

August 2007 Newsletter

S. CLEMENT'S CHURCH

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From the Rector

My dear People,

One of the interesting things about being Rector of S. Clement's is that I get a lot of enquiries from Roman Catholics about our Liturgy. Many of the older ones remember a time before the Second Vatican Council when their own Mass was similar in structure to ours, and when they visit, they often say what a joy it is to see the Mass done "properly" again.

These are the kind of Catholics who will no doubt make full use of the Pope's latest ruling, that the old form of the Mass, often called the Tridentine Mass, may again be celebrated in Roman Catholic parishes. I am happy for them, because they have clearly felt that the new form of the Mass lacked much that they valued.

However, what they see and like in the S. Clement's version of the Mass is not really the old Tridentine Mass at all. If it were, the only part that would be in English would be the Sermon, and that would be tacked onto the end of the Mass as an optional extra. Nothing much would be heard in Latin either, except what we already hear sung by the Choir. All the rest of the prayers would be said silently by the Celebrant at the altar.

It was because the pre-Conciliar Mass was so remote from the people that an unstoppable cry for reform went up, and sadly (as in so many other cases) the pendulum swung too far, so that wild theorists were allowed to take away all that was stately and mystical and beautiful in the Mass and replace it with irreverence to the Blessed Sacrament, tasteless vestments, sloppy ceremonial, to say nothing of balloons and guitars!

However, the worst reform of all was in the language, especially in English. The translations of

the Latin texts were rendered in the most banal, pedestrian English. And this was often done quite deliberately by those who wanted the mass to be in the language spoken by the "ordinary person." It was argued that when the Mass was first allowed in Latin, it was because it was the language of the people, an argument which has been shown to be nonsense. The Latin of the old Roman Mass is a fine literary Latin, easily understood by ordinary people, but far removed from the Latin they would speak in the market place.

The so-called linguistic experts (had any one of them ever written a poem, I wonder?) made the mistake all good teachers try to avoid of talking down to their subjects. From their ivory towers they assumed that common people couldn't be expected to understand fine, literary English, and (as ad nauseam in our own Diocesan councils) the needs of "the young people" were cited as decisive. These young people could not be expected to understand churchy English with a special vocabulary, but would be turned off by it. The lunacy of this condescending approach can be seen in the eight year olds who can reel off the hundreds of names and biographies of their Poikemon card characters, or the teenagers who speak and write what to me sounds like outer-Mongolian when discussing the latest programs for their computers or cell phones. Yet the mad liturgical scientists pontificated that words like consubstantial, co-eternal, vouchsafe, deign, not to mention thou, thee, thy and thine were too much for modern youth!

So it is no wonder that many Roman Catholics will make full use of the new permission to ask their parish priests to provide celebrations according to the old rite.

As an Anglo-Catholic, I am sorry that they will not have the opportunity to experience the old rite in the English we use in S. Clement's. This is the English of the sixteenth century Prayer Book and of the Authorized Version of the Bible (or the King James Version as it is called in America) as well, rather surprisingly, the fine translation of Monsignor Ronnie Knox of the Roman Canon. The formal beauty of this English makes it an appropriate partner with the stately and formal ceremonial of the old Mass. And, of course, apart from the private prayers of the priest, the whole ritual is heard by the congregation. As one of the liturgical experts in the congregation said to me, this is roughly what most of the Fathers of Vatican II thought they were voting for! Be that as it may, the Anglican compromise we use here is, to my mind, the most edifying form of the Mass I know, and we should be very thankful to God for it.

Now that Rome has relented a little and allowed the faithful to have the old form of the Mass when it seems right and appropriate, is it really asking too much that the Episcopal Church of the USA might now formally agree that parishes may use the 1928 Prayer Book without being branded obscurantist? Of course, given the total lack of discipline in ECUSA, hundreds of parishes happily use 1928 anyway, but it would be good to see real liberalism break out in an area where liturgical fascists have ruled for too long. In the Church of England, the 1662 Liturgy is still the norm, while all others are permitted variations. No one could complain if ECUSA now said that the new Prayer Book was the norm, but that earlier versions were just as acceptable for parish use. [Note, I refuse to use the latest fashionable name

“The Episcopal Church”; that name belongs to my Mother Church, the Scottish Episcopal Church!]

Well now, that's taken me a long way from the Pope's latest “Motu Proprio,” but I hope you can see a thread of consistency running through this letter. I am not a liturgical expert, but I can see that there is beauty and validity in many different rites (including the ancient rites of the Eastern Churches) but it saddens me to see the “dumbing-down” of so much modern liturgy, and I hope both Rome and Canterbury (or the New York outpost of Canterbury) may be in for a re-awakening to traditional forms. Rehab clinics may have to be opened for modern liturgical “experts,” of course. High walls can be built round them so they never have to hear Gregorian Chant or Prayer Book English from the nearby churches! But beware; their rage may be great. After all, as the old saying has it, the difference between a liturgist and a terrorist is that you can sometimes reason with a terrorist!

I hope you have a lovely summer break and find beautiful Masses in the churches you visit. If not, your return to S. Clement's will feel all the better.

Your Friend and Rector,

Kalendar

August 2007 – *Our Lady in Heaven.*

- 1 W S Peter in Chains. *Ss Machabees, Mm.* [Prisoners & those who work with them]
- 2 Th S Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, BCD. S *Stephen I, PM.* [Catholic Renewal in the Church]
- 3 F Invention of S. Stephen, First M. *Abs.* [S. Stephen's House, Oxford]
- 4 Sa S. Dominic, C. [The Living Rosary of Our Lady & S. Dominic]
- 5 Su **Pentecost X.** Dedication of Our Lady of the Snows. [Parish]
- 6 M TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD. *Ss Sixtus II, P Felicissimus & Agapitus, Mm* [The Bishop & Diocese of Pennsylvania]
- 7 Tu S Cajetan, C *S Donatus, BM,* Of the Octave. [The Dean & Chapter of the Diocesan Cathedral]
- 8 W S Oswald, KM. *Ss Cyriacus, Largus & Smaragdus, Mm* Of the Octave. [The Church of England]
- 9 Th S John Mary Vianney, C. *Vigil.* S Romanus, M. *Of the Octave.* [Parish Priests]
- 10 F S LAWRENCE, Dn.M. *Of the Octave. Abs.* [Pope Benedict XVI & The Roman Church]
- 11 Sa Of the Octave. *Ss Tiburtius & Susanna, VMm. Abs.* [Sr Elaine & St Anna's]
- 12 Su **Pentecost XI.** S Clare, V. *Of the Octave.* [Parish]
- 13 M Octave Day of the Transfiguration. *Ss Hippolytus & Cassian, Mm.* [The Community of the Transfiguration]
- 14 Tu Vigil. *S Eusebius, C.* Monthly Requiem. [August Chantry List]
- 15 W **Assumption BVM.** Holy Day of Obligation. [Parish]
- 16 Th S JOACHIM, Father of the BVM. *Of the Octave.* [Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham]
- 17 F S Hyacinth, C. *Of the Octave.* Octave Day of S Lawrence *Abs.* [The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament]
- 18 Sa S Helena, Empress. *Of the Octave.* S Agapitus, M [For an increase of devotion to the Cross & Passion of Our Lord]
- 19 Su **Pentecost XII.** S John Eudes, C. *Of the Octave.* [Parish]
- 20 M S Bernard, AbtCD. *Of the Octave.* [Monks & Nuns of the Cistercian Order]
- 21 Tu S Jane Frances de Chantal, W. *Of the Octave.* [Increase of vocations to the Religious Life]
- 22 W **Immaculate Heart BVM.** *Ss Timothy, Hippolytus & Symphorian, Mm.* [Increase of devotion to Our Lady]
- 23 Th S Philip Benizi, C. *Vigil.* [The Guild of All Souls]
- 24 F **S Bartholomew, Ap.** *Abs.* [Rowan, Archbishop of Canterbury]
- 25 Sa S Louis, KC. [The Church in France]
- 26 Su **Pentecost XIII.** *S Zephyrinus, PM.* [Parish]
- 27 M S Joseph Calasanza, C. [Christian schools & teachers]
- 28 Tu S Augustine, BCD. S Hermes, M. [Catholic renewal in Church life and teaching]
- 29 W Beheading of S. John the Baptist. *S Sabina, M.* [Community of S John the Baptist]
- 30 Th S Rose of Lima, V. *Ss Felix & Adauctus, Mm.* [The Church in Latin America]
- 31 F S Aidan, BC. *S Raymond Nonnatus, C.* [Christians in Moslem countries]

Music for the Month – August 2007

5th August, Pentecost X:

Ordinary: *Ludovico Viadana*, Missa ‘L’hora passa’

Organ: *Jehan Alain*, Aria

Mendelssohn, Allegro

12th August, Pentecost XI:

Ordinary: *Stephano Bernardi*, Missa ‘Il bianco e dolce’

Organ: *Marcel Dupré*, Ut queant laxis

Herbert Howells, Allegro assai

15th August, Assumption BVM::

Ordinary: *Franz Josef Haydn*, Missa ‘Sti. Johannes de Deo’ (with orchestra)

Motet: *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, Sancta Maria

Orchestra: *Mozart*, Sonata in B-Flat

Mozart, Sonata in D Major

19th August, Pentecost XII:

Ordinary: *Orlandus Lassus*, Missa ‘Je suis desheritée’

Organ: *Percy Whitlock*, Folk Song

Whitlock, Fanfare

26th August, Pentecost XIII:

Ordinary: *Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina*, Missa ‘De Beata Virgine’

Organ: *Charles-Marie Widor*, Andante sostenuto

George Frederick Handel, Sinfonia from ‘Solomon’

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Wednesday, 15th August

Procession & High Mass 7.00 p.m.

Haydn: Missa Sti. Johannes de Deo ('Little' Organ Mass)
(with orchestra)

Mozart: Sancta Maria

Preaching: The Rev'd Richard Alton,
Sometime Rector, S Mark's Church, Locust Street

Torchlight Reception in the Garden to follow

August

Month of the Most Pure Heart of Mary

THE SUN has set, but there is still colour in the sky and colour on the sea. Pale streaks of rose lie along the horizon, both on cloud and on water. The sea, where it meets the sky is a lightless pink, where it touches the land a lightless blue. It is strange, this lightless colour of the sea. Under all the riches of its summer twilight changes the sea seems lifeless. There is a deadness too in the sky now that the sun has gone. It is all like a painted memory of something once seen, a dream of something once alive. Then a wind goes over the waters, and suddenly a point of living light is kindled, as the first star shines out in the lifeless sky. The planet named long ago after the goddess of beauty is still the star of the sleeping August sea. It shines one tiny brilliant point of light in all that rose-blue lifelessness of sky and sea. Round it and beneath it clouds and water waken into darkness, so that by the time the other stars have kindled, and the moon has risen, the whole dead scene has come to life again in glowing depths of gold and blue.

* * * *

The human race flowered in Mary. Sown in the garden of man's universal dream, tended and watered by the Law of the chosen race, the Rose of Sharon bloomed to be fertilised by Godhead. Mary stands alone as the single perfect flower brought forth by that sad sowing of the human race. Rich was the soil and many were the gardeners, yet only the one blossom opened perfectly to the sun.

So once again the adventure of life could be made, the suitable medium having been found.

The medium of the natural life that first came wonderfully to an inorganic world was the sea, in which organic life arose—Aphrodite, beautiful and fertile, born of the sea-foam. The medium of the supernatural life that came wonderfully into nature was the pure will of Mary when she proclaimed herself the handmaid of the Lord. Her name signifies salt-ness, bitterness, in fact, the salt and bitter sea—there is no flowering in her name—but her perfect will is the star of the sea, makes a guiding path across its mystery—the star which yet is not a star, but a planet blazing with reflected glory.

Thus she is the rose to symbolize that she is the flower of all life, the flower of the long growth of the ages; she is also the sea to proclaim that she is the virgin source of the New Life, of the ages yet to come; she is the star of the sea to show the guidance of her perfect will, perfect only in its reflection of the glories of the will of God. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." When Mary speaks these words a new star is kindled, and the dead world comes alive in the night.

The sanctified myths of Genesis point to the failure of the purpose of life through the corruption of a woman. This need not involve the belief that the first perversion of free will came through woman as distinct from man. Eve symbolizes the feminine principle in things—the receiver, the reflector, the material, the medium. Through the wrong choice of the first human wills, the medium of creation was spoiled, and the human race became in its tendencies a part of nature rather than of supernature. Intended for the spouse of heaven, it turned instead to Adam—Edom—red earth, and by turning earthwards away

from heaven, to the knowledge of good and evil, it lost its purpose even in regard to the earth it turned to, its powers of redemption, its functions as mediator, and cursed became the ground for our sake.

Mary too stands as a symbol—the symbol of the restoration of the lost purpose of life through the sanctification of a woman. The medium, the receptacle is rehabilitated in Mary, “spiritual vessel, wondrous vessel of devotion,” and becomes the vehicle of the divine. By the Holy Ghost, Mary is made the spouse of heaven and the mother of heaven’s Lord.

The body which the Redeemer took of his Virgin Mother was not an inheritance of the flesh only, but the inheritance of a human heart and will. We all receive from our parents an heart and will made crooked by a perverted inheritance, in other words by sin. The heart and will of our Lord were clean and straight and without sin. His psychological processes were as God intended them to be—an orderly development from primitive yet honourable instincts moving towards completeness, which is perfection. “The sin is in the will,” There was no sin in the will of Mary, which was simply the will of God, so she was able to give her son what no other human parent has been able to give. The doctrine of the Virgin Birth proclaims that he took from her the feminine principle only—the vessel, the vehicle—while Godhead provided the masculine or quickening element. If he had been born according to nature he would have belonged to nature, but he was born the mediator of two worlds, the natural and the supernatural—“By the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary.” Once more the Spirit of God moves upon

the face of the waters, and the New Creation is begun.

It was Mary’s privilege to give our Lord all that he took of manhood. She gave him human nature at its best—the perfect vehicle. She gave him not only a human body but a human mind—and she did more than give. What she had already given she trained and guided. Again and again, psychologists tell us, even a good inheritance will be wasted by the mistakes of the parents during the first years of their child. The delicate child-mind may be hopelessly warped and spoiled by the mishandling of those that train it. The more we learn of the discoveries of modern psychology the more we are impressed by the terrific responsibility of the Mother of God. To her care was committed not only her infant’s tender body, but his beautiful, perfect, sensitive mind. Those early years which psychologists tell us make or mar a whole life were entirely in her keeping. It was for her to sow the seed of early impressions, to impart the first teaching. Only the glory of her own submitted will could have guided her through the ocean of her motherhood’s cares—that will which was simply the perfect reflection of the will of God.

The spirit of God moves over the face of the waters, and the waters become a miraculous source of life. Above the waters a single star is bright with the reflected glory of the sun.

—from *THE MIRROR OF THE MONTHS*, by Sheila Kaye-Smith, The Society of SS Peter & Paul, London

A Catholic Alphabet

G is for Gospel

S Paul is the first Christian writer to use the word *euangellion*, Gospel, Good News for the account of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The same word was then applied to the written accounts of the life of Jesus, of which there were several.

The Church chose four of these accounts as being accepted by all the churches as the most trustworthy Gospels of Jesus Christ: the Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, now the first four books of the New Testament.

It is important to stress that the Church (through its Bishops) chose these Gospels (and the rest of the New Testament) because we Catholics believe that Scripture cannot stand alone as our sole guide to belief, as though it dropped down complete from heaven. The good news of Jesus Christ was preached for many decades before a word of the New Testament was written. And the Church has developed doctrines and explored new insights into the Gospel over the two millennia that have passed since the New Testament was collected together. So it is the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit that is the best interpreter of the Gospel.

Scholars have studied the four canonical Gospels and their relationship to one another. Although there is certainly not 100% agreement, the most widely held view is that Mark (the shortest) is the earliest, being written about 30-40 years after the death of Jesus Christ, and that Matthew and Luke both used Mark when they wrote fuller accounts. They probably also had another early Gospel (called “Q” by scholars, from the German word “Quelle,” a Source) because they have identical passages which are not from Mark, and they do not seem to know each other’s Gospel. Then S John, in his old age, wrote his Gospel in a completely different style, quoting long discourses of Jesus, unlike the other three, which are largely made up of short stories and parables collected from several sources.

Just as one can get a better, more rounded, picture of what happened at a road accident if there are several independent witnesses, so the four Gospels (or, more accurately, the one Gospel according to four witnesses) give us a wonderfully diverse yet consistent picture of Our Lord Jesus Christ. They are indeed Good News, the best news the world has ever had.

H is for Heaven & Hell

In the Old Testament, there is little thought of an afterlife. The Jews rested their hope of immortality mostly on the concept of living on in their descendents. But certainly in the later parts of the Old Testament, ideas of the just receiving a reward and the wicked a punishment in the afterlife did find expression. Surely, it was argued, a just God would not allow good people to suffer in this life unless they could find the happiness they deserved in the next. And surely the wicked would not get away with their wickedness for ever.

But it was only with the Resurrection of Our Lord from the dead that this vague hope blossomed into life. If Christians are made part of Christ's Body in Baptism, their life is now Christ's life, which is the eternal life of God.

And it is no longer a question of justice, no longer a question of what we deserve. Now it is a question of a loving father willing that all should be saved from death and destruction.

Jesus definitely taught that although Heaven is God's will for all, nevertheless those who refuse to accept his love and realign themselves with that love by repenting their sins will suffer loss and will experience that loss as punishment.

The Church developed the wholesome doctrine of Purgatory as a way of expressing its deep conviction that most people need more cleansing from sin and growth in goodness than they possess when they die, before they can live with God in the state we call Heaven. If we are to live with God and with the life of God, there can be nothing in us that is opposed to love. All hate, selfishness, malice, etc have to be burned away.

On the other hand, the Church has never declared that anyone has gone to a punishment that will be everlasting, which is what we mean by Hell. We can legitimately hold out hope that no one will resist God's love for ever, though the appalling possibility must always remain.

I is for incense

If there is one thing that raises a Protestant's hackles (apart from calling priests *Father* and Mary our *Mother!*) it is the use of incense in church. But this should not be so, as it is very much grounded in the New Testament. In the Book of the Revelation of S John the Divine, S John's vision of heaven included the angels holding bowls of incense, symbolizing the prayers of the saints rising up to God like smoke from the thurible. All the Apostles, and Jesus himself, were used to seeing clouds of incense in the Temple at Jerusalem accompanying the offering of the animal sacrifices; so it is not surprising that the early Church would use incense at the offering of the sacrifice of the New Covenant, the Holy Eucharist which is the representation of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross.

Incense is now used by the Church to symbolize the sanctifying or the setting apart of some thing or person in the Liturgy, as for example the elements of bread and wine at the Offertory, the altar and celebrant and all the people in the Mass, the body at the Absolution of the Departed in a funeral, etc.