

DIALOGUE MASS

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As must surely be the case with many readers of *The Remnant*, I have followed the series of articles on the Dialogue Mass under the title "Debating The Relevant Issues" with increasing bemusement.

In what sense is the question of the Dialogue Mass relevant to us and where is this debate going? The extremely detailed article of Mr Tofari was certainly reminiscent of the content and style of the liturgical reformers of the 1950s and it is not surprising that it should have evinced the alarmed response of Mr Dahl. Are there really any traditional Catholics ready to repeat the painful experiences of 50 years ago? Mr Tofari's article seems to indicate that he, at least, is one. Although he rightly states that Dialogue Mass is not a matter of doctrine but of *praxis*, he nevertheless also states that it is an important question. Indeed it is. Silence and sound are mutually exclusive. If his assertion is ever conceded in practice that a single person who decides to avail himself of making the responses at Mass has every *right* to do so then it spells the final end of what was once the universal and exclusive practice of the Western Church for more than 1000 years.

Although this is an important matter, it is likewise a tiresome one — for it seems that every traditional institution and practice must be permanently placed in a position of self — defence and called upon at any time to justify itself.

The standard procedure of the liturgical reformers has always been to appeal to the practice of the early Church, ignoring the greater part of her history until the 20th century, (save for the purposes of ridiculing it), in order to justify their innovations. Once papal sanction is granted to their ideas they invariably invoke this authority, oftentimes without adequate justification. It is truly remarkable how they did, in fact, obtain sanction for most of their proposed reforms both before and after the Second Vatican Council even to the point of the *de facto* abolition of the traditional rite of Mass itself! At the time, the average Catholic had no notion of the machinations of the leaders of the Liturgical Movement, or indeed of the liturgical practices of the primitive Church. The argument of papal authority was enough for all of the reforms to be generally accepted without question. The final step then is to present the innovations as the authentic tradition of the Church.

Mr Tofari's article follows the same method. He attempts to prove his case by an appeal to the primitive Church and the Oriental rites to establish and prove active lay participation in the sense that such participation should be vocal; derides the liturgical practices of the medieval, baroque and subsequent eras and he even makes a case that the development of the liturgical practice during these long centuries was vitiated by the influence of Protestant individualism and pietism etc. Even more fantastically he appropriates a description of the form of Low Mass which is known and loved by all of us as "the great Irish silence", as if this practice was not universal throughout the worldwide Church! Such a thesis entirely excludes the operation of the Holy Ghost in the development and enrichment of the Church's worship throughout history.

One of the most perplexing assertions is as follows:

"...for nearly 200 years after the Renaissance the unfortunate liturgical *status quo* remained virtually static despite the enormous efforts of Dom Gueranger and a host of others. Despite more than a few errors from some, all agreed on one completely orthodox thought: the Church's liturgical piety must be restored to the forefront of the daily life of the average Catholic". How can the liturgical life of the

Church as always practiced be *unfortunate*? Whatever they had in mind to foster liturgical piety it was certainly not the Dialogue Mass which did not exist, nor indeed was envisaged at the time. Furthermore, this statement overlooks the fact that it is precisely the Low Mass which brings this liturgical piety to the forefront of the daily life of the average Catholic. Given that the Solemn High Mass is the accepted original and authentic form of the Roman liturgy it is manifest that it could not be celebrated every day except in places like great cathedrals and monastic establishments. In order to make it possible for the priest to celebrate and for the laity to participate on a daily basis the "silent" Low Mass was devised. [N.B. The author is aware that parts of the Low Mass are to be recited in a clear voice. He uses the term "silent" in order to distinguish it from Dialogue Mass].

Could anything be more apostolic — the possibility which the Low Mass provided of having the Holy Sacrifice in almost any place or circumstance — thus rendering the highest act of worship accessible to all? This is surely the greatest expression of an authentic active lay participation in the liturgical life of the Church! To appeal to the Oriental rites as providing superior lay participation is fatuous. Mr Tofari states that, "even today the very idea of the laity attending the Divine Liturgy as muted spectators is incomprehensible in the Eastern rites". Of course, as in the Roman rite, the laity of the Eastern Rites may participate in the liturgical chant but unlike us they may not, in reality, be spectators at all as the Iconostasis completely obscures their view!. Interestingly enough, the Iconostasis is not intended as a means of excluding the laity, but rather its doors represent the link between heaven and earth. This indeed represents more authentically the idea of the union of priest and people at the Mass throughout the centuries. A notion which, of course, is completely rejected by the Liturgical Movement of the 20th century. Furthermore, The Orientals may not assist at Mass every day for the reasons stated above, and finally, there is no provision for Dialogue Mass in the their Rites!!!

The author of "Liturgical Principles And Notions" makes the case that as the laity have always been permitted to sing the High Mass it is logical that they should be allowed to make the responses at Low Mass. As this seems reasonable, we may well wonder why, until the 20th century, this was never done or even encouraged ANYWHERE. The idea that it was the result of persecution in anti-Catholic countries is a fallacy. Dialogue Mass was quite as unknown in the Papal States as in the Ireland of penal times! Indeed, the fact that Sung Mass (*Missa Cantata*) only appeared in the 18th century and bilingual missals for laity in the 19th suggests that the idea of active lay participation - if such an idea existed at the time - was, in fact, discouraged. That this state of affairs existed for more than 1000 years must surely mean that it cannot be considered merely as an abuse as the result of neglect of the laity by the popes and ecclesiastical authorities. This being so, I submit that it stemmed from the fact that it is never necessary to state the obvious. It is only when things become obscured that it is necessary to explain their meaning. The liturgy of the Church had always been understood as a common ACT i.e. the physical presence of the ritualised sacrifice of Calvary rather than an exercise of Common prayer. No doubt Christ's sacrifice is indeed a prayer - even the highest prayer which exists - but a distinction must be made. This is quite well summed up in a 19th-century polemical writing against protestant notions of worship which I quote *in extenso* as it gives a view entirely opposite to that of Mr. Tofari; i.e., that rather it is active participation in the sense in which he understands it that is influenced by Protestant notions — not the reverse!

"The main difficulty experienced by Protestants in witnessing Catholic worship arises from their not understanding the difference between a common *act* and a common *prayer*. The acts of the Church, such as processions, expositions of the Blessed Sacrament, the administration of the Sacraments, and above all the holy Sacrifice, are indeed always accompanied by prayer, and generally by prayers of priest and people, though not necessarily by united or common prayer. In any case, the act must be distinguished from the prayers.

A Protestant may easily understand what is meant by this distinction by aid of a few illustrations:

Suppose a ship, filled with a mixed crew of French, Spanish, and Portuguese, is being wrecked off the coast of England. A crowd is assembled on the cliff, watching with intense earnestness the efforts being made by the captain and crew on the one hand, and by life boats from the coast on the other, to save the lives of the passengers. A great *act* is being performed, in which all are taking part, some as immediate actors, others as eager assistants. We may suppose this act carried out in the midst of united prayers. English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, each in their own tongues and many without spoken words at all, are sending up petitions to Almighty God for the safety of the passengers. It is a common act at which they assist; it is accompanied by the prayers of all; but they are not *common* prayers, in the sense of all joining either vocally or mentally in the same form of words.

When the priest Zacharias had gone into the temple of the Lord to offer incense, and “all the multitude of the people was praying without” (Luke 1.9), there was a common act performed by priest and people – by the priest as actor, by the people as assistants – and the act was accompanied by united prayers. But it mattered not to the people what language was spoken by the priest or what sacred formulae were used. Their intentions were joined with his. Their individual and varied petitions were one great Amen said to his sacerdotal invocations; and all ascended together in a sweet-smelling cloud of incense to Heaven.

Or to come still nearer to Catholic worship, let the reader represent to himself the great act of Calvary. Our Lord Jesus Christ is Priest and Victim. He accompanies His oblation of Himself with mysterious and most sacred prayer. Two of His seven words are from the Psalms; and it has therefore been conjectured that He continued to recite secretly the Psalm, after giving us the clue to it, by pronouncing the words, “Eloi, Eloi, Lamma Sabachthani?– My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Or again, “Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit”. There were many assistants at that act and among those who assisted piously – the Blessed Mother of Jesus, the Apostle St. John, the holy women, the centurion, the multitude “who returned striking their breasts” – there was a certain unity in variety, not a uniform prayer, yet a great act of harmonious worship.

There are, then, prayers used in Catholic churches in which the whole congregation joins, such as the singing of hymns, the recitation of the Rosary, performing the Stations of the Way of the Cross, especially the chanting of Vespers or *Compline*. Such prayers are either recited in the vernacular, or, when Latin is used, they require some little education in those who take a direct and vocal part in them. But the great act of Catholic worship is the Holy Mass, or the unbloody sacrifice. One alone stands forth and makes the awful offering; the rest kneel around, and join their intentions and devotions with his; but even were there not a solitary worshiper present, the sacrifice both for the living and dead would be efficacious and complete. To join in this act of sacrifice, and to participate in its effects, it is not necessary to follow the priest or to use the words he uses. Every Catholic knows what the priest is *doing*, though he may not know or understand what he is *saying*, and is consequently able to follow with his devotions every portion of the Holy Sacrifice. Hence a wonderful union of sacrificial, of congregational and of individual devotion. The prayers of the priest are not substituted for those of the people. No one desires to force his brother against his will. It is the most marvelous unity of liberty and law which this earth can show. The beggar with his beads, the child with her pictures, the gentleman with his Missal, the maiden meditating on each mystery of the Passion, or adoring her God in silent love too deep for words, and the grateful communicant, have but one intent, one meaning, and one heart, as they have one action, one object, before their mental vision. They bow themselves to the dust as sinners; they pray to be heard for Christ’s sake; they joyfully accept His words as the words of God; they offer the bread and wine; they unite themselves with the celebrant in the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, which he as their priest offers for them; they communicate spiritually; they give thanks for the ineffable gift which God has given them. Their words differ, their thoughts vary; but their hearts are united and their will is one. Therefore is their offering pure and acceptable in the sight of Him who knows their secret souls, and who accepts a man, not for the multitude or the fewness of his sayings, for his book or for his beads, but for the intention with which he has, according to his sphere and capacities, fulfilled His sacred will, through the merits of the Adorable Victim who is offered for him”. (*Ritual of the New Testament* by Rev. T. G. Bridgett)

One may also suppose that Dialogue Mass was never considered an option until modern times as it would have been simply impractical. It is impossible for a priest at a distant altar to dialogue with a large congregation without the use of a microphone as otherwise he could not be heard and, in any case, in many churches the priest was separated from the

congregation by the rood screen which divided the sanctuary from the nave. We are all familiar with the fact that in large churches the pulpit was placed in the nave quite far from the altar and raised up on high so that the sermon could be heard. Similarly churches would have had to be completely reorganised in order for Mass to be *heard*, thus destroying all of the mystical symbolism of the cruciform plan. Interestingly enough, the new emphasis on vocal participation even before the Council, or any thought of a new Mass in the minds of most people, had already produced the beginnings of the new church architecture:

“Reconceiving liturgical space had begun; especially with St. Michaels in Burlington, Vermont in 1944. A more radical step was Blessed Sacrament Church in Holyoke, Massachusetts, built in 1953. Here the altar was dead centre in an octagonal church and surrounded by eight rows of pews. This soon turned out not to be the answer, but it did herald the movement to reconceiving the relationship of congregational space to the sanctuary. All was still in flux when events after Vatican II soon gave new directions to church building.” (*Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today* by James White)

These churches were built for the old Mass – not the new - but a Mass in which obviously active vocal participation was very strong in influencing the design!

There is a very significant difference between singing and speaking in a language which one does not understand. The music itself is a profound expression of the soul and the meaning of the individual words which are sung is often secondary. It is sufficient to consider that a person ignorant of the Italian language might happily listen to an opera in that language but would certainly hesitate to listen to a play. Indeed, raising the mind and heart to God is the very essence and definition of prayer which need not be synonymous with an exercise of the vocal chords.

A final reason why vocal participation was never encouraged, particularly after the Tridentine Missal was promulgated, was the danger that such participation would demonstrate similarities to Protestant worship and the likely conclusion that intelligent spoken participation would produce a demand for vernacular liturgy it was also this concern which motivated the prohibition against translating the Missal mentioned below. Later history was to prove that these concerns were entirely justified.

Finally, we come to the ultimate argument -that of authority - and indeed Mr Tofari devotes almost the entire second part of his article to the 1958 Instruction “On Sacred Music And Liturgy” with its unambiguous assertion that

“A final method of participation, and the most perfect form, is for the congregation to make the liturgical responses to the prayers of the priest, thus affording a sort of dialogue with him, and reciting aloud the parts which properly belong to them.”

Obviously, this is intended to be the fatal blow to all opposition!

It must be noted, however, that this “most perfect” form of participation is at odds with the Church’s traditional practice. The contemporary ideal of placing the Roman missal in the hands of the faithful in such a way that united, to the priest, they may pray with the same words and sentiment of the Church — whether the Mass be silent or dialogue — was impossible of achievement for the far greater part of the Church’s history as the vast majority of any congregation would have been unable to read, the printing press not yet invented, or books too expensive. It is really only towards the end of the nineteenth century that cheap books became available to the average person so it is perfectly clear that the liturgy was never designed with this type of participation in mind. In this connection Mr Tofari observes “this individualist Protestant spirit began to gradually seep in amongst the Catholic clergy and laity alike. It contributed to Catholics following private devotions during their attendance at Mass, rather than communally uniting themselves to the liturgical actions. Meanwhile, the age of the printing press was on hand

to deliver a prolific number of “Mass prayer books” whose contents were usually devotions far removed from the sacrificial action taking place at the altar.” Of course, the true reason for this state of affairs has nothing whatsoever to do with Protestantism but the simple fact that it was FORBIDDEN by the Church authorities to translate the Missal e.g. 1661 Pope Alexander VII condemned a Missal translated into French and forbade any further translations under pain of excommunication. This prohibition was renewed by Pius IX as late as 1857 and only in 1897 was it no longer enforced.

Dismissing all objection against the Dialogue Mass, Mr Tofari generously asserts that nevertheless,

“...some Catholics still remain adamant in following their own desires rather than the Church’s will. However, it must be assumed that they act in good, but ill-informed faith.”

On the contrary, however, we are rather too well informed! By 1958 Annibale Bugnini, (who’s name is synonymous with the New Mass) and the key figure in the pre- and post-Conciliar changes had been secretary of the Commission For Liturgical Reform for already 10 years and much progress had already been achieved, including limited use of the vernacular in certain rites. Pius XII died only a few weeks later and things were set in motion for the Council. As the Dialogue Mass was the spearhead of the Liturgical Movement’s desire for active lay participation it is not surprising that it should be praised as the “most perfect form” of assistance in this document. Nevertheless, this same Instruction of 1958 does not make this method of participation in any sense obligatory but rather recognises that

“...all are not equally capable of correctly understanding the rites and liturgical formulas; nor does everyone possess the same spiritual needs; nor do the needs remain constant in the same individual. Therefore these people may find a more suitable or easier method of participation in the Mass when they meditate devotedly on the mysteries of Jesus Christ, or perform other devotional exercises and offer prayers which, although different in form from those of the sacred rites, are in essential harmony with them.”

It is therefore obvious that to insist that this one manner of assisting at Mass is more in conformity with “the mind of the Church” is something of an exaggeration.

It is necessary to be clear in one’s mind that the **Dialogue Mass is a novelty** in the history of the Church. Even those who approve of it and feel that it is an improvement on what went before must, in all honesty, admit this for it does nothing for their case to pretend otherwise. It was quite unknown before the 20th century. St Pius X did not envisage Dialogue Mass but rather congregational singing when he advocated “active participation” for, although the Dialogue Mass simply did not exist in his day, he could easily have introduced it. This is proved by his radical reform of the *Roman Breviary* which clearly demonstrates that he did not hesitate to implement liturgical change which he considered necessary. This successor Benedict XV is credited with having done so and of having personally celebrated Dialogue Mass ONCE in his priesthood which lasted 44 years. It seems that Pius XI celebrated it twice. This does not indicate that they considered it a high priority but it was enthusiastically adopted in latter years by bishops and clergy who were very progressive at the time, especially in France and Germany.

Also it is not, and **has never been, obligatory** although, inevitably, wherever it was introduced there would always be found someone who would exercise their “right”(!) to make the responses so that over a period of time in the countries mentioned above where it was encouraged and introduced early on, it eventually became the exclusive practice. The result is that in these places the “silent” Mass on public occasions has passed out of living memory and consequently the average Traditional Catholic there who understandably has little knowledge of liturgical history believes that it has been practiced in every era since

the early Church. Paradoxically, or PROVIDENTIALLY, it was not adopted in English-speaking lands as their bishops in the 1940's and 50's were generally very conservative and therefore not particularly interested in the Liturgical Movement and its ideas. The fact that the former countries are "Catholic" while the latter are "Protestant" has given rise to the misconception that reluctance to embrace the Dialogue Mass is the result of unconscious protestant influences but nothing is further from the truth.

The Dialogue Mass, being less than 90 years old in comparison with the 2000 year old history of Church's worship, must be seen in the context of the unprecedented and constant changes in the liturgy which took place in the 20th century. Most of these were of very short duration. A striking case is that of the Breviary. Even before the Council, the Roman Breviary — the most important book after the Mass — suffered very important and short-lived changes. In 1911 Pius X drastically altered the immemorial breviary codified by Pius V in 1567. Only 34 years later Pius XII introduced a completely new Latin psalter to replace the one which had been in constant use since the earliest days of the Church. Although in theory optional, breviaries were no longer printed with the old Psalter. This was reversed by John XXIII who made further alterations in 1960 and restored the old Psalter. Almost everyone then abandoned that of Pius XII. This is only one example of the numerous liturgical changes which took place without ceasing throughout the period from the reign of Pius X to that of John XXIII before the traditional liturgy was finally abandoned. Nothing like it had ever been known in the entire history of the Church. It is therefore obvious that Liturgical directives do not remain binding for all time! If this is true of Papal Bulls it is all the more so in the case of an instruction on Sacred Music which seems to form the ultimate basis of Mr. Tofari's argument from authority.

Most of these changes, unprecedented and far-reaching as they were, passed unnoticed by the average layman. However, papally-approved liturgical change was the daily bread of the priests for half a century before the Council (being equal in length to the entire priestly life of many of them) and had become all too familiar. This surely explains why the Post-Conciliar reforms met with little clerical resistance but indeed were largely received with enthusiasm or equanimity much to the bewilderment of the Faithful. The survival of the Traditional liturgy was due largely to the efforts of laymen to whom the New Mass and the notion of radical change to the sacred liturgy was a tremendous shock. They had the very greatest difficulty in finding priests prepared or interested in celebrating the Traditional Mass for them since the direction in which things were moving had been clear for years:

"In 1956 Gerald Ellard published *The Mass in Transition*. He began by acknowledging that his 1948 book *The Mass of the Future* was already out of date, so rapidly had liturgical practice progressed. People were beginning to grasp the difference between praying at Mass and praying the Mass itself. Various practices were becoming common. Vernacular missals were now in the hands of millions of lay people. In a few places the altars had already been prized loose from walls and priests were celebrating facing the people albeit it with a tabernacle in the way. The so called Dialogue Mass was well on the way to being no longer a rarity in the United States and was prevalent in Germany." (*Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today* by James I White)

Towards the end of his lengthy article, after having wistfully considered the possibility of an authentic liturgical reform if the pre-conciliar popes had been heeded and the "intransigency of the pietists" had not been a contributing factor to frustrating this, Mr Tofari states:

"Many may not prefer the Dialog Mass and that is their prerogative. Nonetheless, one must avoid equating the legitimate practice of the Dialogue Mass with the illegitimate child which is the *Novus Ordo Missae*. The illogical *post hoc ergo propter hoc* must stop in the assertion that the Dialogue

Mass was ‘the beginning of the end’ for the liturgical revolution imposed in the wake of the Second Vatican Council”.

Then finally, with amazing self confidence, he asserts that

“both claims are faulty, having liturgical misconceptions or improper context as their basis.”

However, it is perhaps rather Mr. Tofari’s claims that are based on liturgical misconceptions and improper context and dispel his assertion that the “silent” Mass is in any way influenced by pietism. If the faithful were “mute spectators” before the 20th century it was the result of deliberate policy by the Popes and the highest authorities of the Church for 1000 years and not the result of any ill-will or preference of their own. The mildly derogatory expression of “mute spectators” in a pontifical document was surely the indication of a radical change of policy and was understood as such. This is surely why it is not possible to find Pontifical documents in praise of the “silent” Mass for it was simply a fact of life in the Church and required no praise or justification unlike the new form of participation which required to be promoted.

Furthermore, these changes were all promoted by the very same people who established the New Mass and the new liturgy so when Mr Tofari poses the question: “What kind of liturgical reform would have occurred in the wake of the Second Vatican Council if the pre-conciliar popes had been heeded?” it is not too difficult to find an answer. What indeed does Mr Tofari imagine himself? For after Dialogue Mass there is nothing left to reform except the rite itself and/or render it in the vernacular. This was, in fact, the direction of liturgical scholarship before the Council. The most authoritative work on the Mass produced during these years is Joseph Jungmann’s epic work “Missarum Solemnia”, published in 1949 with several later additions. Much of Mr Tofari’s article seems to be based on this book with which he appears to be familiar.

Here is what Jungman has to say about the Tridentine form of Mass:

“After fifteen hundred years of unbroken development in the rite of the Roman Mass, after the rushing and the streaming from every height and out of every valley, the Missal of Pius V was indeed a powerful dam holding back the waters or permitting them to flow through only in firm, well-built canals. At one blow all arbitrary meandering to one side or another was cut off, all floods prevented, and a safe, regular and useful flow assured. *But the price paid was this, that the beautiful river valley now lay barren and the forces of further evolution were often channelled into the narrow bed of a very inadequate devotional life instead of gathering strength for new forms of liturgical expression.....*In fact someone has styled this period of Church history as the epoch of inactivity or of rubrics.”

With regard to the vernacular he is much more cautious (after all this is written in 1949!)

“The monumental greatness of the Roman Mass lies in its antiquity which reaches back to the Church of the martyrs, and in its spread which, with its Latin language, spans so many nations. Nowhere else is it so plain that the Church is both apostolic and catholic. But this double advantage of the Roman Mass also involves weaknesses. The Latin tongue is nowadays become more and more unfamiliar even to cultured people. *Will there ever be any relaxing in this matter in the setting of the Mass? The Latin language is only one of the peculiarities of the Roman liturgy that, due to its venerable age, has to some extent become a problem.* In the present shape of the Roman Mass, forms and practices have been retained which are no longer comprehensible to the ordinary onlooker.”

As the New Mass provides for nothing other than active lay participation it is surely not unreasonable to believe that the Dialogue Mass was a significant step towards the introduction of the new liturgy. Although the adage *post hoc ergo propter hoc* is certainly a logical fallacy if applied in every circumstance, it does not alter the fact that effect most surely follows cause and we can now see with hindsight where all these changes were leading. It is now no longer possible to maintain with objectivity that liturgical changes such as the Dialogue Mass were completely unrelated to what was to follow.

We conclude this article at the point where we began. The Dialogue Mass is nothing more than a liturgical praxis. Although it may not be Modernist it is undoubtedly MODERN and imbued with the spirit of the age which produced it as Joseph Jungman in *Missarum Solmenia* frankly admits ,

“...from the Dialogue Mass the Faithful gain a living knowledge of the actual course of the Mass and so they can follow the Low Mass as well as the solemn Mass with an entirely new understanding. To have been deprived of such an understanding much longer would not have been tolerable even to the masses in this age of advanced education and enhanced self consciousness. But what is even more important, now that the Faithful answer the priest and concur in his prayers, sacrifice with him and communicate with him, they become properly conscious for the first time of their dignity as Christians.” (!)

Even if it is readily conceded that Dialogue Mass is neither Modernist nor heretical this is not to say that it is desirable. Many practices of the Church in previous centuries were abandoned for good reasons and it is most unwise to revive them now. Even if there was a liturgy in the early Church which approximated to the Dialogue Mass it is well known that there was also Mass in the vernacular, Communion under two kinds and in the hand, Mass sometimes celebrated facing the people and a married priesthood (even the first Pope was married!). None of these practices are in themselves against the Faith and were quite legitimate but recent history has proved what dire consequences have ensued when many of them were revived after the Second Vatican Council.

Neither is it in any sense desirable to introduce Dialogue Mass in places where it has never been the established practice before the Council. The faith of most Catholics was nurtured by the liturgical forms of their youth and there is no excuse to disturb this now and renew the bitter experiences of the pre- and post-Conciliar years. This was the praxis adopted by Archbishop Lefebvre in the Society of St. Pius X during the years when this Society was effectively the sole guardian of the Traditional Rites and this is surely the most wise and considerate position to continue to adopt at the present time. One day the Liturgical Movement with its 20th century ideas and assumptions will be judged in the light of history. To some extent this has already begun. Until then, may all reforming zeal according to its questionable principles, such as is expressed by Mr. Tofari’s article, cease! As St. Paul says, “all things are lawful to me; but all things are not expedient” (*I Cor. VI.12*).

Let us, therefore, treasure the traditional form of “silent” Low Mass as one of our greatest treasures. This is the form of Mass developed at a high point of Catholic culture and devotion in an era which we love to call “The Age of Faith”. This is the form of Mass which nurtured the spiritual life of the saints who were the greatest of the *true* reformers of the Church, Saints Francis, Dominic, Bernard, Ignatius, Catherine of Sienna, Teresa of Avila, etc. None of them were dissatisfied with the “silent” Mass, as known by them and us, but rather they loved it and there is no evidence that they felt that they suffered any deprivation from their lack of “active participation” “in the worship of Christ’s Mystical Body. Let us also love and be thankful for this grace and “be zealous for the *better* gifts” (*I Cor. XII.31*)
