with this more positive note, with these prophecies and promises of resurrection.

But, typically, Lauds of the Dead was and is followed by the Requiem Mass. Let us then turn to that part of the Funeral Liturgy. Note that there always were alternatives for the readings and prayers of the Requiem Mass (and, in the Dominican Rite, for some of the chants); I shall focus on the Mass for the Day of Burial, though even then there was a bit of flexibility as regards the Collect.

One text of the Requiem Mass, namely the Tract *Absolve*, appears to be a prayer for the souls in Purgatory – but it is that only in part, since it also prays that the dead may escape the judgement of condemnation. On the

whole, as in the Office, time is collapsed and the explicit prayer is for a safe journey through the crisis of death.

Some texts of the Funeral Mass struck a balance between fear and confidence, such as the most usual Collect:

*Deus, cui proprium est misereri semper et parcere, ...* O God, to whom it belongs ever to have mercy and to spare, we humbly beseech you for the soul of your servant N, which you have commanded today to journey from this world. Do not deliver it into the hands of the enemy, nor forget it for ever. Rather, bid the holy Angels receive it and lead it to Paradise its homeland. So may the one who hoped and believed in you not endure the pains of hell, but possess eternal joys.

The same Collect is available in the new Rite, but in a shortened form, and wholly “positive” in tone:

O God, to whom it belongs ever to have mercy and to spare, we humbly beseech you for your servant N, whom you have commanded today to journey to you. Because he hoped and believed in you, grant him to be led to his true homeland and possess eternal joys.

The famous *Dies iræ* is also, in fact, a balanced text! If we understand it as sung *in persona defuncti*, it is the prayer of one facing the Last Judgement (as anticipated in the moment of death), and, with fear and trembling, asking for mercy – asking *confidently*:

*Rex tremendæ majestatis ...* Thou, O dread and mighty King, Mercy’s inexhausted Spring, Now Thy free deliverance bring. Think, good Jesus, think, I pray: I it was that caused Thy way; Cast me not aside that day! Faint in search of me hast lain; On the Cross hast suffered pain: Shall such labour be in vain?

In the Roman Rite the same note of fear was struck at the Absolution, with the Responsory *Libera me*. In the Dominican Rite the more “positive” *Subvenite* was sung at that point. But in both Rites, many of the texts struck a “positive” note: the *Requiem æternam ... lux perpetua ...* theme of Introit, Gradual and Communion, for example, and, looking ahead to the carrying of the body out of Church, the *In paradisum*. In particular, the readings were declarations of hope for the final resurrection: I Thess. 4:13-18 and

John 11:21-27 (on other occasions than a funeral, II Macc. 12:43-46, Apoc. 14:13, John 6:51-55 and John 6:37-40 were often used – the new Lectionary contains all these and many other texts).

The old rite of the Funeral Mass, therefore, gathered up some of the themes of the Office of the Dead: a sense of fearful drama and a mood of urgent petition. But the note of *bewildered anger* has disappeared. I suggest this is because the Requiem Mass provides the answer to the question posed by the old Matins of the Dead. Not so much by means of the proper texts, but *by means of what the Mass is*. For the God who appeared to Job and said, “I’m bigger than you are,” has now appeared to us. God has, quite literally, been seen on earth – but when God did become incarnate, He did not so much say, “I’m bigger than you are,” as, “I am with you.” Jesus Christ is Emmanuel, God-with-us. And the Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament of His Self-Sacrifice on the Cross. One of the Trinity has died on the Cross, as the Second Council of Constantinople declared. God has still not explained why we die – but God has Himself died, as man. He has shared our death, or, rather, we share His. And the Holy Eucharist we receive is Viaticum, food for the journey, the medicine of immortality, the way the risen Jesus makes us able to live for ever.

So the old Liturgy of the Dead had a particular, dramatic shape. It presented us with the scandalous mystery of death, convinced that God must put right what has gone wrong; then it presented us with the even more mysterious answer – *God* has died on the Cross, and our death can therefore be a sharing in His Death. This does not make death understandable, in a way it makes it *more* shocking. But our complaint against God is quieted by our discovery of God’s solidarity with us: death is not something imposed by a distant God, but shared by God who became one of our family.

Thus, when we prayed *in persona defuncti* we accompanied the dead person into the scandal of death and the moment of judgement, and stood with him or her before Christ the divine Judge who, *quærens me, sedisti lassus, redemisti Crucem passus*. Celebrating the Holy Eucharist for the dead, we accepted on their behalf Christ’s Sacrifice and His Passing Over to new life. And so, implicitly, we accompanied the dead into Purgatory, which is nothing else than a completion of our dying with Christ, that we may live with Him (“they joy to undergo the *shadow of Thy Cross sublime, the remnant of Thy woe*”). In the old Office and Mass of the Dead, we so to speak accepted death on behalf of the deceased – accepted it under initial

protest, a protest only brought to its resolution by the great Sign of God's solidarity with us, by the revelation of God's own readiness to accept death.

As one would expect, the penetration of the "literary form" of the old Liturgy of the Dead required considerable work; its implications were not blazoned on its surface. Given that few lay people would ever have heard Matins of the Dead, it is unlikely that many people ever experienced the full drama of that Liturgy. It is not even all that likely that many people took the trouble to notice the many elements woven together in the old Requiem Mass, though many were indeed struck by its drama.

The new Liturgy of the Dead abandons the attempt to provide a "catharsis" for the dead person scandalised by his own death. Thereby, perhaps, it does not provide much of a catharsis for those who remain alive. The new Mass and Office of the Dead make a consistent attempt to provide hope and comfort to Christians living in a post-Christian society, and to non- or nominal Christians attending funerals. They are "didactic" – and are so, to some extent, at the expense of praying for the dead. Gone is any profound sense of shocked protest at death; in the way the funeral Liturgy is often celebrated, there is even little sense that death is "the last enemy to be destroyed." All too often death is presented as a "friend" – but that is not true to Scripture or to the new Funeral Liturgy itself. I fear that the new Rite is often enough mis-used in such a way that the mourners' human feelings are not respected. Even when it is used well, there is less sense of the *urgency* of praying for the dead, and it is not so easy to cultivate a cathartic drama or a sense of solidarity-in-horror with the one who has faced death.

It is not easy to see how this situation might be remedied. I would of course welcome a revision of the Office of the Dead so that it would incorporate the special features of the old Office of the Dead; the restoration of readings from Job would provide the note of protest that the Requiem Mass could then answer. A yet more difficult task would be to persuade priests to persuade mourners to celebrate Vespers of the Dead after the reception of the body, and Matins and Lauds of the Dead on the morning of the Funeral. Even if the Office of the Dead were revised, and were used more widely, the mourners would be even less open than in previous ages to the dynamic of its literary form. People are not well attuned to the rich symbolic fabric of Scripture and Liturgy – even though there is a widespread thirst for "spiritual values." And I fear that few priests manage to unpack much of

the available riches in their homilies. The “Liturgical Movement” wanted the minds and hearts of the faithful to be “formed” by the Liturgy – and I fear we are further off than fifty years ago from achieving that noble goal.

Nevertheless, I am still haunted by the drama of the old Liturgy of the Dead, and wish it were possible for more people to accompany their departed through complaint, bewilderment, fear and anger to an acceptance of a share in God’s own Death, which is the strange way He has provided to resurrection and life.

## **LAUDATE DOMINUM**

## **Harmony that God wants to hear**

Pilgrims who were present at the Pope’s Wednesday Audience on the 26<sup>th</sup> February, listened to the Holy Father’s reflection on Psalm 150, *Laudate Dominum in Sanctis* (Praise the Lord in His Holy Places), which he concluded by describing as ‘the ideal seal to the whole Psalter, the book of praise, of song, of the liturgy of Israel.’ He then went on to elaborate on the importance of song in our own liturgy:

Thus, it is necessary to constantly discover and live the beauty of prayer and of the liturgy. One must pray to God not only with theologically precise formulas, but also in a beautiful and dignified way.

In this connection, the Christian community must make an examination of conscience so that the beauty of music and song will return increasingly to the liturgy. It is necessary to purify worship of deformations, of careless forms of expression, of ill-prepared music and texts, which are not very suited to the grandeur of the act being celebrated.

Significant, in this connection, is the appeal of the Letter to the Ephesians (5:18-20), to avoid intemperance and vulgarity, to leave room for the purity of liturgical hymns. "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father".

The Psalmist ends by inviting "everything that breathes" (Psalm 150:5), an expression that in Hebrew designates "every being that breathes", especially "every living man" (Deuteronomy 20:16; Joshua 10:40; 11:11,14). Hence, in divine praise the human creature is involved with his voice and heart. With him are called ideally all living beings, all creatures in which there is a breath of life (Genesis 7:22), so that they will raise their hymn of gratitude to the Creator for the gift of existence.

Saint Francis follows this universal invitation with his thought-provoking "Canticle to Brother Sun", in which he invites us to praise and bless the Lord for all creatures, a reflection of His beauty and of His goodness.

All the faithful should participate, in a special way, in this song, as the Letter to the Colossians suggests: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16).

In this respect, Saint Augustine, in his "Commentaries on the Psalms", sees symbolized in the musical instruments the saints who praise God: "You, saints, are the trumpet, the psaltery, the zither, the tympani, the choir, the strings and the organ, and the cymbals of joy that emit beautiful sounds, which play harmoniously. You are all these things. When hearing the Psalm, one must not think of things of little value, of transitory things, or of theatrical instruments". In reality, "every spirit that praises the Lord" is a voice of song to God.

The highest music, therefore, is the one that arises from our hearts. It is precisely this harmony that God wants to hear in our liturgies.

Almost one hundred years ago, the Pope's predecessor, St Pius X, issued his celebrated *motu proprio*, *Tra le sollecitudini* (22<sup>nd</sup> November 1903), about which we hope to say more before the end of this centenary year. It is a beautifully written document in which one feels moved to applaud every paragraph. It is tempting to quote from it at length, but for the present let us recall simply its insistence that Gregorian Chant is the authentic music of the Catholic liturgy, to which might be added other music only of truly

worthy composition. The same principle has been stressed in every subsequent Vatican document on music in the liturgy and of course, most notably, in the Sacred Constitution on the Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (4<sup>th</sup> December 1963), [see in particular Chapter VI, Articles 114-118] from which the *Novus Ordo* of Mass derives. It remains therefore completely relevant for us all today.

## **WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH**

### **Echoes of ‘The Spirit of Vatican II’**

That spurious ‘spirit’, in whose name so much unnecessary spoilation was caused, has not entirely left us. There are those, not many perhaps, though notably adept at getting their opinions into print, who apparently consider themselves personally affronted by any initiative on the part of the Holy See intended to raise the general standard of the Sacred Liturgy, even after more than thirty years’ experience of the New Rite. It seems they feel they have had some influence on the development that has brought the liturgy to its present pass and consider themselves well enough pleased with the results. Now, faced with a growing realisation that the Church sees that it is possible and necessary to work towards something better, perhaps they do indeed see themselves ‘cast into outer darkness’! It may be a needless feeling of guilt or paranoia, for in truth there has been no evidence of a deliberate campaign to humiliate or heap blame on individuals who have done what they thought right during the extraordinary period under the ‘spirit of Vatican II’. Yet, setting aside due dignity, several have gone out of their way recently, to launch intemperate attacks on the Holy See, for daring to issue the Instruction *Liturgiam authenticam* or, through the bishops, to encourage the making of fresh appointments for the new era at ICEL.

An early example, in August 2001, was the notorious attack on *Liturgiam authenticam* by the editor of *Liturgy Newsletter* (issued by the Liturgy Committee of the Bishops’ Conference) in which the document is described as ‘mean-spirited’ and ‘authoritarian, not to say totalitarian in tone’. The bishops publicly disassociated themselves from that without delay. In September 2002, *Briefings* (official journal of the Bishops’ Conference) reproduced an extraordinary statement by the Scottish Bishop Maurice Taylor who was retiring at the end of his term as Chairman of the Episcopal

Board of ICEL. He pointedly rejected all criticism of ICEL's work and issued an indignant defence of members of staff whose integrity he imagined to have been impugned thereby.

*Music & Liturgy* (the well produced magazine of the Society of Saint Gregory), in its Autumn/Winter 2002 issue, carries a report of the inaugural James Crichton Memorial Lecture, given on All Souls' Day 2002 at Salford Cathedral. This was instituted by the society in memory of Mgr Crichton, the doyen of England's post Vatican II liturgists who died in 2001. It was delivered by Mgr Anthony Boylan, who we remember as 'National Adviser on Liturgy' in the late 1970's and early 80's, when the ALL was struggling to secure approval of the New Latin-English Sunday Missal. One might have assumed that he had settled down to respectable obscurity in the Leeds diocese, but his name reappeared last year in connection with the unedifying affair of the Knottingley tabernacle, which received much publicity in the Catholic newspapers.

Now, he has stepped into the limelight to deliver his lecture under the title '*Liturgiam Authenticam* – is this Liturgical Renewal?' His answer to that inapt proposition was of course predictable and not long in coming: "it becomes abundantly obvious that the document is not concerned in the least with liturgical renewal"

He sets the tone by quoting with evident approval the two examples given above. Then, early on, he includes us in the following tribute, clearly oblivious of our continually expressed concern for better vernacular translations: "The first line of resistance to renewal was, of course, to a vernacular liturgy – an opposition, quite marginal now, but one that is still continued by the Association for Latin Liturgy and the Latin Mass Society (although the latter have other agenda as well)."

Better translation is apparently not something desirable: "... it is easy to see that the issue of the accuracy of translation and the elegance of wording in the vernacular text is very largely a red herring." Furthermore: "If the language used is so polished and elegant that it becomes alien to many .... it will diminish rather than promote their ability to participate." That is a gem for Father Bruce and his colleagues to ponder!

There is much more, for example: “I have difficulty too with the concept that any language is ‘sacred’.....”. (But might it not be ‘sacral’?) In any case: “Many of the prayers are old, but that does not make them sacred..... The majority of those in the Missal are barely worth the effort of translating anyway.” All in all, the document is judged “very short on principles but long on procedure....” and “efforts to develop the liturgy will be stultified by the oppressive control...”.

**Editor’s Comment** Readers will know that this Newsletter strives as far as possible to concentrate on all that is positive and hopeful. We give space to these controversial quotations only to provide a frank reminder of the attitudes that were indeed quite prevalent in the early post-conciliar period - and surprisingly linger still.

Regarding *Liturgiam authenticam*, it can be said quite simply that the Holy See has an absolute right and duty to guide the worship of the Catholic Church throughout the world. It has the responsibility to ensure that when Catholics believe they are sharing the same faith and worship with fellow Catholics abroad, they are in fact doing so. If translations are not true, the people are being deceived. Translation requires that where there is meaning in the words of a text, that meaning must be reproduced faithfully in the translation. Thus, it is not necessarily ‘word for word’ that is required, but rather ‘meaning for meaning’. No serious language teacher should accept anything less. Should anyone doubt the need for a more faithful attitude to translation of the liturgy, it is demonstrated with the greatest clarity in the CDW’s ‘Observations’ (March 2002), which may be read in full on our website.

There is, incidentally, a situation of some irony in the Diocese of Leeds. The new co-adjutor bishop is Arthur Roche, who happens also to have been appointed as the new episcopal chairman of ICEL. Will Mgr Boylan, liturgical adviser, be offering him advice, to complement any that he may receive from the *Vox Clara* committee?

**AIDAN NICHOLS OP: A POPE AND A COUNCIL ON THE SACRED LITURGY** *Review*

Fr Aidan Nichols is known to us as the distinguished Dominican scholar who delivered a memorable address at our AGM at Spanish Place in October 1997, entitled *Ad sacra mysteria celebranda*, about the liturgical theology of Dom Odo Casel. Fr Nichols is one of the most prolific Catholic authors, with at least 30 titles still in print. The most prolific must be Cardinal Ratzinger, who has of course been writing very much longer. The comparison is interesting, however, as both are highly respected theologians, whose books on theology, and some on Church history, account for most of their output, but who care passionately about the liturgy and are openly critical of its general state at present. Each has written two influential books on the subject in recent years. The Cardinal, however, has just published another, so far only available in Italian: *Il Dio Vicino* (The Intimate God) concerned especially with the Blessed Sacrament. To keep things tidy, Fr Nichols has also written 'The Theology of Cardinal Ratzinger'. He has further books appearing almost monthly, but we must focus now on the second of his books on the liturgy, which is one of an excellent series of titles published by Saint Michael's Abbey, Farnborough:

**A Pope and a Council on the Sacred Liturgy: Pope Pius XII's *Mediator Dei* and the Second Vatican Council's *Sacrosanctum Concilium* with a comparative study 'A Tale of Two Documents'** That is the full title and subtitle, which sets out the author's purpose with perfect clarity. His presentation of his subject is similarly one of admirable directness. Helpfully, he sets out both documents in full – how boring it would be if one had to bring out one's own copies and turn to them constantly while trying to follow his arguments. Ahead of these long texts, he presents the shortest element in the trilogy, his own critical analysis.

Obviously, the two documents are regarded as the principal landmarks of liturgical development in the mid-twentieth century. They are however of a quite different nature, the one a Papal Encyclical, written by the wise Pope Pius XII in 1947, very soon after the return of peace following the turmoil of the Second World War, presiding over a stable but steadily growing Catholic Church. The second, signed of course by the then Pope Paul VI, who had served Pius for so long as right-hand man, was essentially a conciliar document, in fact the 'Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy' which emerged from the Second Vatican Council in 1963. This was early in a

decade when attitudes to all manner of things would undergo radical change. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* was to a large extent the blueprint for the future development of the liturgy, although ‘the nuts and bolts’ were only put into place by the documents that were to follow, particularly: *Sacram Liturgiam* (1964), *Inter æcumenici* (1964), *Institutio Generalis* (1969) and *Missale Romanum* (1970). Although endorsed by the Council Fathers, it was essentially the work of *periti* or ‘experts’ working behind the scene. The author is not alone in believing that it contained “in the innocuous language of pastoral welfare, some seeds of its own destruction”.

First however, he studies both documents against the historical background of the Liturgical Movement, and looks critically at their underlying theological and pastoral standpoints. Interestingly, he detects a connection between the Thomist theology of justice and the virtue of religion and the principle of *participatio actuosa*. He finds *Mediator Dei* generally the more substantial in its theology and he credits it with raising the liturgy to the highest importance in the spiritual life of the Church. He acknowledges that Pius XII had a fairly shrewd understanding of the movements that were afoot and sought, for example, to temper such enthusiasm as existed for a return to the ‘pristine’ worship of the primitive Church. He observes that *Sacrosanctum Concilium* did not exhibit similar caution, which was consequently not available to encourage sober restraint in the subsequent implementation of the renewal. It was claimed, allegedly by one of the Fathers of Vatican II, that the Liturgical Movement ‘reached maturity’ in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. In returning to the sources, Nichols is able to provide some answers as to how far the reforms did come to achieving the hopes of that movement, for a study of which one can do no better than turn to his earlier work [Nichols, Aidan: **Looking at the Liturgy** 1996, Ignatius Press, San Francisco ISBN 0 89870 592 4] and it matters little which of these books one reads first.

If a reviewer needs to find a minor quibble, there is one thing that puzzles. Throughout his commentary, the author refers to the two documents by the initials MD and SC, which is perfectly acceptable, but sometimes, in the same breath, he refers to the ‘Liturgy Constitution’ which the less well versed reader may not immediately recognise as SC in another guise, but imagine that a third document has been mysteriously introduced; a trifling point that does not in any way detract from this study. His book adopts a

valid form of analysis of key Vatican documents of the twentieth century. Surely there are other encyclicals or apostolic constitutions that might justify the same method of scrutiny. As to the Sacred Liturgy, we are left knowing that Father Nichols has reservations about the direction the Church has travelled. As to the future, “The renaissance to which we look forward, I venture to suggest, will include the recovery of the liturgical objectivity married with devotionism of MD but also SC’s looking beyond the Church here and now to the final Church arrayed in the glorious garments of the redeemed when Christ comes with all His Saints.”

Nichols, Aidan: **A Pope and a Council on the Sacred Liturgy**, 2002, St. Michael's Abbey Press, Farnborough ISBN 0 907077 38 2 £10.95

## **PACEM IN TERRIS**

## **Fortieth Anniversary**

We began this Newsletter with reference to a brand new Encyclical from John Paul II. Later we spoke of another one, very nearly 100 years old, from St Pius X. It seems appropriate to end with one more, not in this case concerned with liturgy: that issued by Pope John XXIII, 40 years ago (11 April 1963): *PACEM IN TERRIS - de pace omnium gentium in veritate, iustitia, caritate, libertate constituenda*. In a poignant coincidence, this anniversary falls now, when the Pope, Vatican diplomats and bishops from every land have been leading fervent appeals for peace and when such an insistent call has been raised throughout the world by voice and pen and prayer. At this time it is fitting to revisit Pope John’s eloquent document, composed when the world was gripped in the Cold War, yet expounding a strategy for peace that remains valid today. The CTS has recently republished the English text: [PIUS XII *Pacem in Terris* Catholic Truth Society, London ISBN 1 86082 170 7, £2.50]

In spite of current happenings, it may be a hopeful sign that so many people of all nations have been ready to raise their voices in the cause of peaceful solutions to the world’s problems and in condemnation of militaristic aggression. While frustrated in the short term, if this momentum continues to grow, it is surely possible that in our present century we may expect more peace than in the last.