

Orthodox

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Bishop Clark.

"The bishop wants us to listen to him, but he doesn't want to listen to the Holy Father, his boss. Something's wrong there," said Michael Macaluso, a Holy Rosary parishioner and head of Citizens for a Decent Community, an anti-pornography group.

Others concede that Bishop Clark and diocesan officials do listen to their concerns, but seldom act on them. "Everybody is willing to listen. Dialogue is the byword of this diocese," said Aquila. "But when it comes to movement toward any orthodox reading of things, nothing happens."

An illustration of the diocese's lack of pastoral concern, Orthodox Catholics say, is its response to requests for the Tridentine Mass.

The center of the church's liturgical life for centuries, the Tridentine Mass was abrogated in 1969 by Pope Paul VI. Then, in 1984, Pope John Paul II granted to diocesan bishops the power to allow celebrations of Mass in Latin according to the form of the 1962 Roman Missal — the Tridentine Rite — under certain conditions.

Holy Rosary parishioner John Wagner, who helped organize the Alliance for Catholic Education that opposes Catholic School reorganization, headed a group that then appealed to Bishop Clark for permission to celebrate the Tridentine Mass on a regular basis.

"We had a priest and a parish willing to celebrate, and the Vatican has said people's right to go to the Tridentine Mass should be respected," Wagner said, referring to the apostolic letter *Ecclesia Dei*, which stated, "... respect must everywhere be shown for the feelings of all those who are attached to the Latin liturgical tradition by a wide and generous application" of the directives issued by

Holy See in 1984.

But in response, Wagner said, Bishop Clark told the group he saw some pastoral problems with the request and would withhold judgment.

According to Father Thomas Mull, former director of the diocesan liturgy office, the diocese last winter asked the Vatican to clarify how it should apply the rather strict 1984 guidelines, which stipulate that such celebrations must be "exclusively for the benefit of those who petition it," in a designated church or oratory, "only on those days and in those circumstances approved by the bishop," and only with "unequivocal, even public, evidence that the priest and people petitioning have no ties with those who impugn the lawfulness and doctrinal soundness of the Roman Missal promulgated in 1970 by Pope Paul VI."

Father Mull pointed out that the 1984 decree does not explain whether Tridentine rites for other sacraments are also to be restored. "One of our other questions is, 'How restrictive does Rome expect us to be in questioning people (who would attend such a Mass)?"' Father Mull said. "In some dioceses, it was apparently decided to allow (the Mass) without asking questions ... Bishop Clark's choice was (to wait for the clarification) rather than start something that we might have to take away from the people again."

Wagner's group has written to the Vatican requesting its intervention. In the meantime, however, Holy Rosary Parish was unable to gain permission for a Tridentine Mass to celebrate its centennial last year.

"Here's a case where people have a legitimate request, and we feel Bishop Clark is not ... taking time to respond in a pastoral way to the needs of conservative Catholics," Wagner said.

However much he wishes to attend a Tridentine Mass, Wagner cannot foresee attending an unsanctioned Mass in Latin, such as the one celebrated each week by the Fathers of St. Pius V at Holy Name of

Mary Church on Winton Road. "Those people are schismatic," he said. "No way would we ever want that. You've got to stick with the church."

Finding a parish in which to worship, however, can prove troublesome. The Aquila family, like many on the extreme right, has passed through several parishes in the past five years. They tried to influence a number of pastors to adopt more orthodox practices, but found them largely unresponsive. Eventually they sought sanctuary from female altar servers and other exceptions to church "discipline" at Our Lady of Victory Church — one of several islands of traditional Catholicism.

Perhaps the parish best known for its orthodoxy in the City of Rochester is Holy Rosary, where you'll never find women preaching or serving on the altar, general absolution or improvisational liturgies.

Forty Hours and other traditional devotions are still relatively popular, and the parish even offers a Novus Ordo Mass in Latin on the first Sunday of each month.

"We just try to keep the parish according to the true interpretation of Vatican II and not give in to things that are new just because they are new," said Father Robert Meng, pastor.

Because parishes like Holy Rosary are atypical, they can become isolated. "Most people just write us off as ultra, ultra conservative," Father Meng said. "Everybody's going their own way, so we do too. There isn't really anything you can do."

St. Leo's in Hilton, another bastion of Catholic orthodoxy, has tried to strike a balance between orthodoxy and diocesan involvement, according to Deacon William Schmitz, who is assigned there. "I think the parish community at St. Leo's tries to have a sense of diocesan family in terms of cooperating with major and important programs that emanate from the Pastoral Center to the extent that they don't violate (parishioners') sensitivities," Schmitz said, pointing to Commitment to Ministry as one example of a program in which St. Leo's is taking an active part.

Although parishioners have some freedom to choose a parish that reflects their views, priests don't have that option.

Those with orthodox views tend to fall within two categories, according to Father Collins: those who keep their views hidden in hopes of being accepted; and a small group of others "at the bottom of the scale" whose views are widely known.

Whereas pastors have a good deal of control over teaching and practice in their parishes, Father Collins said, younger priests and seminarians face more pressure to adapt to the mainstream.

"They are suffering, and suffering immensely," he said. "We have lost some excellent vocations from this diocese because they are too orthodox."

"It's almost as if the diocesan officials ... are paranoid about a young man who likes to say the rosary or enjoys Benediction," he added.

Lost vocations are only one aspect of the price orthodox Catholics say the diocese pays for its liberalism. "One of the reasons for the dichotomy, the polarity, the split in this diocese is that the administration is being cafeteria-style in what it wants to endorse from Rome," said Father Collins.

Some orthodox Catholics continue to fuel that polarity, angrily insisting that Bishop Clark "restore obedience and respect for the Holy Father" throughout the diocese.

Others, weary of divisiveness, are beginning to advocate reconciliation. Deacon Schmitz, for one, wishes Catholics from across the ideological spectrum would "find ways to pray together more often and get to know each other better."

"We're not going to get anywhere standing six feet apart and shaking our fists at each other," he said. "When we're praying together, there's no room for anything else."

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