



# Boston Catholic Journal



NIHIL NISI IESUM

Dedicated to Mary, Mother of God

Salus Animarum Suprema Lex Esto (Canon Law 175)

The Salvation of Souls is the Supreme Law in the Church

## **Pope Benedict's Apostolic Letter Summorum Pontificum**

### **... and a Deafening Silence in Boston**

**The Elephant in the Room that no one is Talking about ...**

**It was an historical moment in the history of the Church ...**  
*except in Boston.*

The Holy Father issued his *Motu Proprio*, permitting a never-disallowed-but-nevertheless-always-prohibited celebration of the Roman Rite Mass in Latin — dating, in its present form from 1570 following the **Council of Trent** (hence

“Tridentine”), and the Canon of which had been celebrated from antiquity by St. Ambrose, for example, in the 4th century until 1962 — and it has been greeted in Boston by a resounding silence. The news was splashed across headlines worldwide ... but somehow never made it into the “bulletins” distributed after every Mass, was not spoken of from the pulpit by the priest, and is nowhere to be found on the websites of Catholic parishes in the Archdiocese of Boston. Absolutely nothing appears noting ... much less celebrating ... this profoundly historical occasion.

## **The Church in Boston, under Cardinal Sean Patrick**

### **O’Malley, appears to be in a collective state of denial**

“This issue of the Latin Mass is not urgent for our country”, he replied when pressed to at least acknowledge the existence of the *Motu Proprio* by a Boston Globe reporter. A man for our times, to be sure. A man fluent in Spanish — and eager for us to realize this — although most Bostonians do not speak Spanish, he glibly dismisses Latin because, he apparently reasons, most Bostonians do not speak Latin and have as little interest in it as in ... well, Spanish. The model of American ecclesiastical correctitude, he is quick to capitalize on the perception of

progressive pluralism through Spanish, but clearly reluctant to invest in what he seems to perceive as a regressive form of pluralism in the way of promoting Latin as an equally optional liturgical language ... which, just by the way, was the *lingua franca* of all the Spanish, Italian, Vietnamese and Irish generations preceding this, **our most “progressive and enlightened” generation in Boston ... a generation that has thrived on degeneration, a generation that has produced more pedophiles than priests and pedophile priests than any generation preceding it.** A harsh assessment to be sure .... but a candid assessment to be equally sure.

O’Malley has a keen eye for what is correct ... which is not the same as a keen eye for what is right. Will he cease pandering to the now panicky "progressives" that people the Chancery in Boston and the rectories in the suburbs?

We are not particularly hopeful, and this is why:

Can we really anticipate more in **a Diocese that has become synonymous with scandal, criminal ecclesiastical complicity, episcopal irresponsibility, sexual abuse and cover-up, the fostering of homosexual vocations — in effect, the epicenter of everything that could have gone wrong,** and did go wrong (and with such horrendous consequences), with the Catholic Church in America following the latitude ... which it quickly became license ... after the Second

Vatican Council?

## **“The Elephant” ... and even Larger Issues**

Although *mandatory* compliance with the *Motu Proprio* is not effective until September 14 of this year, it is clear that parishes and priests *should* be announcing this historical occasion to their congregations and publishing it within their bulletins — with at least the same emphasis they place on, say, Book Clubs devoted to purely secular literature. It is, after all, splashed across secular headlines around the world — but oddly enough not a sentence, not a word of it, within our own parishes. What is amiss? Or perhaps we should ask, in light of this apparently deliberate omission: *Cui bono? Who benefits* from this secret — divulged to the entire world and suppressed within our own parishes? It is the proverbial elephant in the room of which no one is speaking. More than odd.

## **It would appear that someone stands to lose**

Some group, some clique, deeply embedded in the machinery of local parishes — the tightly-knit group of people who are the coveted “**Ministers of this and that**”, who run the parishes, the **parish councils**, Religious Education, and the

numberless committees that endow them with “power”, however petty — the laity clamoring for their fair share of power through the clericalization of the laity and the concomitant laicization of the clerics are the ones who stand to lose most.

Expect the outcry, the defiance, the protests, principally from them. **The**

**Tridentine Mass restores the priest to the altar and the laity to the pews.**

“Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist” — most commonly, *incorrectly and disobediently* called, “**Eucharistic Ministers**” — will have to relinquish their heady status as “**distributors**” of the Body of Christ, and as often, His Precious Blood. They will, presumably, be excluded from entering and walking freely about the Sanctuary, and delving into the Tabernacle at will. The **Lectors** will lose their audience and the opportunity to project their rhetorical skills. Most painfully, the “**Musicians**” will have to relinquish their cherished centrality to Jesus Christ and the Sacrifice of the Mass. The vaunted skills, the endless and dismal repertoires on **guitars, drums, cymbals, piano, flute, trumpet, oboe ...** all will — once again, presumably — have to give way to Jesus Christ, to the priest as the “*Alter Christus*” at what will no longer be a “**communal table and feast**”, but an “Altar of Sacrifice”. Above all, they lose their audience, and with the loss of their audience, their egos.

It matters not that the Latin Mass is only one among many celebrated in the vernacular where they can display their skills without restraint. The point of

contention is this: what if — by some miraculous turn of events — the people begin attending the Latin Mass in greater and greater numbers? What if they begin to defect from **Joan Baez** to St. Gregory the Great? From the guitar to the organ? From “**Folk Music**” to Gregorian Chant? Unlikely, to be sure. Or is it, “*perhaps unlikely*”? Time will surely tell. If the shift is largely demographic, it will be the young who are, by most accounts, likely to seek the beauty, majesty, and utter sanctity of the Latin Mass. The “older generation” to whom critics of the Mass in Latin point as the most likely candidates are, in fact, already in a state of stupefaction from **40 years of liturgical inanities** and will remain attached to “**Folk Masses**” which are the vestiges of the “**Days of Rage of the 60’s**” and oddities peculiar to the Catholic Church by and large. They have lost their sense of the sacred ... and it is through no fault of their own. They have been given nothing else by their pastors, priests, and “**Ministers of this and that**”. Some have, in fact, finally emerged from the euphoric “**Age of Aquarius**”, but only to find themselves immersed in “New Age” Catholicism. To a surprisingly large number, the difference between the Mass and Metempsychosis is rather blurred ... and unimportant.

## **The *Motu Proprio***

Let us consider the following points in the *Motu Proprio*, the full text of which follows this article. Five articles are of particular interest to us in the way of precisely how the Mass will be implemented — *if it is ...*

- **Art. 5. § 1** In parishes, where there is *a stable group of faithful* who adhere to the earlier liturgical tradition, the pastor should willingly accept their requests to celebrate the Mass according to the rite of the Roman Missal published in 1962, and ensure that the welfare of these faithful harmonizes with the ordinary pastoral care of the parish, under the guidance of the bishop in accordance with canon 392, avoiding discord and favoring the unity of the whole Church.
- **§ 2** Celebration in accordance with the Missal of Bl. John XXIII may take place on working days; while on

Sundays and feast days one such celebration may also be held.

- **§ 3** For faithful and priests who request it, the pastor should also allow celebrations in this extraordinary form for special circumstances such as marriages, funerals or occasional celebrations, e.g. pilgrimages.
- **Art. 7.** If a group of lay faithful, as mentioned in art.1, has not obtained satisfaction to their requests from the pastor, they should inform the diocesan bishop. The bishop is strongly requested to satisfy their wishes.  
  
If he cannot arrange for such celebration to take place, the matter should be referred to the Pontifical Commission "*Ecclesia Dei*".
- **Art. 10.** The ordinary [Bishop or Cardinal] of a particular place, if he feels it appropriate, may erect a personal parish in accordance with can. 518 for celebrations following the ancient

form of the Roman rite, or appoint a chaplain, while observing all the norms of law.

**Cardinal O'Malley** is, you can see, responsible, according to the pronouncement of the Holy Father, for having the Tridentine Mass available within his Diocese. We believe that he is awaiting the “stable groups” (which he appears to dismiss as extremely marginal in number) to begin to coalesce, to coherently form, before doing so — but what effectively constitutes a “stable group” in the way of minimum members is not specified and will likely be defined by the Ordinary or pastor in either stringent or fluid terms, whichever best accommodates their own personal inclination. We anticipate much opposition from deeply seated “progressive” (liberal) elements in the Archdiocese who, as we have already suggested, clearly view the *Motu Proprio* as a threat to, and a possible relinquishing of, their sense of “empowerment” ... While it is lamentable to find the Gospel and the Church itself understood in terms of the acquisition and exercise of power, it is naive to overlook it.

As the date grows closer, it is likely that groups wishing to celebrate the Tridentine Mass will, to the Cardinal’s surprise, increase substantially. It is, however,

important for every parishioner to let his or her Pastor know of their wish to have the Mass celebrated in Latin. It is not a responsibility we can leave for others. If we do not speak — most assuredly we will not be heard. We urge you to call your Pastor and ask what plans are being made in light of the *Motu Proprio* and to express your wish to have it implemented in your own Parish ... which, by the way, you support and sustain. It is your right as a Catholic.

Clown Masses, Charismatic Masses, Healing Masses, Children's Masses, Spanish Masses, Halloween Masses — the variety abounds even as it verges on the profane. Politely we smile at the antics of priests and musicians alike, for we possess the one attribute that has become the *sine qua non* of every "modern" Catholic; something greater than reverence or even piety itself: our *tolerance* ... of everything and anything at Mass — as long as it is not in Latin ...

“*Lex orandi, Lex credendi*” indeed: how we pray is the measure of what we believe. It is enough to give one the shivers.

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