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SPERANTES ETIAM FACIENTES

Editorial

Waiting joyfully in hope is an essential feature of the journey through life of every Christian. A vivid reflection of this hopeful waiting, in microcosm, may be discerned in the pattern in which Vatican documents on the Liturgy have come down to us in recent years: *Liturgiam Authenticam*, *Institutio Generalis*, *Missale Romanum (editio tertia)* and *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*. We waited patiently for these, but were never left disappointed. Now we await the “more specific document, including prescriptions of a juridical nature, on this very important subject” that the Holy Father has promised us. There has been no lack of speculation about it, early leaks suggesting something heavily draconian, but later ones hinted at concessions designed to avoid upsetting the ‘progressives’ among the world’s bishops. Nevertheless, the Pope and the senior curial cardinals are men of wisdom and courage. Indeed, in these late years of his pontificate, Pope John Paul returns repeatedly to the topic of reverence in the liturgy and the

importance of appropriate music in its celebration. Therefore we have every reason to remain hopeful.

In the meantime, the work of this Association proceeds in its quiet but dedicated manner. However, in the second half of 2002 our work became almost feverish, culminating in the release of our first CD *Orate Fratres*, in collaboration with our friends, The Music Makers. Inspired by the promulgation of the exciting third edition of the *Missale Romanum*, its purpose is to ensure that nobody, seminarian, priest or layman, need ever complain of the lack of an accurate guide to pronouncing, singing or saying the Latin texts of the Missal. This, we believe, will rank among our most important contributions to the worthy celebration of the Liturgy. Our work has not gone unnoticed; from the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, the Prefect, Cardinal Arinze, has written “Your Association merits encouragement and gratitude for all you do to promote beauty and reverence in the sacred liturgy and more frequent celebrations in Latin.”

FUTURE EVENTS 2004

Spring in the Highlands

From Wednesday in Easter Week (14 April) until Low Sunday (18 April) a group of members will be participating in a Retreat in the inspiring setting of Pluscarden Abbey, which is noted for its full retention of Latin in the daily Mass and Divine Office. If anyone has questions to ask about this, they may contact Ian Wells who has kindly undertaken the organisation of the event: Ian.Wells@Latin-Liturgy.org (telephone 0115 950 4464) In view of this Retreat, we will not be holding the usual Spring Meeting of the Association this year. This popular event will be resumed in 2005.

October in Chelsea

It is proposed to hold our Annual General Meeting this autumn on Saturday 2nd October at the Church of St Mary, Cadogan Street, Chelsea, London SW3, where the Vice-Chairman has held sway as MC for some twenty years and been closely involved in other ways too numerous to mention. Further information about this meeting will be given in forthcoming Newsletters.

ORATE FRATRES

Successful Launch of New CD

We were delighted with the successful launch of our latest product at ‘Towards Advent’ in Westminster Cathedral Hall on Saturday 15 November. The CD was the result of several months’ intensive work in planning, recording and packaging. It was carefully compiled in order to fulfil the demand for an accurate guide to the pronunciation of Church Latin and singing of the Gregorian Mass texts. The project was inspired by the publication of the third official edition of the *Missale Romanum* (2002) which was clearly intended to be used at the altar and from which it was evident that singing the Mass was to be preferred wherever possible, as the Pope reminds us, so that “the beauty of music and song will return increasingly to the liturgy”¹

It is intended primarily, but not of course exclusively, to assist in the training of seminarians and young priests, or indeed older priests whose formation may have been deficient in this respect. It can also be of great benefit to others: students of Liturgy, members of choirs and congregations and all who wish to increase their knowledge of the Latin of the Missal and their ability to participate actively in it. In particular, *Orate Fratres* could be used profitably by those learning Latin from our textbook *A New Approach to Latin for the Mass*, in which context it provides an excellent replacement for our earlier cassette tape.

The painstaking work of recording was undertaken by our member, Jeremy de Satgé, who is General Manager and one of the founders of The Music Makers, who have already marketed such a CD of the Mass chants in English: *Let us proclaim the Mystery of ‘Faith’* (2002), in co-operation with Wonersh Seminary. Knowing the difficulties encountered in production and the amount of dedication required to achieve as perfect a recording as possible, we owe Jeremy a very considerable debt of gratitude.

Since the launch, we have enjoyed a steady volume of sales, not only within our own country but throughout the world. We continue to receive accolades from all quarters, a changing selection of which are shown on our website: www.Latin-Liturgy.org

In America, our friends at **Adoremus: Society For the Renewal of the Sacred Liturgy**, www.adoremus.org, have kindly published a review in their Bulletin under the title: **CD Offers Jump Start for the New Missal**, from which we quote:

“Priests (and parish choirs) who want to use the new Missal for Mass now have a helpful guide. *Orate Fratres*, a CD guide for singing and saying the Mass in Latin according to the new *Missale Romanum* (2002) was released in December by the Association for Latin Liturgy of England, in collaboration with The Music Makers group. Association chairman Bernard Marriott said that the CD provides "an accurate guide both to the pronunciation of Church Latin and to the singing of the chant... It will be invaluable for priests and people to refer to when uncertainties arise. In addition to the standard Gregorian texts of the Mass, plus a useful selection of important Prefaces, the historic chants of Holy Week and the complete spoken Mass" are included. Adoremus's review of the CD confirms Mr. Marriott's description. The careful diction in chanted texts by singer/reciter, Jeremy de Satgé, is noteworthy, and comes through well in a very clear recording.”

¹*Pope John Paul II, Audience, 26 February 2003 (see Newsletter 118 of Easter 2003)*

Orate Fratres may be ordered online from: Sales@Latin-Liturgy.org or by using the Order Form at the back of this Newsletter. Price £12.00, postage paid (in the UK)

AGM 2003 IN BARKING

Report

On Saturday the 11th October, it was a happy experience to renew our acquaintance with Father William Young's delightful parish of Saint Mary and Saint Ethelburga in Barking. Those of us who had taken part in the AGM here in 1998 were reminded why we had enjoyed it so much on that occasion. In an unpretentious post-war church of unspectacular design, all is decently arranged and one can sense that the liturgy under Fr Young's caring guidance is conducted here with admirable reverence. We were most warmly welcomed, by Fr Young of course, but also by his friendly parishioners who turned out in force to share the celebration of their patronal feast with us.

This is of course not the church at which the future Cardinal Heenan began his ministry as curate between the wars. The present church, dating from 1979, is of straightforward low-built brick construction, in contrast with the Puginesque Gothic in which we often find ourselves. It offers no 'verticality' which some think important in a place of worship. In this it is however perfectly in tune with the recent diocesan Cathedral (1991 by Quinlan Terry) at Brentwood. St Ethelburga's has a pitched roof whose timber beams one can admire from within the nave. There is conventional congregational seating on good benches in the centre of the nave, but with similar benches on both sides, which conveys a nice intimacy. The floor of the nave is carpeted in old gold, (in common with that of our Jesuit friends at Farm Street). The sanctuary is attractively distinguished with a light stone floor; there is a diagonally placed area slightly raised for the sedilia; a perfectly good altar is sensibly arranged so that Mass can be celebrated either *ad orientem* or *versus populum*; while the tabernacle has a prominent place to the side, is decently veiled and visible to all.

Outside the church, we find the remarkable feature that sets it apart: a handsome ring of four bells mounted in a low steel frame. This is reminiscent of the French Abbey of Saint-Wandrille, where a similar array of low-mounted bells greets one just inside the main gate. The presence of the Bells of Barking is explained by Fr Young's passionate interest in and knowledge of the subject, which he kindly shared with members later in the afternoon.

Sung Latin Mass for the Solemnity of Saint Ethelburga was celebrated by Fr Young, assisted by our Council member, Fr Kevin Hale (to whom we offer best wishes on his move to Our Lady of Lourdes, Leigh-on-Sea) and Bro Anton Webb of the Oxford Oratory. To encourage the fullest participation of the parishioners, Mass XI *Orbis Factor* was chosen. In the choir stalls one recognised a row of familiar faces of the Association's officers and distinguished members. The text of the sermon preached by Fr Young will be found following this article.

At lunch, we had further experience of the friendliness and hospitality of the parishioners, who had made a magnificent effort to provide

refreshments of an excellent standard. The parish has the benefit of extensive facilities for meetings and social functions in its former school buildings. In the afternoon, Fr Young was the principal speaker, on the subject of Bells, which was greatly appreciated by all present; and he has kindly provided the text of his talk for reproduction in this issue. The Business Meeting followed after a tea break, with Reports from the Chairman and Treasurer. The Chairman's Report is reproduced later in this Newsletter and the Annual Accounts produced by the Treasurer may be seen at the end of the Newsletter. A happy and successful day was concluded with Solemn Vespers and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, well celebrated and well supported by the parishioners.

SERMON ON THE SOLEMNITY OF SAINT ETHELBURGA

Preached by Father William Young on the 11th October 2003

There were in fact three St Ethelburgas, and they all lived in the 7th century. The first was daughter of King Ethelbert of Kent and married to King Edwin of Northumbria. When he died, she became abbess in Lyminge, Kent, and died there in 647. The second was also of royal blood, being the daughter of King Anna of East Anglia. She became abbess of the monastery of Faremoutiers in France, and died in 664. Neither of these eminent women is our Saint Ethelburga, who was the sister of St Erconwald, who became Bishop of London. Until it was vandalized at the Reformation his shrine was a popular place of pilgrimage and prominently placed behind the high altar in St Paul's Cathedral. It is not clear if the family of our St Ethelburga was of royal blood, but then this distinction was perhaps not so clear to the Anglo-Saxons. The very name Ethelburga means noble stronghold, Ethel, Atheling. What is certain is that she was very rich, or rather, her family was. She must also have been very devout, although we know virtually nothing about her whatsoever. Bede relates the miraculous events that preceded her death, on 11th October, probably in 675 or 678. These strike us today as rather far fetched. Perhaps that is part of our problem. Those who observed these events, whatever they were, associated them with our saint, and this would not have happened if she had not already been a remarkable and holy woman.

What is known is that Erconwald founded two monasteries, one in Chertsey for himself, and one in Barking in 666, as a house over which Ethelburga could preside. The legend goes that Hildelith, a nun, was brought in from

France as “novice mistress” for Ethelburga to form her as Abbess while remaining her inferior. This must have required the patience of a saint, and her success is perhaps sufficient to explain why Hildelith, along with Cuthburga, is also honoured as a saint, as one of the Barking Virgins commemorated in the diocese on this day. I say success, because there must have been a powerful presence of holiness at the beginning of Barking Abbey to explain its extraordinarily long history. It had its ups and downs, and needed royal support at times, being refounded by King Edgar. For a time it was a double house, with monks as well as nuns, but in the course of time the male component was reduced to the college of priests who looked after the spiritual and liturgical needs of the nuns, and eventually the townspeople. To give some idea of the scale of time, just remember that William the Conqueror stayed here in the aftermath of 1066 while the Tower was being built for him as his palace in London. The Abbey was already 400 years old at the time. It lasted another 500 years, and at the time of its destruction in 1539 its oldest parts were as old as the White Tower of the Tower of London is now.

So why am I telling you all this? And why are we bothering to celebrate this person, about whom we know about as much as could be learned from a newspaper death announcement, not even an obituary. Even her bones are lost. Ethelburga’s cult never spread far from Barking, although there is a St Ethelburga’s Church in London. It was almost destroyed in the terrorist bombing about 10 years ago, but has now been restored as St Ethelburga’s Centre for Reconciliation and Peace.

It seems to me that our St Ethelburga gives us a powerful witness to the essentials of Christian life. Don’t tell me that she had to be retiring and modest because she was a woman. Women in Anglo-Saxon times could be very assertive. (Think Lady Godiva!) The Abbesses who were her successors were also very powerful personalities. Not shrinking violets. Ethelburga chose an ordered life of work and prayer as a way of re-planting Christianity in Barking. She did not seek to be known for her own deeds and fame. She wanted to be known by God, and as a nun, she kept herself for him. It is because her whole life was spent in his service that we do not know the external details. This is not a hatred of the world. But it is a preference for eternal values. It is a virginity.

Am I alone in feeling the title *virgin* a little embarrassing these days? We tend to avoid it, even in BVM. Perhaps what is wrong is that we see virginity in terms of negativeness, of a denial of our sexual nature. There is, of course necessarily a sexual dimension to virginity. But for someone dedicated to God, sexuality is an aspect of life that falls into place, not without a struggle, perhaps, as an enriching part of a whole personality. While the world celebrates fame and sex and glamour, it will never notice people like St Ethelburga. But they are there as witnesses to the possibility of a successful integration of our human energies and passions. Jesus was mocked by being told to come down off the cross. To expect our Ethelburga to reveal herself to us as a personality is to call her out of her monastery, her enclosure, her intimacy with God. Her very hiddenness is a witness to holiness and an invitation to us. Not indeed to become a nun or a monk, at least, not necessarily. Some perhaps will be called, but we must try to imitate her holiness by seeing the intimacy to which God calls us, married or single, young or old.

So today we celebrate. We honour our saint. Let us honour her by ourselves seeking closer communion with God.

BELLS IN THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH: Regrowing a Wholesome Tradition Talk given by Fr William Young at the Association's AGM in Barking

Perhaps the earliest objects we would easily recognize as bells in the service of the Church were handbells. St Patrick's Bell, and a few hundred others like it, (one more has recently been discovered), are of this kind. They are small enough to be carried about to summon people together. They were precious, cult objects, and were revered in ways we might nowadays find difficult to appreciate or even consider superstitious. They were not cast, but made from sheet metal, folded and welded or riveted, like cowbells. Cast bells, made in one piece by pouring molten metal into a mould, give a much stronger sound. Surely we can all remember the school bell, either in our own school or from comic strips like the Bash Street Kids. The old handbell from the school which once occupied this building is carefully preserved as a historical relic. Curio shops cater for the enduring need for bells of this kind as decorative objects or souvenirs. Sets of handbells in bronze for playing tunes or for handbell ringing can still be

ordered from the founders, at great expense. They cannot really be thought of as being in the service of the Church, and of course not every bell is a church bell, although the Christian Church has made such widespread use of larger bells than handbells that the sound of a bell, at least until recently, would be presumed to be to do with religion, at least in a loose sense. Anyone interested in a detailed historical account of the development of the bell from these earliest times to the very sophisticated products of today will have to consult one of the many encyclopaedia articles available in libraries or on the internet. The article *Bells* by Fr Herbert Thurston SJ in the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, although nearly 100 years old, is well worth a look. For our purposes this afternoon we only need to register the general and longstanding human fascination with sounds and how they can be generated for musical or other purposes.

A Romantic might be tempted to imagine that the process of refining metals was driven by the knowledge that metals, especially melted and cast metals, can be made to give out a pleasing and interesting sound. But you do not need to be a cynic to consider it more likely that practical needs, including the superiority of metal weapons over wood or stone, came first. Whatever drove the development of metal-working, man (if I can still use this term) has used metals for a very long time, and he soon discovered their musical potential. In time of war, (both World Wars in Germany, for example) bells were often melted down to make weapons, and when peace came, cannons have been melted down to make bells, as in Vienna after the siege of 1683, and in Cologne after the 1870 Franco-Prussian war, and again after the First World War. The most famous bell founder known by name, Geerd van Wou, who lived at the turn of the 15th and 16th Centuries and was based in the Low Countries, was much sought after both as caster of bells and as a maker of cannon.

By a process of trial and error lasting many hundreds of years, the best metal was found to be bronze, an alloy of copper and tin. Even today, it has not been improved on. Over the years the proportions of about 23% tin to 77% copper have been found to give the best results. We may talk about “silver bells” but silver is not the best metal. Gold would be worse, although as a child I remember being transfixed by the sound of the golden bell discovered in the film *The Vikings*. Iron works, even an iron bar hung in a tree can serve as a call to worship, but it rusts. Steel is better than iron,

but also eventually rusts, and stainless steel is not a successful alloy for making bells. Other metals and alloys have been used, especially in times of shortage, even aluminium. Small bells can be made of porcelain, a speciality in Meissen, and quite large ones even of glass. Old bells, made with imperfectly refined metal, even contain more than just traces of lead, but a lead bell would be just that, leaden. There has to be a rigidity and a brittleness to make the metal resonate. Interestingly, lead would work, but only if the bell cast in lead were cooled to extreme, sub-zero temperatures to harden it. You may know that tin will crumble away into dust at very low temperatures. Bells made with alloys containing tin should not be rung at very low temperatures, because they become very brittle and may easily crack. This happened to the great bell in Erfurt in 1984. It was, miraculously, welded in situ. The important property of the metal is that it must be resilient and strong, hard, but not too brittle. Here bronze succeeds as a bell-metal eminently, at ordinary temperatures, because its fine crystalline structure, which makes any broken surfaces look white because it is so fine, can be generated so easily. Copper can be melted using a wood-burning furnace and bellows, and once it is liquid, tin will readily dissolve into it to form an intimately mingled solution, which can then be poured into a mould and take up the shape intended.

The shape is important. For each material, there would be an optimum shape or profile. German founders faced with the problem of casting in steel during the post-war shortage of bronze, developed special profiles for steel, but only in a time of shortage. We can confine our interest to bronze bells. The bell shape we now take for granted in Western Europe and beyond, took several hundred years to develop, and the secret of the perfect shape for bronze was often lost. Founders jealously guarded their secrets from their competitors, and sometimes they died before they could pass it on to their heirs. I suspect that bell-founders of the past were not always scrupulously honest folks. Invariably, I think, the weight of old bells is exaggerated; but this is only discovered much later. One can imagine a bell-founder on his death-bed passing on the secret to his son in the words: “My son, remember that you can also make bells from bronze!” But the secret was really all in the shape, and by the end of the 15th Century, this had been discovered and was being used with some consistency in north-west Europe. Some very large bells of up to 10 or more tons were cast in

this golden age from 1450 to the so called Reformation. A number of these bells still exist and are still in use today.

Now I want you to think carefully about this great achievement. There was no really effective way of tuning bells. The shape had to be fixed before the metal was poured. The mould was made of an inner and outer half, which were then put together and held together, even being buried in the ground to resist the pressure of the molten metal. You had to know that the form the bell took up was exactly right, allowing for the mould to ease itself into the shape desired. (I visited Erfurt many years ago and saw the quilted effect on the inside of the great bell there, caused by the nails resisting the pressure of the molten metal more than the surrounding clay mix which they were there to strengthen.) If you got it wrong, the only solution was to break up the bell and start again.

Clearly, bells were a large investment of money and were important. The 11ton bell cast for Cologne Cathedral in 1448 went through four castings until the founder was satisfied. This is recorded on the inscription, which had to be re-done each time. We can know that the founders were truly masters of this art, because the same founder, van Wou, cast the bell for Erfurt in 1497 with virtually the same harmonics as a modern bell. But when he cast the ring of 13 for Utrecht, the canons wanted a different sound, and he was able to provide it for them. All these bells still exist for you to hear. The classic sound is that which Canon Simpson found in the oldest English bells he studied in the 19th Century. I risk boring you, but the key point is that a bell does not just give out one note. The main note is accompanied by harmonics, and the principal harmonics are the hum-note, or fundamental, which is an octave below the strike note, the octave above, which is called the nominal, a perfect fifth, and a minor third. The bells at Utrecht all had flattened, i.e. lowered fundamentals, and most medieval bells show degrees of variation from this pattern, which makes each bell totally unique.

So presumably this secret got to England before the Reformation. There is a mediaeval bell in the abbey, now the Anglican cathedral, at Gloucester, but I have never been able to hear it. There were certainly large tower bells in English cathedrals and abbeys. There were four moderate sized bells here in Barking. But as we know, the Reformation opened the way for almost all

these bells to be destroyed and their metal sold. One ring of bells at St Paul's Cathedral in London, the Jesus bells, said to be the finest in existence at the time, were apparently gambled away by Henry VIII. There are very few bells left in England from this heyday of bell founding. English writers are often at pains to protect English Change Ringing from blame in this. I think it is probably right that change ringing only really developed *after* the belfries had been decimated. Of this more later. But the needs of change ringing – small, compact bells – is, I believe, the chief reason for the sound of English *post*-reformation bells. The harmonics of these bells are not the same as the pre-reformation ones. I mentioned that the canons of Utrecht specified flattened hum-notes. English bells until Canon Simpson's time tended to have *sharpened* hum notes and thirds sharpened to *major* thirds. This results in a rather dissonant sound. Our smallest bell was cast by Mears in 1867 and is of this pre-Simpson type. Our other three bells were cast by Taylors, whose foundry spearheaded the rediscovery and re-application of Canon Simpson's observations.

After this golden age of founding at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, the use to which bells were put determines their tuning. In the Low Countries the rich towns began to commission large numbers of bells together in *carillons*. These began as clock chimes and today very large assemblies of very many chromatic octaves of bells exist all over the world. There will be as many bells as notes on a piano, and they can be played from keyboard. I must admit my prejudice against such arrangements for the use of the Church. In civic life, carillons and the occasional concert of bell music perhaps have their place. A clock chime can be a very pretty and enriching part of a town's heritage and public persona. But I think that using carillons in churches is an abomination. It is certainly a provocation to play hymn-tunes on Church bells. Complaints against this abuse are always justified. However, the development of the carillon did mean that ways of tuning bells more accurately had to be discovered, so that tunes could be played in tune. The Hemony brothers in the Low Countries were probably the first to do this consistently well. Until their time in the 17th Century, tuning was literally a hit and miss affair, with hammer and chisel! Carillon bells can be used for church purposes as well as part of a carillon, although church bells ideally need to have a thicker profile (and a crown or canons, although this is disputed) so that the sound travels further. From the point of view of the use to which I believe the Church should put bells,

carillons are a wasteful use of bronze, because it takes twelve bells to each of several octaves if you want to play tunes. Harmonies require still more. The effect can be very pretty.

Although there are quite a number of carillons in England, I do not think that many are in church use. That is a notably Irish vice, although not without the connivance of English founders, indeed Taylors in particular. The English vice, in campanological terms, at least, is change ringing. Now I must admit to having a very ambivalent attitude to change ringing. I was brought up as an Anglican, and at the age of nine I was taught how to handle a bell and was able to ring a modest amount. I kept it up for many years, even after I was a priest. I never did understand why it was so important that the bells had to be so rigidly controlled, because even as a child, I could hear how much finer the sound of a bell was when it was swinging freely, ideally frame high, i.e. through 180°. Even when only two or three ringers came to ring for service, the bells were always only chimed, by pulling the bell slightly so that the clapper fell against the soundbow, or by being rung up and swung through an entire circle of 360°. Now with eight, ten or twelve bells, a really grand effect can be created, if it is done well. But when bells are rung from upside down to upside down, it strangles the sound of the bell. The clapper, after striking the soundbow, rests on it and damps the resonance.

Change-ringing requires bells to be full-circled, because each bell has to ring in turn and at equally spaced intervals. Ringing starts with the bells sounding down the octave, 1-8, in rounds, as it is called, but then the pattern changes, and each time the bells strike, the order changes. A conductor can call out changes every few minutes (call changes), but there are various ways in which the order can change each time the bells sound. These methods or principles need to be easily memorizable, because bells will be rung like this for extended periods, each by one person. These methods or principles have been evolved to enable all the possible mathematical permutations to be achieved without any repeats. It is an exercise in mathematical ingenuity. In effect, bells have become playthings. On six bells, there are 720 possible changes; on seven, there are 5,040, which takes between 2½ and 4 hours to do, depending on the size of the bells. To do 5,000 is called a peal. Shorter “touches” can be planned for service ringing, and if well rung, the bells can sound very impressive,

especially if they are well made of a reasonable size. It is certainly a remarkable phenomenon and totally unique to England and her “Empire”, but I feel one must doubt whether it is altogether appropriate that bells should ring for so long, just because all the mathematical permutations have to be gone through, all the more so since it comes at the cost of the natural resonance of the bells. However, the tradition is dying. England used to be called the “ringing isle”, but now we have silent Sundays, at least in regard to bells. Even 40 years ago, when I used to chime the bells for service, it was very rare indeed to get enough ringers to ring on Sundays. All the ringing took place during the week on practice night, or on Saturday afternoons for weddings. When I used to ring, I used to make a point of properly ringing the largest bell (tenor) for 5 minutes before the service. People used to notice how much finer the sound was. But change ringers are not really interested in the sound of the bells.

Change ringing arose out of a history of abuses. In the 19th Century there was a divorce in many places between the tower and the church. Church authorities had to work hard to take back control over the bells, which were rung at the pleasure of the ringers without any regard for sacred uses. Indeed, even in the 60’s of the last century, I well remember ringing on a Sunday when ringers could be got and watching quite a few of them leave the church after the ringing had stopped before the service began! The custom of ringing bells to changes in this way not only impairs the sound of the bell; it subverts the use to which bells had traditionally been put.

Whether or not this was actually intentional is difficult to say. But it certainly advanced the agenda of the Reformation. Bells had always been very highly regarded. When consecrated for sacred use, they were washed in holy water, anointed with holy oil, decorated as for a baptism and incensed inside and out. They were almost felt to have a personality of their own, hence the names they were given officially or as nicknames. They were said to be “baptized”. Each place would have bells immediately recognizable by their sound as belonging to that individual church. You knew you were home when you heard the bells of your own village. They entered into the emotional life of the parish. They had all sorts of uses, some of which were obviously “religious” some “secular” some so much part of the culture of the time that it would be impossible to determine what they meant to people. No doubt some users were superstitious. No wonder

the “reformers” had it in for them. Bells were used to announce Mass and the Office, weddings and funerals, rejoicing and mourning. Bells rang at various times during the services: at the *Sanctus*, the Consecration, and to this day, in theory, at the Gloria on Holy Thursday evening and at the Easter Vigil. Their silence on Good Friday emphasized their use at Easter and at other times of special rejoicing. Bells rang at sunrise and sunset, at curfew, for the *Angelus*, as a person lay dying and at his or her death. Even the reformers could not kill off many of these uses, as readers of Dorothy Sayers’ *The Nine Tailors* will recall. Bells rang for executions, they functioned as fire alarms. They were even rung to ward off lightning and demons. No doubt this was the last straw for the reformers. But there are times when mankind wants to make a noise, to do something that expresses how he feels about something important and communicates the feeling to others to enable them to share the emotion.

Napoleon understood this. After the Revolution had destroyed huge numbers of the bells of France and the territories she had invaded, he arranged for new (and less worthy) bells to be cast in France. He knew that the people loved their bells. As I mentioned earlier, our tyrant, Henry VIII, is supposed to have gambled away the Jesus Bells at Old St Paul’s in London, thought to have been the biggest and best in the country. The Dissolution of the Monasteries destroyed many hundreds of bells. The bell in Gloucester exceptionally survived. Tom at Christchurch, Oxford is a recasting of one of the bells of Oseney Abbey. We are talking about big bells and lots of valuable metal. The reformers certainly did not want the people to be attached to the Catholic tradition that had given them such a wealth of bells, so they allowed smaller bells to be cast for the despoiled churches of England. They were used to call people to the sermon. Traditions of long-ringing did exist, eg. At Utrecht, where the bells were sometimes rung for 3 hours at a time. Now bells announced the three-hour sermon, and at another time, the ringers could play their games for three hours with the bells. Bells became the playthings of a caste, a club, so that they could be stripped of all their Catholic religious significance.

The result today is that few English people have actually experienced what bells should really sound like. Those of you who have never been abroad to a big city church in Germany or France or the Low Countries, or even Italy on a great feast day may perhaps not know what I mean. We are a deprived

people. At the end of the 1980s I used to listen to the programme called *Bells on Sunday*, which was then broadcast at a civilized hour on Sunday mornings. I tuned in specially and arranged to record one broadcast, which, exceptionally, was due to come from the Cathedral in Basel, Switzerland, where a special ecumenical meeting was taking place. I knew that the largest bells there would have weighed several tons, the largest perhaps more than five tons. What came over the radio was the sound of tinkling, of bells even smaller than ours here in Barking. What had happened was that the sound engineers had heard the recording made in Basel, but had not been able to recognize what they heard as bells. They sounded much too deep and grand for ears attuned to hearing little parish bells each Sunday. They thought a mistake had been made. The recording must have been made at the wrong speed to sound so deep. So they speeded it up! I kid you not. Some redress has been made since. There were several programmes in the 1990's featuring the way bells had influenced musicians. I missed them, but I wonder if (I tread here on very thin ice!) the relative fewness of really great English composers is connected with this trashing of the sound of bells in England since the Reformation.

Wagner seems to have understood this human need to be overwhelmed or captivated by sound. The Festspielhaus, the hall he had built for his music dramas in Bayreuth, has wooden seats precisely so that the full range of sound and vibration can reach you, even through your lower regions, as through a soundboard. We all respond to the deep notes on an organ in a great church or cathedral. Some of the longer pipes produce sounds we cannot actually hear, but they help form our experience of the music, or better, enable the music to achieve its aim of preparing us to be open to the Spirit. It is like this with bells. Until you have heard reasonably sized bells ringing freely, you will not really know what I am getting at. They must swing. In the East, in Orthodox lands, there are some very hefty bells. The big ones sound wonderful. But how much better they would sound if they could be swung. I once heard a story that when silent films first came to Russia there was one which showed western bells being swung, and everyone laughed at the idea that stupid westerners did this to their bells when all you need to do is to strike them or pull the clapper against the soundbow. Well, they could not hear. It was a silent film. The Doppler Effect explains the difference. Remember your westerns! The train bell rang higher in pitch as the train came towards you, and the pitch dropped as

it passed and was lower as the train went away. The soundwaves are pressed together on approach and stretched apart when the train recedes. When a bell swings, the ear registers the smaller difference in pitch between when the bell swings towards you and when away. It gives a texture, a depth, a dimensionality to the sound, even at a distance, even when not in the line of swing, because the sound spreads out. That is why our bells swing, and the wooden headstocks help them to vibrate optimally. English heavy bells often miss out on this because of the crooked headstocks into which they are “tucked” up. This makes them swing too slowly to produce the effect, and the steel necessarily used in these cases does not improve the sound.

This brings us to Barking and to regrowing a tradition. The old Abbey, which stood here until its almost instantaneous and total destruction in 1539, certainly had bells, probably 4 in the tower, probably the largest will have weighed a ton or perhaps more. I do not know if this is known. The *Ordinale* gives some indications. We know that on great feasts all the bells would be rung together in what was called the *classicum*. On today’s feast, the bells will have rung for the procession of St Ethelburga’s feretory around the church. Every moment of the abbey’s life would have been organized round the ringing of bells at the proper time. Our parish has inherited the double dedication, St Mary & St Ethelburga, of the old abbey, but we cannot have bells rung excessively in a housing area. So what we have is this: At 9am, 12noon and 6pm every day the *Angelus* rings. After the two groups of three strokes, the bell rings for a minute. On Saturday evening two other bells join in this one minute of ringing as a way of announcing the arrival of the Sunday, the Day of Resurrection, which begins on Saturday evening. This is the original bell of the church here. On Fridays the third bell rings at 3pm for one minute to call to mind the passion and death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Ringing for Sunday Masses is also on this automatic timer. Two bells ring for the ordinary Masses at 6:30pm Saturday and 9am Sunday and all four for the principal Mass at 11am on Sunday. We are working out a schedule for other days when the bells have to be switched on manually. In principle, when only one bell rings, it is a signal or an invitation to prayer. When more than one bell rings, as on Sundays and Holy Days, it indicates more than just an invitation, it is a call to a duty. If we had more bells than four, we would be able to make further distinctions. The bells ring for 5 minutes at these

times. Perhaps 7 for 11am. Over time, our people, Catholic and local, will, I hope, take this on as part of their heritage.

Why bother to have bells? They are obviously not essential. But can we be satisfied with merely what is essential? Our parish has always had its bell. Two others were given. The fourth was paid for by collections and donations in celebration of the Jubilee of 2000 and as a symbolic proclamation of the third Christian millennium. The bells announce our presence. They call to worship, prayer, and reflection. They make us pause in a busy world. In a word, they create silence, a space for awe and wonder.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2002/03

by Bernard Marriott

At this time last year, I had the very great pleasure of welcoming you to my home territory, Holy Cross, Leicester. We were given an excellent analysis by Fr Richard Conrad, OP, of the old and new liturgies of the dead – “Complaining to God or Masking the Grief.” Fr Young was one of the ministers on that occasion, and it was in discussion afterwards that he invited us to Barking today to help celebrate the patronal festival. A very big thank-you is due to Fr Young and the parish for making us so welcome today.

News from Rome this year has continued to be ‘interesting.’ A year ago, Cardinal Grocholewski, Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, issued a Decree revising the course of studies in Faculties and Departments of Canon Law. One of its main provisions is to ensure greater time for the study of Latin. This was followed in May by the Cardinal being asked to lead a new commission, apparently with responsibility for examining ways of restoring the use of Latin in the Church. We are writing to Cardinal Grocholewski to ensure that he knows of our existence, and offer assistance in any way that we can.

On Maundy Thursday, the Pope issued the fourteenth encyclical of his pontificate, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* which, in the words of one headline, sets out to “Restore Doctrine, Piety – End Abuses.” It does look as though the tide is about to turn, to borrow an analogy from the Candlemas edition of the Newsletter. However, we still await from Rome a document on the Eucharist which is expected to be published by Cardinal Arinze’s Sacred

Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. There may also be another document, this time from Cardinal Ratzinger's Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. These should have a profound effect on the way in which Mass is celebrated, which will be beneficial to our cause. We must wait and see.

Our Spring meeting was held in Derby. If you were not there, you will have seen from the Newsletter how excellent a day it was. For now, suffice it for me to thank wholeheartedly all those who were involved in the day, especially Dr Mary Berry for her illuminating insights into recording music in a French national monument, and to the Dean and Chapter of Derby Cathedral who could not possibly have done more to make us welcome. Next year, our Spring gathering will be rather different – a retreat at Pluscarden at the invitation of the Abbot. A dozen or so members will be going, and now is really the last opportunity to sign up, as accommodation has to be booked well in advance because we will be there in the second half of Easter week which is a particularly busy time at the Abbey.

The bulk of our work on publications this year has centred on the production of a new CD, *Orate Fratres*. When our Latin tutor, *A New Approach to Latin for the Mass*, was published in 1987, Christopher Francis made a cassette tape as a guide to pronunciation. Technology has advanced since then, and the original recording was not technically suitable for transfer on to a CD. Council therefore decided that we should commission a new CD, and one which will both act as a support for readers of *A New Approach*, as well as being of particular use to priests who wish to say Mass in Latin, but may require help with singing and pronunciation. One of our members, Jeremy de Satgé of The Music Makers, had already produced a CD, *Let Us Proclaim the Mystery of Faith*, to help priests sing Mass in English, and we engaged him to produce the equivalent in Latin, using the new 3rd edition of the *Missale Romanum*. This has been an interesting exercise, and has brought to light a whole series of unexpected small changes since the 2nd edition. We hope to be able to launch the new disc at Towards Advent in November.

The Newsletter has appeared, as usual, three times in the year. Its quality and coverage have reached new heights thanks principally to Edward Barrett whose liturgical antennae are receptive to all happenings of

significance, and whose pen portraits of activities are invariably a delight to read.

The law on charities has been tightened up over the years since the Association was founded. We have now been advised that we should formally apply to become a registered charity with the members of Council being our trustees. Application is now in process of being made.

Last year I made an appeal for new members to serve on Council. This has borne fruit with Mike Withers coming forward, and being co-opted onto Council until October 2004. Whilst welcoming Mike, we must bid farewell to Tony Simons as Treasurer and Council member. Tony has been a Council member since the Association's inception in 1969, having drawn himself to Dick Richens' attention by a letter in *The Times*. He had a short break in 1970, and another from 1978 to 1985. He was Treasurer from 1973 to 1978, after which I took over, and then he succeeded me in 1994, and has now been Treasurer for a total of 15 years and a Council member for 27 years. We are greatly indebted to Tony for having set up the clear and comprehensive system of bookkeeping that we have, and for providing sound financial guidance which has allowed the Association to grow steadily without our ever being in the least danger of running into financial difficulties. Tony's advice to Council, whether as Treasurer or not, has always been carefully considered and thoughtfully expressed, often tinged with that rather waspish sense of Civil Service humour that Martin Lynch used so much to enjoy. We look forward to continuing to see Tony at our Spring and Annual meetings.

Now to return to Rome. The next move in the process of seeing that *Liturgiam authenticam* is faithfully applied to the English-speaking world is a meeting on 21 October called by Cardinal Arinze of the Presidents and liturgy officials of the English-speaking bishops' conferences. It is to be hoped that this meeting will be fruitful and move us rapidly towards better English translations which can be set comfortably aside an increasing use of Latin in celebrations of the Mass.

BLESSING OF NEW ORGAN AT ST CECILIA'S Bernard Marriott

On the Feast of Christ the King a large number of friends and well-wishers assembled in St Cecilia's Abbey, Ryde, for the Dedication and Blessing of the new organ. Normally the congregation is confined to the north transept, but on this occasion we were allowed onto the Sanctuary and had a splendid view of the nuns' choir with the organ at the west end of it. The Blessing was performed by the Prior of St Michael's Abbey, Farnborough, Dom Cuthbert Brogan OSB. It was accomplished in Latin throughout, apart from the readings. In his sermon, which preceded the inauguration of the organ, Fr Brogan referred to the Queen having, a day or two earlier, to praise both teams in the rugby world cup final without the match having been played. Fr Brogan found himself in a similar situation, having to praise the organ before he had heard it played. Could it turn out to be a disaster? He didn't think he needed to worry about this - and indeed he did not.

The Opening Chant was followed by Psalm 150, and then two Readings, separated by Psalm 46, *Omnes gentes plaudite manibus*. Intercessory Prayers were concluded by the Prayer of Blessing, which was then followed by a dialogue of medieval origin between the Prior and the organ, in which the Prior invited the organ to play as a sacred instrument for the first time. The organ was played by Joseph Cullen, who advised on the project, and who improvised as his part of the dialogue:

Awake, O organ, sacred instrument; give praise to God our Creator and Father, fount of all goodness and beauty. (Improvisation)

O organ, sacred instrument, give praise to Jesus our Lord, the eternal word of the living God, who for our sake died and was raised. (Improvisation)

O organ, sacred instrument, give praise to the Holy Spirit, light of our heart and sweet guest of our souls. (Improvisation)

O organ, sacred instrument, carry our praises and supplications to Mary, the Mother of Jesus and mother of mercy, cause of our joy. (Improvisation)

O organ, sacred instrument, fill this church with your joyful harmonies, and lead the company of the faithful into Christ's own act of thanksgiving. (Improvisation)

O organ, sacred instrument, seven times a day sing the work of God in the presence of the Blessed Trinity and of the Angels and Saints. (Improvisation)

The service concluded with the singing by the nuns of Gloria XIV (*Iesu Redemptor*), interspersed with further improvisations, and this was followed by a recital which included works by Vivaldi, Couperin, Sweelinck, Franck, Langlais and Bach. After this we were treated to a splendid abbatial tea, and the opportunity to meet members of the community in the parlour. Solemn Vespers brought the day to its conclusion, the organ now being played by its builder, Kenneth Tickell of Northampton.

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO THE CHANT *Review by Christopher Francis*

THE BEGINNER'S BOOK OF CHANT: A Simple Guide for Parishes, Schools and Communities. By a Benedictine Monk. St Michael's Abbey Press, Farnborough. 2003. ISBN 0 907077 39 0 soft cover 96pp £ 9.95

Although nowadays monastic authors generally give their names, it is nice to see this writer identifying himself in the traditional way as 'a Benedictine monk'. (The Carthusians have always been firm on this point.) He has produced a short, practical guide to the basics of Gregorian chant, which many people will find very useful. The author says at the outset of the method offered 'it does not claim to be "authentic" but it is simple to understand and teach'. So this is not a book for the scholar, but then there is no shortage of those.

After a brief historical survey the reader is introduced to the notation of the chant: clefs, the relation between four and five line notation and the various types of neumes. Then (a good move this) there is a 'tutorial' on Mass XVIII. This is much more effective than continuing with more pedagogic material and possibly putting the novice reader off the whole thing.

The fourth chapter, on rehearsal methods, is interesting, particularly in dealing with sensitivities about, indeed opposition to, the chant, and the whole negative legacy of the 1960s. There is a lot of good practical advice on rehearsal and basic technique. It is all more down to earth than earlier

books of this kind: 'Keeping interest in a choir, particularly of religious, is a remarkably hard task. Frequently, despite protestations to the opposite, they just do not want to be there. Human nature being what it is, and clerics awkward characters to boot, you are unlikely to get a straight answer from them about the quality of choir practice that you are running.'

After some guidance on Latin pronunciation there is a second 'tutorial' on *Gloria XV*, the author preferring to find alternatives to the *Missa de Angelis*, with which we are perhaps too familiar. The rest of the book is then devoted to short chapters on different types of chant – antiphons, hymns, psalms and so on – on accompaniment, vernacular adaptations, and Frequently Asked Questions, with short but helpful answers.

The book is nicely produced, with a pictorial cover and clearly printed musical examples, both in four and five line notation. My only criticism is of the typeface used on the cover and for chapter headings; it is both twee and unsightly, and prevents the book from appearing authoritative. Fortunately the body of the text is set in a decent type but if the book were to go to a second edition, which I hope it will, the designer should look soberly at this aesthetically regrettable font. At the end there is a collection of very useful information on the modes, neumes and rhythm, and a good glossary of terms. Finally as well as a list of source books and other further reading, there are recommended websites and compact discs, which effectively substitute for having to produce a tape to go with the book, as one had to do in pre-web days.

MORE FROM FARNBOROUGH

New Books from St Michael's Abbey Press

This prolific publishing house continues to issue new titles which must be welcomed by all who care about the Liturgy. Here are two that cannot be ignored:

Fortescue, O'Connell & Reid: The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described ISBN 0-907077-41-2 hard cover 496pp £ 30.95

Fr Adrian Fortescue's indispensable guide to the liturgy began life in 1917 and ran for 12 official editions, the last in 1962. Then came the turmoil of the post-conciliar years, during which second-hand copies had to suffice for devotees of the pre-conciliar rite. Then in 1996, the Saint Austin Press helpfully issued a reprint of the 1962 edition. Now, following the Apostolic Letter *Ecclesia Dei* of July 1988 and the steadily growing use of the former rite with official approval, the need for a fully up-to-date version was becoming urgent. Dom Alcuin Reid is to be congratulated for undertaking the production of this 'revised, corrected and expanded' edition. It is not only exponents of the older rite who will benefit from it, but all serious students of liturgy, not least those of us who strive to ensure the most worthy celebration of the newer rite.

Looking Again at the Question of Liturgy – with Cardinal Ratzinger

Translated proceedings of the Fontgombault Liturgical Conference

ISBN 0-907077-42-0 soft cover 166pp £ 11.95

In English for the first time, we can read here the important contributions made by Cardinal Ratzinger and other distinguished speakers on aspects of liturgical reform at the conference held at the traditionalist Abbey of Fontgombault in 2001.

TOWARDS ADVENT

'Festival of Catholic Culture'

In November, the Association participated for the third year running in this now well-established event in Westminster Cathedral Hall. This year we attempted to make our display brighter and better stocked than before. Our main purpose is to 'fly the flag', spread the message and cement friendly and useful contacts. This year we had the additional excitement of launching the CD *Orate Fratres*, as described earlier in the Newsletter. We were well pleased with the immediate results and even more gratified with sales since then. We also took the opportunity to prepare for the occasion a more attractive 'Statement of Aims' leaflet to promote our image. This has been further improved and the latest version is now available.

During the day a number of 'workshops' took place on a variety of topics, including one given on improving parish music by our member Jeremy de

Satgé, with whose organisation ‘The Music Makers’ we shared our stand. We hope next year to provide a workshop under the banner of the ALL.

CHAVAGNES

Catholic Boarding School for Boys in France

Since it opened as Chavagnes International College in 2002, we have followed with interest the success of this enterprising school. The moving force behind it is Ferdi McDermott, who members may know of following his establishment some years ago of the Saint Austin Press with its noteworthy publications.

The school caters for boys aged 9-18. Teaching is in English, in the hands of dedicated Catholic teachers. It offers an authentic traditional formation, but fully in tune with the modern world. There are excellent cultural facilities and opportunities for sport. Education is on traditional lines, with sound instruction in the faith. The school offers a programme of special cultural and spiritual events throughout the year. Mass is celebrated regularly at the school in Latin - according to the *Novus ordo* - and the boys have learnt essential items of Gregorian Chant, all of which they are reported to enjoy. Indeed, we are delighted to hear that, as they say, they “find themselves aligned 100% with the policies of the ALL (and the universal Church, of course!)”.

The school is set in rolling countryside in the Vendée region of France. The beautiful building it occupies was formerly a junior seminary, founded in 1802, a few short years after the terrible massacres of Catholics throughout the region following the Revolution. The people of the region still remember and honour the courage of the ordinary Catholics of those days, and the remarkable apostolic zeal of their great priests in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including St Louis de Montfort and Père Baudouin. The building and surrounding area are indeed steeped in history

This all sounds admirable and worthy of support. Interested parents and others are certainly advised to find out more about Chavagnes International College, via the school’s website: www.chavagnes.org.

This Committee of Bishops that was established to keep in touch with ICEL, as it continues with its task of translating the *Missale Romanum* into English, met in Rome for the fourth time between the 18th and 20th November. The Committee expressed its gratitude for the excellent start made by ICEL in translating the Missal in an English style in conformity with the spirit and the specific instructions of *Liturgicam authenticam* of March 2001. The *Vox Clara* Committee is scheduled to meet again in Spring of this year.

CENTENARY OF *TRA LE SOLLECITUDINI*

Motu proprio of Pope St Pius X

The Centenary of the *Motu proprio: Tra le Sollecitudini* issued by Pope St Pius X on the 23rd November 2003, the feast of Saint Cecilia, was celebrated to a greater or lesser extent in different parts of the world.

In Rome, more than 20,000 people gathered for the National Congress of Sacred Music organized by the Italian Association of St. Cecilia on that date. The day concluded with a celebratory concert before Pope John Paul in the Paul VI auditorium at which the Association chose to perform Perosi's *Passion according to St Mark*. At the end the Holy Father told those present:

"St. Cecilia, the Roman martyr and by popular tradition the patroness of music and musicians, invites believers to walk vigilantly toward the encounter with Christ, gladdening the earthly pilgrimage with the joy of song and music. May St. Cecilia accompany each one of you and help you to realize fully your mission in the Church. With the *Motu Proprio*, Pope St. Pius X redefined, pastorally, the relations between Sacred Music, the Liturgy, and the duty "to maintain and promote the decorum of the House of God."

The most important feature of the day, however, was the Pope's letter issued on that date. It is an important document, a *chirograph*, intended to be regarded as an instruction. Official versions are available now in four languages but not including English. While we can cope with translation,

the problem is its length, of some 4,000 words, which could take up more than twelve pages of the Newsletter. We may return to this later; here, however, are some extracts. The Pope begins:

“A hundred years ago, moved by the strong desire ‘to protect and promote the dignity of the house of God’, my predecessor Saint Pius X signed the *Motu proprio: Tra le sollecitudini* [*Among the concerns... (of the supreme pastor and others)*], the object of which was the renewal of sacred music and of its function in worship. The centenary of this document gives me the opportunity to reflect on the important function of sacred music, which St Pius X represents both as a means of raising the spirit towards God and at the same time as a valuable aid to active participation in the sacred mysteries and in the solemn public prayer of the Church. This perspective is taken up again by the Second Vatican Council in chapter VI of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* on the sacred Liturgy: the musical tradition of the universal Church has created a treasure of inestimable value, more important than all other arts, above all because with sacred music linked to the text, it forms a necessary and integral part of the solemn Liturgy.

It is important that musical compositions used in liturgical celebrations meet the criteria wisely laid down by St. Pius X and prudently developed by Vatican Council II and the magisterium of the Church." "Not all musical forms are appropriate for liturgical celebrations. Music that is heard in church must first be ‘true art’ and it must also correspond with the specific requirements of the Liturgy.

The sacred environment of liturgical celebration must never become a laboratory for experimentation or trial compositions and performances, introduced without careful consideration. Among the musical forms that properly respond to the qualities required in sacred music, especially liturgical music, Gregorian chant occupies an important place. Recognized by the Second Vatican Council as the ‘Music of the Roman Liturgy’, and given that it continues to provide an element of unity in the latter, Gregorian chant "should be retained in first place for sung liturgical ceremonies that are celebrated in Latin".

In Paris, to mark the Centenary, there were impressive celebrations organized by CIEL, in conjunction with their 9th Colloquium, keenly supported by Una Voce and other traditionalist bodies. The highlight was a Solemn Pontifical Mass celebrated in the Tridentine rite by Cardinal Estevez Medina, the former Prefect of the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments. This took place at the Church of Saint Eugene and Sainte Cécile. The sung ordinary was Mass IX *Cum Iubilo*, sung by all; but there was much excellent music – with some items by Charpentier, including his *Ecce Sacerdos Magnus*.

SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM Fortieth Anniversary Celebration

On the 4th December, a celebration was held at the invitation of Cardinal Arinze in the Vatican's Pope Paul VI Audience Hall, as a Commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Those invited included a number of influential prelates, such as Cardinal George of Chicago, Cardinal Meisner of Cologne, Cardinal Dias of Bombay, and Abbot Dupont of Solesmes. The themes discussed came under three main headings: *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 40 Years on; Sacred Liturgy during the Pontificate of Pope John Paul II; and, inescapably, the *Motu proprio* of St Pius X. Cardinal Arinze tells us that it is hoped to publish an account of the proceedings in book form.

To mark this anniversary, the Holy Father issued a further important document, in this case an Apostolic Letter, entitled *Spiritus et Sponsa* (The Spirit and the Bride – quoting from the Apocalypse Ch 22: ‘let him who is thirsty come ...’) This document runs to some 3,000 words, but the full text can be found in English on the Vatican website: www.vatican.va, so readers will excuse us if we do no more here than quote a few salient paragraphs:

With the passing of time and in the light of its fruits, the importance of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* has become increasingly clear. The Council brilliantly outlined in it the principles on which are based the liturgical practices of the Church and which inspire its healthy renewal in the course of time². The Council Fathers set the Liturgy

within the horizon of the history of salvation, whose purpose is the redemption of humanity and the perfect glorification of God.

.... the Council rightly affirms that every liturgical action "is a sacred action surpassing all others. No other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree" The mystery proposed in preaching and catechesis, listened to with faith and celebrated in the Liturgy, must shape the entire life of believers who are called to be its heralds in the world.

Then with regard to the different elements involved in liturgical celebration, the Constitution pays special attention to the importance of Sacred Music. The Council praises it, pointing out as its objective: 'the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful'. In fact, Sacred Music is a privileged means to facilitate the active participation of the faithful in sacred celebration, as my venerable Predecessor St Pius X desired to highlight in his *Motu proprio*.

Forty years later, it is appropriate to review the ground covered. I have already suggested on former occasions a sort of examination of conscience concerning the reception given to the Second Vatican Council. Such an examination must also concern the liturgical and sacramental life. "Is the Liturgy lived as the 'origin and summit' of ecclesial life, in accordance with the teaching of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*? "Has the rediscovery of the value of the Word of God brought about by liturgical reform met with a positive confirmation in our celebrations? To what extent does the Liturgy affect the practice of the faithful and does it mark the rhythm of the individual communities? Is it seen as a path of holiness, an inner force of apostolic dynamism and of the Church's missionary outreach?"

The liturgical renewal that has taken place in recent decades has shown that it is possible to combine a body of norms that assure the identity and decorum of the Liturgy and leave room for the creativity and adaptation that enable it to correspond closely with the need to give expression to their respective situation and culture of the various regions. Lack of respect for the liturgical norms can sometimes even lead to *grave forms of abuse* that obscure the truth of the mystery and give rise to dismay and stress in the People of God. This abuse has

nothing to do with the authentic spirit of the Council and should be prudently and firmly corrected by pastors.

Conclusion:

The promulgation of the Constitution on the Liturgy marked a stage of fundamental importance in the life of the Church for the promotion and development of the Liturgy. It is in the Liturgy that the Church, enlivened by the breath of the Spirit, lives her mission as "sacrament - a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all men", and finds the most exalted expression of her mystical reality.

“The mystery brought about in the Liturgy is truly great. It opens a glimpse of Heaven on earth, and the perennial hymn of praise rises from the community of believers in unison with the hymn of heavenly Jerusalem: *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis!*”.

At the beginning of this millennium, may a "*liturgical spirituality*" be developed that makes people conscious that Christ is the first "liturgist" who never ceases to act in the Church and in the world through the Paschal Mystery continuously celebrated, and who associates the Church with himself, in praise of the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

Together with this wish, I impart my Blessing to everyone from the depths of my heart. Pope John Paul II

Illustrations wanted for our Website

The development of the ALL Website is continuing, in the capable hands of Mike Carson-Rowland. We are hoping to enhance it further by including more pictures, particularly in the case of our Online Latin Mass Directory. This could be made more attractive with photographs of some of the churches listed, either of the exterior or of the sanctuary. Readers are invited to send copies of any suitable photographs they may have available to Mike's Sheffield address. These may be hard copy prints or digital; the former will be returned without delay.