



More Heat Than Light

Sir, I have read with interest the numerous letters in Catena on the subject of proposed liturgical developments following the issuing of the motu proprio confirming a universal right upon all priests to say the Mass of Pius V.

I would humbly and respectfully observe that some of the letters have provided more heat than light in the matter, and the time has come to suggest that Brothers acquaint themselves more clearly of the Theology of Benedict XVI. May I recommend that Brothers interested in this matter take time to read and reflect on an excellent new book.

"Ratzinger's Faith – The theology of Pope Benedict XVI"

by Tracey Rowland,
Oxford University Press

ISBN 978-0-19-920740-4.

Time taken to read this book may inform and allay the fears of Brothers and confirm that the Holy Father is successfully defending the outcome of the Council and embracing those who should never have left the church at all. To quote from the chapter on Liturgy since Vatican II: "Rather than being ecclesial lepers, in the pontificate of Benedict XVI, Catholics who have for several decades suffered behind an iron curtain of parish tea party liturgies and banal "cuddle me Jesus" pop songs, liturgy as psychotherapy and a group bonding exercise, are more likely to be welcomed in from the cold and treated like ecclesial treasures".

Keith Allen

Ascot & Sunningdale Circle

New Website

Sir, The letter from the Brothers of Canterbury Circle (Catena Jan 2010) concerning the Society of St Pius X raises important issues for the future unity of our Church.

Recently a new website was launched which I hope will be helpful in furthering discussion and reflection on the issues raised in their letter.

The website can be found at
www.standup4vatican2.org.uk

Brothers in general may wish to publicise this initiative in their parishes and schools and other relevant societies and organisations.

Michael Thornhill

London, Northern Heights Circle

Prayer for Christian Unity

Sir, Recently, over coffee, I suggested that next year our parish's Friday evening Traditional Latin Mass would be our "Unity Service", and maybe I would invite a SSPX priest to preach and possibly, if it was a High Mass, get a Greek Orthodox to sing the Gospel in Greek before the sermon. Anglicans who were considering union could sit in choir and a Coptic friend could sing a hymn about the sanctification of the altar before the Introit and a Melkite a hymn to Our Lady during the Last Gospel! Five years ago a "Unity Service" in a Catholic church might have consisted of the Sally Army band playing, the local vicar preaching, a Methodist or Baptist doing a few prayers.

It would cause a bit of kerfuffle in the diocese, so maybe it won't happen - at least not the SSPX preacher - but I was trying to illustrate how ecumenism has changed in the pontificate of the "Pope of Christian Unity". We have moved on, full unity with the SSPX is likely to happen, unity with "Catholic" Anglicans is going to happen. Maybe unity with the major Orthodox Churches is still further off, but maybe not so far off with the minor ones that are uncomfortable being in the orbit of Moscow, Constantinople and Athens.

Unity with the Protestant "Churches" is a dead duck. We can still build friendly relations but sacramental and theological unity is impossible. What fascinated me was the Traditional Latin Mass in this scheme; far from being a source of division, it is a source of unity.

Fr Ray Blake

St Mary Magdalen
Brighton
Sussex

Confession Once a Year!

Sir, Church law lays down that people should go to confession at least once per year. One does not hear that mentioned in sermons these days.

Nor is one told that Vatican II referred to the teaching of Casti Connubii. *

Many people think they can pick and choose Church teaching. That teaching has been stated and re-stated over the centuries. It is not always easy to comply with.

A practising Catholic accepts that, like everybody else, he is a sinner. For that reason the Church has always recommended frequent confession. For that reason also there is the practice of First Saturdays.

If Catenians sin grievously against the faith, they must realise that they have to

change direction, or in other words CONVERT (altogether change direction), and repair the damage done wherever possible.

I am afraid that, after death, some may well find themselves where they do not want to be.

Tom van der Linden

Wimbledon and

Kingston upon Thames Circles

* See Gaudium et Spes.

Thanks from Australia

Sir, I wonder if you could print this letter from Tony Cunningham who looks after Aboriginal people in Australia and who has received much help, including Rosary beads, from Catenians. As a reminder, Tony is a Deacon and is a member of Bracknell Forest Circle. When he and his wife Marjorie emigrated to Australia they looked for a parish where he could do the most good. When they saw the barefooted Aboriginals he knew that was where he wanted to be and the local Bishop accepted him.

Dear brothers

Just as I was out of the Rosary booklets a parcel arrived, I am so indebted to you all for your kind generosity. I know it costs money to send these to me but believe me they are used to promote the blessed Rosary.

Today, there was a young man who had very severe mental problems and he reached out to take one out of my small bag I carry around with me, I gave him a booklet and he took it and immediately kissed it as though he knew what it was. It was for me a sign that no matter how far we think we and others may be from God He is always there for us.

Another woman this morning told me she had been away from the Church for 20 years, I gave her a Rosary and a booklet and she cried. We shall see over the next few days what the power of the Rosary will do in her life.

Once more my thanks for all you do.

God bless

Tony

Australia

Michael Blackburn

Halifax Circle

'I have made this letter longer than usual, only because I have not had the time to make it shorter.'

(Blaise Pascal)