

Tridentine

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At this time, Father Mull said, Bishop Clark has not revised his position. But, the priest remarked, "I think the bishop has certainly not foreclosed on the possibility."

Under the new guidelines, local advocates of the traditional Mass could bypass Bishop Clark and appeal directly to *Ecclesi Dei* for permission to celebrate the Mass in this diocese.

But Aquila said his group had no plans to do so. "We really want to do it with the permission of the bishop," he said.

A dangerous time

The Tridentine Mass took form at the 16th-century Council of Trent.

Reacting to the Protestant Reformation, the council fathers set forth specific instructions for celebration of the Mass. They strictly defined the canon — the portion of the Mass containing the consecration — and allowed no variation.

According to the stipulations of Trent, priests were to say the Mass in Latin only, and to turn their backs to the congregation at all points in the liturgy except during the sermon and some Scripture readings. Prayers of the Mass, including the responses, were said by the priest and altar servers only, with no participation from the congregation.

Yet even during the Council of Trent, church leaders considered the possibility of permitting Mass in the vernacular — or spoken language — of each region's people, noted Father Benedict Ehmann, former director of music and liturgy at St. Bernard's Seminary.

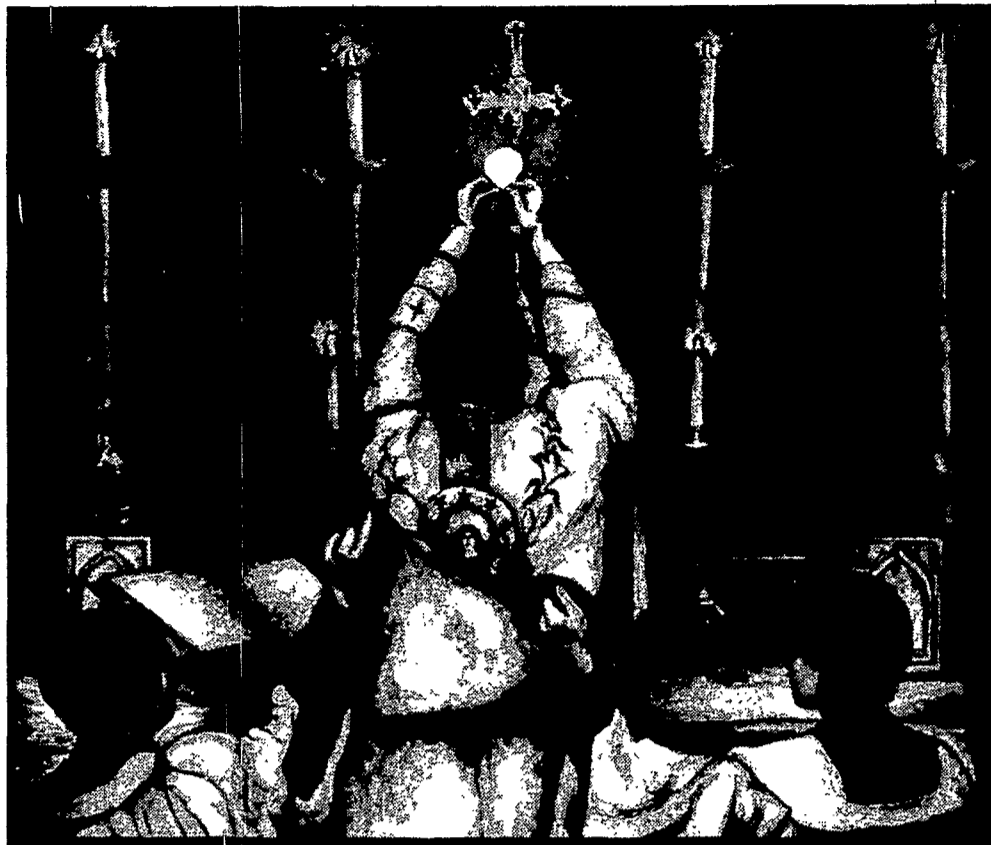
Ultimately, the council fathers decided to authorize only Latin for use in the Mass. But according to Father Ehmann, their decision was influenced by fear that allowing the vernacular would be interpreted as a concession to the Protestants.

"Pope Pius IV clamped down on it, and said we could not have vernacular now, it was too dangerous a time," Father Ehmann said.

Ongoing evolution

The Mass set forth by the Council of Trent became known as the Tridentine Mass, and was the standard form until the Second Vatican Council.

But during the four-century reign of the Tridentine Mass, the liturgy was undergoing reform efforts, observed Father Robert



Kennedy, a professor at St. Bernard's Institute.

Both Pope Pius X (1903-1914) and the Theological Movement that began in 1840 called for lay people to participate more in prayers and singing at Mass. Those calls led to the publication of missals enabling lay people to better follow the service.

By the 1950s, the liturgy had evolved to the point at which the church permitted "dialogue" Masses, in which the congregation recited — in Latin — some of the prayers and responses that previously had been said only by altar servers.

The liturgical changes of the Second Vatican Council grew out of these reform efforts, Father Kennedy said. At Vatican II, council fathers looked past the Council of Trent to the church's first eight centuries, to learn how the Mass originally was celebrated, he observed.

Community emphasis

At the heart of the Vatican II changes was a focus on liturgy as an action of the whole church community, not just the priest, Father Kennedy explained.

The focus on community led the council to recommend that altars be moved to more central locations in church sanctuaries. The purpose of such a move was to create a "sense of (the people and the priest) gathering around the altar as a unit, not having them just face the altar," Father Kennedy

noted.

Fostering community also was the rationale for directing priests to face the people during Mass. And although the council affirmed Latin as the preferred language for Mass, it ordered translation into the vernacular of those portions to be recited by the people.

In permitting use of the vernacular, the church rejected the notion that a common language is the source of universality, Father Kennedy observed.

"Our universality does not depend on a common language, but on a common faith," he said.

Within a just few years of the council, Masses in the vernacular had gained almost universal acceptance in the Roman Catholic Church. In 1969, Pope Paul VI issued a new Latin-language Mass incorporating the changes made during and immediately following Vatican II. The guidelines for implementing the new order permitted celebration entirely in the vernacular.

The new order of Mass was soon translated, and by 1970 the English-language Mass in the new order was the norm in the United States. Although the Latin-language version of the new Mass was still approved for use, the Tridentine Mass seemed gone forever.

Hope for healing

The old Mass might have faded entirely away, but for the late French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, a staunch Tridentine Mass advocate who died earlier this year. Archbishop Lefebvre repudiated all of Vatican II and in 1976 created a schism — or split — in the church by ordaining priests without papal authorization.

Partially in hopes of bringing the archbishop's followers back into the fold, Pope John Paul II in 1984 authorized — with certain restrictions — the use of the Tridentine Mass.

Celebrating the Tridentine Mass has succeeded in winning back some of Archbishop Lefebvre's Buffalo-area followers, noted Father Dennis Mende, director of the Office of Worship for the Buffalo diocese.

"There have been in the diocese a group of people who were followers of Archbishop Lefebvre," Father Mende noted. "A number of people from there have now returned to the church."

One Buffalo church began offering the Tridentine Mass on a trial basis during Advent of 1990, Father Mende said. Following an evaluation of the trial, Bishop Edward Head decided in June of this year to continue it indefinitely.

In the Rochester diocese, however, those who advocate the Tridentine Mass were not followers of Archbishop Lefebvre, Aquila said. But the Una Voce leader noted that he had talked with some people who were involved with schismatic churches.

"One man told me that if Bishop Clark allowed a traditional Latin Mass, it would probably bring the majority of the schismatics back," Aquila said.

Such has been the case in Syracuse, according to Byron Smith, director of Una Voce's Syracuse chapter. Four sites within the Diocese of Syracuse — Syracuse, Utica and Binghamton, as well as Oswego — currently offer traditional Masses. Smith said the Mass in Oswego draws about 50 people each week, and that the other three have even better attendance.

Traditional appeal

Bill Basile, a parishioner of Rochester's St. Ambrose Church and a member of Una Voce, said he is drawn to the older Mass by its use of Latin.

"In losing the Latin (in the new Mass) we've lost the sacred language," Basile said.

Latin, he continued, "is kind of removed from the world of the common man. It helps you to realize that God is transcendent, God is outside our everyday reality."

But Latin is also beyond the understanding of most people, Father Ehmann observed.

Even when the Tridentine Mass was the norm, he said, few members of a congregation were able to follow the Mass in Latin, even with the help of missals. Often, he added, people were "just saying the words."

Not so, claimed Anthony Lo Bello, chairman of the Latin Liturgy Association.

"Everyone who wanted to knew what was going on," Lo Bello asserted in a telephone interview with the *Catholic Courier* from his home in Meadville, Pa. "You had a hand missal with Latin on one side and English on the other side, so you could follow."

Further, Lo Bello added, the sung portions of the traditional Mass were far better than the liturgical music used today. He said the text of the new Mass in English also lacks the poetic beauty of the Tridentine Mass.

Lo Bello's observations about the language and music of the new Mass ring true, Father Kennedy acknowledged. But the church is still working with the Mass, he said, noting that the Vatican is currently revising and rewriting the text to make it more poetic and closer to the Latin.

Transition continues

Ongoing efforts to improve the new Mass are among the reasons Bishop Clark has cited for declining thus far to permit celebration of the Tridentine Mass.

In a Nov. 19, 1990, letter to Aquila, Bishop Clark noted: "We are still in a period of transition from the Second Vatican Council. People have not yet discovered the richness of the liturgical changes."

"You have to understand the broader picture than the here and now," Father Mull remarked in reference to the bishop's letter. "(The issue) needs to be put in the bigger picture that we are still in a period of transition."

If the diocese were to permit the Tridentine Mass, Father Mull noted, "There would have to be a whole process just to let the people know just what is being done."

People would need education about the validity of both Masses, Father Mull explained, and why the Tridentine Mass was being permitted once again.

Although Bishop Clark has not thus far decided to permit the traditional Latin Mass, "the bishop has never permanently said no," Father Mull observed. "I think he continues to be open to it."

Such comments give advocates of the traditional Mass hope that they eventually will be able to celebrate the Tridentine Mass in this diocese, Aquila noted.

Until such time, they will continue their efforts, he said.

"We'll be building more people to support the Mass, and keep petitioning the bishop," Aquila concluded. "That's all we really can do."

@bituaries

Fr. John Murphy, 77; retired pastor

Bishop Matthew H. Clark celebrated the Mass of Christ the High Priest Thursday, Aug. 15, 1991, at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Corning for Father John A. Murphy.



Father Murphy died August 13, 1991, at Arnot-Ogden Hospital in Corning. He was 77.

A Geneva native, Father Murphy was born November 28, 1913, the son of the late William and Mary McKeivitt Murphy.

Father Murphy graduated from St. Stephen's School and DeSales High School in Geneva. He attended St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries in Rochester, and was ordained to the priesthood on May 18, 1940.

From 1940 to 1942, he served as assistant pastor at St. Philip Neri Parish, Rochester. He was assigned to St. Patrick's Parish, Elmira from 1942 to 1951.

Father Murphy served as the chaplain at Sonyea's Craig Colony for Epileptics, later called Craig Developmental Center, from

1951 to 1962.

In 1962, Father Murphy was named pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Greece, where he continued to serve until his retirement from active priestly ministry in 1984.

Father John Haycock, CSB, who lived and served at St. Lawrence the entire 22 years of Father Murphy's pastorate, said the priest "was a joyful man, deeply dedicated to his ministry and his people. He was loved by his parishioners wherever he served."

After retiring in 1984, Father Murphy lived at St. Vincent's in Corning. He had suffered from ill health in recent years, and had a stroke in May of this year.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan was the celebrant at the Aug. 16 Mass of Christian Burial for Father Murphy at St. Stephen's Church in Geneva. Father Haycock, the homilist for the Mass, reported that more than 100 St. Lawrence parishioners made the trip to Geneva for the service and the burial in the Murphy family plot in St. Mary's cemetery.

Father Murphy is survived by one niece, Jo Anne Wills of Delzell, South Carolina, and several cousins.