

# THE LITURGY AND PARISH LIFE.

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This pamphlet was originally written to be read as a paper during the National Eucharistic Congress held in Sydney from April 12th to 19th, 1953. On Thursday afternoon, April 16th, one of the Official sessions of the Congress was held at St Patrick's Seminary, Manly College and was devoted to commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the issuing of the *Motu Proprio on Sacred Music* by St. Pius X. Although the actual anniversary is later in the year (November 22nd), it was felt that such an important national Eucharistic gathering should not pass without some tribute being paid to the work of the "Pope of the Eucharist". The session was presided over by His Lordship, the Most Reverend Dr. E. J. Doody, Bishop of Armidale, and was honoured in a particular way by a distinguished commentary on the paper by His Excellency the Apostolic Delegate, the Most Reverend Dr. Paul Marella. The paper itself aroused so much comment and interest that, in reply to very many requests, more especially by the National Conference of Diocesan Inspectors of Schools, it has been decided to publish the paper as it stands. For the sake of completeness, an appendix giving a translation of the canons of the Australian Plenary Synod of 1937 referring to Sacred Music, has been added, setting a seal, if such were needed, on the remarks proffered in the paper.

PERCY JONES.

[This pamphlet should be of some interest to a new (21st century) audience as it gives some important background information to the renewal of interest in the Liturgy which was to reach a high point in the various reforms set forth and initiated at the Second Vatican Council.]

## PART I. — POPE PIUS X AND THE LITURGY.

On Sunday next, April 19th, [1953] we in Australia commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the first official permission, given by Governor King, to celebrate Mass in this country. That anniversary has inspired the holding of this National Eucharistic Congress to which prelates, priests and laity from every corner of the continent, and indeed from many countries overseas, have come to share our joy on this occasion. In recent years a Eucharistic Congress has become the normal expression of important commemorations; it would therefore seem fitting that during these celebrations some tribute be paid to the Supreme Pontiff to whom under God we owe, more than anyone else, the revival of Eucharistic Life in the Church — to Blessed Pius X of Holy memory. [He was to be canonized on 29 May in year of 1954.]

**Pope of The Eucharist.**

Last year, [on the 3rd of June 1951, to be precise,] the shadows which hang over the Church Militant were for a brief moment forgotten, when the whole Christian family rejoiced at the Beatification of him who has rightly been styled the Pope of the Eucharist. Please God that same family will not have to wait too many years before celebrating his canonization. [29 May, 1954.] Certainly no one has been raised to the altar in this century who has had such a profound influence on the life of the Church and of the millions of the faithful.

In August fifty years ago [1903], Joseph Sarto was elected Pope. The worldly-wise shook their heads. In such obviously difficult times, the election of an apparently undistinguished Italian prelate, the son of very poor parents reared in an obscure district of northern Italy and with small experience of the world and its politics, seemed little short of a disaster. He was such a contrast to the aristocratic Leo XIII. Prior to the conclave, one French Cardinal remarked to him that he was not even eligible, since he knew no French. He himself viewed with dismay during the conclave the gradually mounting votes in his favour.

Yet, looking back over this twentieth century, it is now crystal clear that in his election, the Holy Spirit had raised up a successor to St. Peter who would personally lead a reformation of Church life such as had never been witnessed in the Church before. His name-sake predecessor, St. Pius V, had guided the Church during a previous upheaval and renaissance, but he had men of the stamp of St. Robert Bellarmine to urge the reform. Pius X reformed the Church almost single-handed. Certainly he led the way and, if he had the invaluable assistance of men like Cardinal Merry del Val and others as his advisers, it was from his leadership that they drew their inspiration. His pontificate was in the main the implementing of reforms which he realized necessary from his own experience as a seminarist, a curate, a parish priest and a bishop. His rule was not that of a head of a government but that of a pastor of souls. His very motto “To restore all things in Christ” summarized his achievement as well as his intentions.

There is not a single aspect of Church life, as we know it today that does not bear the imprint of his personal direction. It was to him we owe the Code of Canon Law in force today; [It was revised in 1983.] It is to him we owe the initial steps in Catholic Action; it is to him we owe the defeat of perhaps the most insidious heresy in the Church — Modernism. If today we are part of a family in which millions of its members are vitally aware of their faith and are courageously living that faith amid increasing secularization, paganism and persecution, it is because Blessed [now Saint] Pius X, a man of prayer and a true shepherd, led his flock back to the true pastures of the sacramental life which its Divine Founder had left as their daily food and nourishment.

### **To Restore All Things in Christ.**

Pius X had been too long a priest working in parish not to realize what had been missing in parochial life. With the highly individualistic approach of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to religion and God, he had seen Catholics regarding prayer as a mere private matter between an individual and his God. He had seen the damage wrought by the exaggerated pietism of the Jansenists and of their opponents whose only solution seemed to have been to offer one form of individualistic piety to offset the other; he had seen the damage that this unsacramental life had done to the Church — the Mass, Holy Communion unfrequented — altogether a family starved of its food — a family lacking vitamins and therefore lacking vitality. Worse still, he had seen a clergy equally ignorant of this primary source of the Spiritual life — a

clergy side-tracked into providing spiritual trivialities and non-essentials, helpless before the tide of socialism, and themselves relying on their own resources for their life of prayer.

The answer of Pius X to this state of affairs was clear — reform the Breviary, so that the Clergy have a balanced form of prayer; frequent and early Communion, so that the faithful receive constantly, even daily, and from early childhood, the chief food of their soul — the Bread of Angels — Christ Himself. He realized that, with such Divine nourishment, the vitality of the Church would return and prevail. So it has proved. The missionary activity of this century, the rise and growth of a holy and apostolic laity and the universal loyalty of the faithful to the See of Peter, which have been such striking phenomena of this twentieth century, must be traced back to the call of Pius X to restore all things in Christ by a return to the sacramental life of the Church.

### **To The Greater Glory of God.**

His work did not cease there — in fact it did not begin there. With the intuitive eye of a saint, he saw the deep, underlying misunderstanding which was the cause of the spiritual inertia. It was that the sacraments — even the Mass itself — were only appreciated for the good they produced in the individual soul. The fundamental basis of all religion, namely the worship and glory of God, was obscured or forgotten. The churches had become shabby: the ornaments, the paintings and the statuary had become shoddy: and the music, if it existed at all, had degenerated into a concert to tickle the ears and satisfy the emotions of the listeners. All these externals were but the expression of the petty, shabby minds of the people — they were the indication of a tragic lack of realization of what the worship of God demanded. The mind of sacrifice — “the mind that was in Christ Jesus” was absent — people prayed for what they could get out of it.

How was he to bring the people of God to realize their position before their Creator? How was he to bring it home to them that they were a royal priesthood, a chosen people, a privileged family — brothers of Christ under the fatherhood of God? How was he to make them realize their solidarity — their common bonds which would be the strength of the Church in the ensuing decades? On the surface his reply seemed to be so futile as to merit scorn. Whether merited or not, it met with scorn and continues to meet with scorn.

### **The Liturgy: The Primary and Indispensable Source of Christian Life.**

After his first Encyclical in October, 1903, in which he outlined his policy of restoring all things in Christ, the first document he issued to the Universal Church was the *Motu Proprio* of November 22nd, 1903, on Sacred Music. Well might the churchmen and the laity of the Church, reared in the cultural backwaters of nineteenth century romanticism and liberalism, look askance at the announcement of a Papal document on music and a *Motu Proprio* at that — “on his own volition”. Yet the opening sentences of that masterly decree showed immediately that Blessed Pius X had put his finger on the core of the disease:

“Among the cares of the pastoral office, not only of this Supreme Chair, which We, though unworthy, occupy through the inscrutable disposition of Providence, but of every local church, a leading one is without question that of maintaining and promoting the decorum of the House of God, in which the august mysteries of religion are celebrated and

where the Christian people assemble to receive the grace of the Sacraments, to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the altar, to adore the most august Sacrament of the Lord's Body and to unite in the common prayer of the Church in the public and solemn liturgical offices. Nothing should have place, therefore, in the temple, calculated to disturb or even merely to diminish the piety and devotion of the faithful, nothing that may give reasonable cause for disgust or scandal, nothing, above all, which directly offends the decorum and the sanctity of the sacred functions and is thus unworthy of the House of Prayer and of the Majesty of God. We do not touch separately on the abuses in this matter which may arise. To-day our attention is directed to one of the most common of them, one of the most difficult to eradicate, and the existence of which is sometimes to be deplored in places where everything else is deserving of the highest praise — the beauty and sumptuousness of the temple, the splendour and the accurate performances of the ceremonies, the attendance of the clergy, the gravity and piety of the officiating ministers. Such is the abuse affecting sacred chant and music. . . . Filled as We are with a most ardent desire to see the true Christian spirit flourish in every respect and be preserved by all the faithful, We deem it necessary to provide before aught else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for no other object than that of acquiring this spirit from its foremost and indispensable fount, which is the active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church. And it is vain to hope that the blessing of Heaven will descend abundantly upon us when our homage to the Most High, instead of ascending in the odour of sweetness, puts into the hand of the Lord the scourges wherewith of old the Divine Redeemer drove the unworthy profaners from the Temple.”

Here was the Pope's remedy for the malady — the primary and indispensable source at which the true Christian spirit is acquired is the active participation in the sacred mysteries and in the liturgy of the Church. Surely nothing could be clearer than this. Yet fifty years after he had penned these words, we look around to find in many places the same ignorance, antipathy and indifference with Pius X deplored. Pius himself had no doubt in his mind. As a young seminarist he had learnt the power and beauty of the Church's music, as a young priest. and as a parish priest he had proved over and over again the vital part it played in a true parochial life, and as a Bishop he saw the need to draw people back to God by love and the deepest expression of love — music. Here was a holy priest speaking out of the abundance of his heart and his experience, not as a mere aesthete or unpractical dreamer.

### **The Reform in Action.**

Throughout his Pontificate Pius X pursued this ideal of active participation in the liturgy. He ordered the return to the pristine melodies of the chant — “*Revertimini ad fontes*” he said, in setting up the Commission for the restoration of the Gregorian Melodies. He reformed the Breviary: he encouraged frequent and early Communion in every way: providing an example in the Papal ceremonies in the Sistine Chapel and in St. Peter's, he set out to draw people to express their love of God in the traditional chants of the Church. Here was the love song of Christ's Bride held in esteem again.

That love-song has continued despite opposition and indifference. It has been fostered by each succeeding Pope. Benedict XV gave the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music its present

building. Pius XI, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of *Motu Proprio*, issued his *Apostolic Constitution on the Liturgy and Sacred Music*, in which he called for detailed instruction in Church music to be given in schools, colleges, and seminaries, and the constant use of the chant in ceremonies, so that the people no longer remain “detached and silent spectators”. Above all, nearly fifty years after *Motu Proprio*, Pope Pius XII, in two of the great Encyclicals of all time, “*Mystici Corporis*” and “*Mediator Dei*”, gave to the world a doctrinal and spiritual exposition of the Church’s life of prayer which set a final seal on the call of his predecessor to restore all things in Christ through an active participation in this vital sacramental life.

Never was the call of the Pastor of souls more timely. Amid the cross-currents of false philosophies, religions and politics, the Bark of Peter must steer a steady course. Before the waves of philosophical idealism, positivism and atheistic existentialism, the Church must remain the defender of objective truth: before the insidious attacks of modernism and indifferentism the Church must proclaim its belief in dogma: before the excesses of totalitarianism and aesthetic and atheistic materialism the Church must stand erect as the Mystical Body of Christ, the real centre of the brotherhood of man.

### **Doctrine not Sufficient.**

Truth is not sufficient for mankind today. Subject to so many specious onslaughts of false philosophers and tyrants, by a diabolical perversion of the printed word, so that today the cherished word “Propaganda” has become suspect and synonymous with deceit, men have come to distrust the rationalization of truth. With so much evil in the world — so much cruelty, men look for love and beauty. Even those, who know the truth, need something more to help them. Pope Pius XII has said: “There was perhaps never a time in the history of the Church, when people were so well instructed as they are today, yet there was perhaps never a time when men have witnessed so tragic a divorce between theory and practice.”

Why is that? It is because we have in a large measure relied on the power of the instructed word to convey truth. We have relied too much on knowledge of the discursive type. We stress so much that Christ is “The Truth”, that we forget that He is also “The Way and the Life”. We think, once we have indoctrinated the intellect by Catechism and Apologetics and shaped the Will by “character training”, that we have reached the soul of man. We have not. There is a world of difference between knowing a truth and realizing it. There is a world of difference between doing something out of a sense of duty and doing it out of love. Hence the tragic divorce between theory and practice.

### **Beauty of Divine Truth Lived and Expressed.**

Man is not merely a composite of rational intellect and will. There is a host of other elements that go to form his personality and, unless these other elements are nurtured and fostered, we cannot produce the integral Christian man. Truth cannot be cold truth. It must be resplendent. Morals cannot be the mere expression of duty. They must be the expression of love — of a vital soul pulsating with the life of sanctifying grace. It is for this reason that the Church calls upon the arts to adorn and present its truths. It calls on painting and statuary to stimulate the imagination and the memory; it calls on music to express its love, for as St. Augustine puts it: “*Cantare amantis est*” — “A lover must sing”. It is this expression in beauty of the truths of the

faith that must attract the Catholic and the non-Catholic. Beauty is the splendour of truth. It is a shining forth, it is a theophany, it is a paean of love arising in the soul that contemplates the infinite perfection and love of God. Surely this is the purpose of our education and of our pastorate. And all this is provided for us in the liturgy of the Church. The liturgy is nothing but the beauty of divine truth lived and expressed by Christ and the members of His Mystical Body. It is the song and action of the Whole Christ worshipping and praising God, offering Him the ineffable Victim of Calvary and, with that Divine Victim, offering the minds and hearts and bodies of all those who are bound to Him in this bond of supernatural love.

## **PART II. — APPLICATION TO AUSTRALIA.**

### **Conditions in Australia.**

May we for a moment indulge in a cursory examination of conscience? What is the position here in Australia? Can it be said that here is a country in which the full vitality of the Church is expressed in its life of prayer? The answer is yes and no. If we take cognizance of the frequentation of the sacraments and of vast numbers of the faithful who unite themselves with the priest and with Christ in the Mass through following the words of the Holy Sacrifice in the Missal, and if we recognize the vast numbers who, this week, are paying special homage to our Eucharistic Lord, the answer is “Yes to some degree”. But if we seek for the very existence of, let alone the active participation of the faithful in the solemn ceremonies of the Church, we must honestly admit that, despite splendid efforts in a few places, there is much yet to be done. There are, of course, reasons for this state of affairs in the past.

### **Change the Accent.**

In a previous generation the accent in Church activity was on the school — schools had to be built; they had to be staffed; they had to be developed. In this generation the accent has moved to the Hall. All the various branches of the lay apostolate have absorbed so much of the priest’s time that little was left for what he considered the trimmings. Is it not time that the accent moved to the church itself? Is it not time that the priest should concentrate on the fullest observance of the priestly functions? It is surely an extraordinary mentality that can attend to details of football teams and not find time to encourage choirs and congregations to join him in the sacrifice of perennial praise. Church music is not just a hobby: it is an integral part of the Church’s prayer, as Pius X clearly states. He himself set an example as a priest in training choirs wherever he was stationed. Every Pope of this century has set out the requirements of the Church in this matter as it affects dioceses, religious orders, seminaries, schools and confraternities. It is this life of the liturgy that is essential to a full Catholic faith. As Pius XI says in his Encyclical. “*Quas Primas*”.

“In fact the yearly cycle of the celebration of the Holy Mysteries has far greater efficacy than all the weightiest documents of the ecclesiastical magisterium, to teach the people the things of faith and thereby to elevate them to the interior joys of life.”

What suggestions then can be made? It seems to me that remedies can be made on three levels — the parochial, the diocesan and the national level.

## LITURGY IN THE PARISH.

### **The Parish School.**

Let us take the Parochial level first. After the family, the parish is the smallest unit in the Church's organization and, if the priests are convinced, it does not take long for the people to react. They will respond. There are first of all the children in the schools. They are the mustard seed in the active liturgical life of the parish. They can be trained and, as they grow up, their training can be used in the confraternities and in the congregational singing. In the meantime, once they are able to sing a Mass, they should be provided with the opportunities in the Church, especially on important feasts in the Church. By important feasts I mean, not just Easter and Pentecost and other such, but also feasts of Corpus Christi, the Sacred Heart, Sts. Peter and Paul, and such feasts which fall on school days, when the whole school should celebrate the Church's Feast.

Today, if a flag is flown from a boys' school, it is often not to celebrate a church feast but a sporting event. The priest should do all in his power to bring the nuns and brothers into the life of parish worship. The religious orders should be made to realize that that is what they exist for fundamentally. Teaching secular subjects is only a necessary means. But to the thinking Catholic it is a matter of some surprise when, not infrequently, instances occur where a great deal of time is devoted to achieve pre-eminence in sport or in secular music, while little or no time can be found to prepare children for their parochial life of prayer. Indeed, there are some religious orders in which the religious are forbidden to conduct their own children when singing in the parish church.

### **The Parish Church.**

As for the adults, the priest has at his service the sodalities and the confraternities which can be taught the Gregorian Chant melodies of the Mass. Then there is the parish choir to give the lead. But today it is true to say that most parish choirs do not exist or are in a poor state. Whose fault is that? It is at least to a large extent the priest's fault. He rarely visits them or encourages them. He does not use his influence in the parish to recruit members and then wonders why the choir is poor.

To me the most important single reform that must be made is to change the sung Mass to an early hour. Times have changed and with the practice of frequent Communion all those willing to sing in a Church choir desire to receive Holy Communion each week. Now especially with the rule of water not breaking the fast, choristers can, without difficulty, sing while still fasting and the Sung Mass can be transferred to one of the early Masses. [The fasting rules are now so light, since Vatican II, that no excuse can be given for not having more sung Masses with a good parish choir leading.] This could mean that each Confraternity could have a sung Mass — sung by the members themselves alternating with the choir, and the choir singing the Proper. The mention of the Proper raises one of the main difficulties of a sung Mass. Yet this is not a grave difficulty; the choir can sing the Proper texts on a Psalm tone or on bigger Feasts sing a simple melody such as those provided in the Blessed *Pius X Hymnal* which is published here in Australia. As for the text itself and its pronunciation, the priest can give some initial help, and the vocabulary is so comparatively small and the rules of pronunciation so invariable that a little

practice will dispel this bogey.

### **Parochial Ceremonies.**

One last word on parochial ceremonies. Any priest who treasures his priesthood should be anxious to try all the ceremonies attached to the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church, before falling back on personal preferences. Some priests are reminiscent of a certain type of non-Catholic who will try every form of religion before examining the claims of the Catholic Church. Some of us will try every type of private devotion rather than celebrate the Mass, offices and processions of the Church in their proper form. Too much attention is paid to the Catholic who looks on the Church as a place to go to obtain favours. Surely it is time we made the praise and worship of Almighty God top priority in our churches and offered Him our best, not our second-best or third-best.

### **Dialogue Mass.**

Where, for one reason or another, it is not possible to begin with the sung Mass, there is the Dialogue Mass, which has done a great deal in many parishes to make the congregation realize that it is their Sacrifice as well as ours. Indeed, it may be said that the Dialogue Mass is a necessity in the average Australian Parish where there are often three, four and sometimes five Masses each Sunday. If every Pope of this century has reiterated the voice of Pius X that “active participation in the most holy mysteries is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit”, then it must be admitted that ninety per cent, if not more, of Australian Catholics are denied easy access to this primary and indispensable source. It is true that a Catholic in using his missal is taking an active part in a certain measure, but it is clear from the context of the *Motu Proprio* and subsequent Papal documents that this is not what the Popes meant. They meant and mean active external participation when, as Pius XI says, they are no longer “silent spectators”. [Vatican II did much to make the ‘Dialogue Mass’ the normative standard for “full, active and conscious” participation in the Sacred Liturgy.]

### **Catholics are a Society.**

This generation has seen the rise of two perversions of the true concept of society, Totalitarianism and Communism. The answer to these is to make Catholics realize that they too are a society — a community and even more than that — a vital organism bound together and to Christ by the life-giving flow of faith and sanctifying grace. If we have been dilatory in presenting a common front to these caricatures of the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ, it is because we have not succeeded in welding Catholics together in their prayer. “Actio sequitur esse” [‘Do follows Be’, or ‘Action follows what you are’] — you may whip up a temporary enthusiasm for some particular action demanding a common front, but that is a passing enthusiasm. You have only to see the results in Trade Union elections to see how difficult it is to make Catholics think socially and it is simply because their prayer is not social. They are just so many individuals at Mass. It is not sufficient to tell them they are one in Christ — you have to make them live that truth. You may preach week-in and week-out that the Mass is their sacrifice and not merely the priest’s, but you have to make them “act” the Mass. It is not sufficient to tell them that the Mass is a social act of worship; it has to look a social sacrifice.

It may take some time to change the mentality of a priest who always refers to “his” Mass, but, until this social concept of Mass is realized and put into effect, we cannot expect Catholic solidarity in action. Furthermore, we can only blame ourselves, if many children on leaving school start to miss Mass. The youth at that age must be doing something. It is all very well to think of the mature minds who over the years may have acquired a certain ability in personal prayer, but young people cannot be expected to have that.

### **Factors Making for Success.**

The success of the Dialogue Mass depends on the attitude of the priest. If he regards the Mass as his own affair and will not wait for the people to make the responses or hurries his Latin, the Dialogue Mass is impossible under such conditions. If he is prepared to regard the people as a royal priesthood and a chosen people, he will encourage them by the tone of voice he uses and the help he gives them. The objection, that the Dialogue Mass distracts the priest, can only be raised by one who has no experience of it. The people merely answer him or recite the vocal parts of the Mass with him. So far from distracting him it helps him to concentrate on what he is saying. As for the silent parts — the people are silent, when he is silent.

More frequently, one hears the objection that the Dialogue Mass distracts the people. This is not so. It might distract them from their own prayers but not from the Mass. Some of the old people might not like it for a time, but experience in every part of the world has shown that the young and the middle-aged do like it. Soldiers, who experienced the Dialogue and Sung Masses of the natives up in New Guinea and the other islands during war, are loud in their praise of such Masses. Whatever the objections raised, the fact of the matter is that the Church has designed the Mass for congregational participation and the Popes have demanded it. What about the pride and disobedience involved in refusing the people their right?

The Dialogue Mass is the first step in parish worship. After some time the people will be ready for the more ideal form — the Sung Mass, but the whole affair needs the leadership and encouragement of the priest.

## **LITURGY IN THE DIOCESE.**

### **Commission for promoting Liturgy.**

What can be done on the Diocesan level? A great deal! While a priest here and there might want to do something along the lines outlined above, many more will embark on it, if they feel they have the encouragement and approval of the Bishop. Pope Pius XII in “*Mediator Dei*” has this to say:

“We therefore exhort you, Venerable Brethren, in your dioceses or within the sphere of your jurisdiction, to see that the way in which the faithful take part in the liturgy conforms to the rules laid down in the Missal and the instructions issued by the Congregation of Rites and in the Code of Canon Law; so that everything shall be conducted with due order and seemliness and no private individual, even though he be a priest, be allowed to use the church for the purpose of arbitrary experiments. To this end We desire that besides a Commission for the regulation of sacred music and art, each

diocese should also have a Commission for promoting the liturgical apostolate, so that under your watchful care the instructions of the Apostolic See may in all things be observed.”

I would like to stress the words “a Commission for promoting the liturgical apostolate”; it is then not only a question of maintaining regularity and uniformity but also a question of encouragement, guidance and leadership. Once such a commission is established, experience shows that priests gain confidence in bringing the liturgy into the lives of the people. They don’t feel “lone wolves” in their apostolate and you find various groups of priests gathering together to study the liturgy and its application to parochial life.

### **Syllabus.**

One of the most important diocesan contributions to this end is the setting of a syllabus of Gregorian Chant and Hymns to be learnt in the Schools and appointing someone, preferably a priest, to visit the schools and see that the syllabus is taught. Such a syllabus should not be heavy: otherwise the teachers feel unable to cope with its requirements. But in the dioceses of Australia, where a syllabus has been set and inspected, the parochial clergy have found automatically presented to them a means of performing the ceremonies worthily. The whole drive in a diocese must be to make the people realize in this prayer their union with Christ.

### **LITURGY IN THE NATION.**

Under the heading of the national level at which the liturgy be encouraged there are several problems which can make or mar the spiritual life of this continent.

#### **In Seminaries and Religious Houses.**

The chief of these is the question of seminaries and novitiates and indeed any religious house where priests or teachers are trained. There is no doubt that, if a seminarist or religious receives the right training during those formative years, the spiritual life of the Church is truly safeguarded. Unfortunately it is true that in this part many of these training grounds have given scant attention to the prayer and ceremonies of the Church. Liturgy classes are often mere classes in rubrics with little teaching of the historical development or spiritual basis of liturgical prayer. Many students, on entry to the college, are branded as “crocks” or “crows” and they are excluded from participation in chant classes and sung Masses. Religious houses are notable for the absence of High Mass and solemn ceremonies even where numbers make it an easy matter. Religious are sent out to teach in schools well versed in teaching secular subjects and the catechism, but ignorant of the very prayer-life of the Church.

Pius XI in his “*Apostolic Constitution*” had this to say:--

“In seminaries and in other houses of study for the formation of the clergy, both secular and regular, there should be a frequent and almost daily lecture or practice — however short — in Gregorian chant and sacred music. If this is carried out in the spirit of the liturgy, the students will find it a relief rather than a burden to their minds, after the study of more exacting subjects.”

Pius XII in "*Mediator Dei*" follows this up with the following admonition:

“Make it your special care (Venerable Brethren), that the clergy of the rising generation, while being trained in ascetics, theology, Canon Law and pastoral studies, shall be correspondingly taught to understand liturgical ceremonies, to appreciate their majesty and beauty and give careful study to the rubrics. Such training is desirable, not only for its educational value, not only for its utility in enabling the young student, when the time comes, to carry out the rites of our religion with due order, seemliness and dignity, but also and especially as a means of educating him in the closest possible union with Christ the Priest, so that being the minister of holy things, he may himself be holy.”

This plea comes up time and time again from the Sovereign Pontiffs and this equally applies to all religious to whom the training of Catholic youth is to be entrusted. It is important that this is realized by religious orders, for not infrequently it happens that, instead of being a help to build up the sacramental life of a parish, they allow their energies to be directed to the propagation of particular devotions which, though legitimate, are secondary to the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit which is the active participation in the sacred mysteries.

### **Episcopal Committee.**

To encourage and supervise these developments it would seem desirable that there be established an Episcopal Committee for Liturgy which would stress the importance of the prayer-life of the church, and which would ensure the balance between public worship and private devotions be maintained, and that those entrusted to the care of souls be trained to nourish those souls according to the mind of our Holy Mother the Church. Protestations of loyalty to the Holy See mean very little when, in a matter affecting the very basis of the spiritual life of the church, small heed is paid to the repeated call of the Sovereign Pontiff.

### **Conclusion.**

It would trespass on your time to review all the possibilities and effects of a full parochial life of community prayer and active sacramental living. I have had time but to mention some of the important aspects of this problem. I have had no time to mention the effect of such a life on the apostolate of convert work, but each priest in this gathering will recall the impressions of many converts of his own acquaintance who have commented on our “dumb” congregations. I have had no time to enlarge on the place of liturgical prayer and action in the Lay Apostolate or on the necessity of the liturgy, if the Church here in Australia is to reach some maturity.

There is little more I can do than summarize the work of Blessed [now Saint] Pius X and his successors in pointing to the three-fold new emphasis in the Church — the emphasis in its theology on the doctrine of the Mystical Body, the emphasis in its apostolate on the active participation of the laity and the emphasis in its prayer on the community life of the liturgy. In this half-century we have witnessed a new vigour in the Church, largely the result of the vision and drive of Pius X. If we still fall short of his ideals, let us turn to his writings and those of his successors, let us implore his intercession and help to guide us “to restore all things in Christ”.

The Church is the Bride of Christ. She has been mocked and spat upon as her Spouse was. She has been weighed down with the sins of her wandering children; she has been bruised and attacked by her enemies. But we, in our love, must seek to adorn her, to ensure that she stands forth radiant in all her beauty. We must adorn her with all the beauty that human mind can devise; we must adorn her, not with cheap tinsel of a chain-store, but with the perfection of the arts. Let us clothe her with the beauty of our painting, our statuary, our architecture and our vestments; let her, through our mouths, sing her inspired love-song to her Divine Beloved; let us be the expression of that grand *Magnificat* surging up from a heart filled with the Holy Ghost; let us present her to her Beloved and to the world in all the glory of her model, Mary Mother of the Bride, that all the world may exclaim:

“Who is she that comes forth as the morning rising, bright as the sun, fair as the moon, terrible as an army set in battle array?”

## APPENDIX.

### Decrees of the Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand held in Sydney. 1937.

#### CHAPTER XIV — REGARDING CHURCH MUSIC, DECREES 552-568.

552. Music in Churches should be carried out according to the laws which are contained in the *Motu Proprio* of Pius X, “*Inter Pastoralis*” (22 Nov. 1903), “*the Code of Sacred Music*” and which are confirmed and amplified by Pope Pius XI in his Apostolic Constitution “*Divini Cultus*” (20 Dec 1928).

553. Since the office of singers in church is truly liturgical, it follows that women, having no part in such an office, may be admitted to form part of the choir rarely and only if necessary. If high voices are to be used, then boys should be chosen for these parts.

554. Care must be taken that in primary schools, boys and girls become familiar with the more common liturgical melodies such as, for example, are to be found in the “*Kyriale*”.

555. It is highly desirable that Schools of Sacred Music should be established. It is of utmost importance that the Church itself should undertake the training of its own teachers and singers in accordance with the precepts of true sacred art.

556. It is well to recall the very wise words of our Holy Father Pius XI, “It is to be deplored”, he says, “that these most wise laws in some places have not been fully observed, and therefore their intended results not obtained. We know that some have declared that these laws, though so solemnly promulgated, were not binding upon their obedience. Others obeyed them at first, but have since come gradually to give countenance to a type of music which should be altogether banned from our churches”.

557. Whoever pursues their studies for the priesthood, not only in seminaries, but also in religious houses, should be imbued from the beginning of their studies with Gregorian Chant and music.

558. Boys' choirs should be set up not only in the larger churches and cathedrals but also in smaller parish churches.

559. It is truly most necessary that the faithful should not appear strangers or silent spectators but, filled with beauty of the liturgy, they should participate in the sacred ceremonies alternating the singing with that of the priest and of the choir.

560. Let religious communities of both sexes be anxious to achieve this goal in the various educational institutes entrusted to them. To see this achieved, we appeal for societies to be set up in some dioceses who, under Episcopal authority, will strive to restore sacred music according to the law of the church.

561. The Gregorian Chant to be used in all churches is that which, restored from the ancient codices, has been promulgated by the Church in the authentic Vatican edition.

562. Since music today is principally secular in its use, greater care is now needed that more recently composed music not be approved unless it fully conforms to the rules laid down by the Holy See for sacred music.

563. The proper language of the Roman Church is Latin; therefore in solemn liturgical functions nothing may be sung but in Latin, especially the variable and common parts of the Mass and Office.

564. The liturgical text must be sung as it is printed with no corruption, omission or addition of words and with no undue repetition and with no abrupt declamation, so that the text may be understood by the people.

565. It is not permissible that the chant or the organ should unduly delay the priest in the liturgical ceremony. According to Ecclesiastical instructions, the Sanctus must be finished before the Elevation, although the Celebrant himself must be reasonable towards the singers in such matters. Following the example of the Gregorian chant, let the Gloria and Credo be fairly brief.

566. The organ is the correct musical instrument for the Church. No other instruments should be used without the permission of the Ordinary.

567. No singer should be admitted to a Church choir unless he be a good practising Catholic. It would add to the decorum of the ceremonies if the boy choristers when they sang in ceremonies wore surplice and soutane.

568. It is most desirable that the faithful in a much greater measure at evening devotions and in processions raise their voice in singing those vernacular hymns that do so much to increase the knowledge and devotion of the people.

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