

Martin Claims Rebutted

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By FATHER HENRY ATWELL

Dr. Malachi Martin, ex-Jesuit, reputed scholar, in a recent public lecture in Rochester, revealed himself as either immensely ignorant or careless with the facts.

He laced his talk with misstatements, distortions, and innuendo. He played upon the nostalgia and the fears of his audience who failed to recognize he misled them repeatedly throughout his hour and a half talk.

— He said Pope John Paul gave Chicago Cardinal John Cody a silent snub at the Pope's installation Mass. That's not true.

— He said Cardinal John Wright urges seminarians to go to Ecône, Switzerland, to learn from Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. That's not true.

— He said Pope John Paul's installation Mass was the "Tridentine" Mass. That's not true.

— He said the "Tridentine" Mass is not forbidden. That's not true.

— He cited "horror stories" of priests celebrating Mass with crackers and Coke as if this were widespread and to be expected as a result of the Second Vatican Council's revision of the Mass rite. That's not true.

— He said there are now "beer blasts" in seminaries as if this also were normal following the Council. That's not true.

— He said Pope John Paul can't make or receive a telephone call, can't write or receive a letter, can't even go to the bathroom except he has two guards to keep him under surveillance. If that's true, I feel sorry not only for the Pope but for the two guards too!

— He dismissed with a flick of his once-consecrated hand theologians Yves Congar, Edward Schillebeeckx and Charles Curran as if they were mere mini-brains. That's not true.

— He ridiculed Cardinal Leo Suenens for his participation in the charismatic movement and said Pope John Paul gave him the silent snub too. That's not kind in the first case and untrue in the second.

— He said 90 per cent of the priests and lay people want to go back to the Latin Mass and the old devotions and the old customs. That's not true.

Martin blamed the "confusion" in the Church today on nuns who have taken off their habits and on priests who rely more on current fads in psychology than on sound

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spiritual guidance. He claims the Communists have infiltrated the Church and that there is imminent danger of a Marxist takeover of our Church and our country. He referred to one Communist leader after another as a "pig."

Now for some facts:

The day after his lecture, which was held at the Downtown Holiday Inn, Rochester, Monday evening, Sept. 18, I phoned the Chicago Cardinal and learned that, contrary to Martin's statement, Pope John Paul was warm and gracious in his greeting to Cardinal Cody.

I phoned Father John Reddington, pastor of St. Louis Church, Pittsford, long a personal friend of Cardinal Wright, who is recovering from eye surgery in Boston, and asked him to check out Martin's remark about Wright. Father Reddington spoke with the Cardinal personally that evening and Martin is "categorically and emphatically" in error. Cardinal Wright, as a matter of fact, has frequently and publicly spoken out against the rebel activities of the elderly Archbishop Lefebvre.

There are several ways to disprove Martin's claim that the papal installation Mass was "Tridentine."

1) The word "Tridentine" is the Latin adjective for Trent, a city in northern Italy, the site of the Church Council which met there off and on from 1545 to 1563 to formulate the Church's response to the Protestant Reformation. The Council issued lengthy statements about what Catholics should believe about the Mass but drew up no specific ritual for the Mass. Pope St. Pius V, seven years after the Council's close, issued the Missal which specified the rite as most of us knew it up until 1969.

2) Pope John Paul used the present approved Missal issued by Pope Paul VI in 1969 for his installation Mass.

3) The "Tridentine" Mass did not allow for concelebration except at the ordination of a priest or the consecration of a bishop. Pope John Paul was ordained and consecrated many years before his installation as Pope and yet 110 Cardinals concelebrated the Mass with him.

4) The "Tridentine" Mass did not allow for the proclamation of Scripture in several vernacular languages. At the papal installation Mass heard the Scriptures proclaimed in at least three vernacular

5) The "Tridentine" Mass required that bread to be consecrated at Mass be on the corporal on the altar. At the papal installation Mass, a hundred priests stood with the vessels containing the breads behind the altar.

6) The "Tridentine" Mass called for ten genuflections between the Consecration and the Communion. At the papal installation Mass, the Pope genuflected twice.

7) The "Tridentine" Mass did not allow for the sign of peace to be given to lay people. At the papal installation Mass, the sign of peace was given to the lay people.

8) The "Tridentine" Mass did not include the proclamation of faith after the Consecration. At the papal installation Mass, the proclamation of faith followed upon the Consecration.

9) The "Tridentine" Mass presumed the celebrant and others who received Holy Communion to be fasting from midnight. The papal installation Mass was celebrated in the evening with Communion given at 8:30 p.m. Were the Pope, the Cardinals, the Bishops, and the 250,000 lay people in the Piazza all fasting from midnight?

10) The "Tridentine" a Mass called for lay people to kneel for Communion. At the papal installation Mass, the Pope gave Communion to his relatives and townsmen who were standing.

If Dr. Martin, reputed scholar that he is, would still say publicly that the installation Mass was "Tridentine" then either he thought to deceive his hearers or he himself is ignorant of what the "Tridentine" Mass was like for the past 400 years.

Dr. Martin was also in error in claiming the "Tridentine" Mass was not forbidden. It is. The 1969 Missal issued by Pope Paul VI replaces any and all previous Roman rite missals. In 1974 the Vatican's Commission for Divine Worship authorized blind, elderly or infirm priests to say Mass in Latin, but only in private without a congregation, and according to the interim missals of 1962-1965-1967, but not the Pius V missal of 1570 or its later editions.

A substantial number of Martin's other statements are similarly untrue.

As his lecture ended, a card was distributed inviting people to attend "the true Mass" every Sunday at a funeral home on Lake

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