

Society of St. Pius X in New Zealand



*Bishop Fellay delivering the Confirmation sermon at Wanganui
4th March 2007*

Newsletter — Easter 2007

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SUPERIOR GENERAL'S LETTER TO FRIENDS AND BENEFACTORS #70

Dear Faithful and Benefactors,

For a long time we have desired to send you this letter to give you some news of our dear Society. We have postponed sending it because we wanted to explain to you our position after the publication announced months ago of the *motu proprio* on permission to celebrate the Tridentine Mass. For, last October while we were gathering our spiritual bouquet for obtaining the liberation of the holy Mass, everything seemed to indicate an imminent publication of a *motu proprio* by Pope Benedict XVI concerning the question. But it seems that the staunch opposition of certain episcopates has constrained the Sovereign Pontiff to delay it “a little while.”

This “little while” is turning into a lengthy duration, so that we shall not wait any longer to share with you our take on the situation.

First, let me thank you warmly for your generous prayer. Our [General] Chapter had set the goal of offering a million rosaries by the end of October. The harvest was abundant indeed, as we were finally able to send the pope a spiritual bouquet of two and a half million rosaries. In our letter [to the pope] accompanying the bouquet, we indicated that we had wanted to show by this concrete act our will to collaborate in the rebuilding of the Church and Christendom. It is obvious to us that this terrible crisis, which has afflicted the Church since the Second Vatican Council, will not come to an end without a vast effort and a very great determination on the hierarchy's part, beginning with the Vicar of Christ. For, in the circumstances, it will take overcoming the lethargy created by a bad habit; it will mean refuting errors and even heresies and other positions totally incompatible with the doctrine of the Church, the Bride of Christ, which have become embedded in the Mystical Body. A happy result cannot be hoped for without the powerful help of Heaven. That is why we turned, and are still turned, towards Our Lady and Our Lord to obtain an improvement in the Church.

Even if till now the desired result has not come about, nevertheless, in the month of October we were witness to a scene concerning the Mass of All Time that had not been seen in the last decade. For, contrary to the usual slogans, which attribute attachment to the Latin liturgy to nostalgia or a particular sensibility, this time serious arguments were being made: freedom for priests to celebrate the Tri-

dentine Mass would create doctrinal problems, they tell us; this Mass endangers the achievements of Vatican II. How can we not rejoice over this sudden discovery?

If we closely consider the arguments advanced this time, especially by the French episcopate, but also at Rome and in Germany, one notices that the bishops in fact are afraid of this Mass. Even Rome is being extremely careful not to disavow Paul VI's reform while outlining the possibility of a return to the old Mass. The progressivists' fear is such that it is necessary [for Rome] to go to great lengths and to argue forcefully for broadening the permission for priests to celebrate the Tridentine Mass. Certainly, that also explains why we have not yet received either thanks or a response to our letter from the Sovereign Pontiff or even the Vatican.

In the present situation, we can and we must draw some conclusions for the future, even if we do not yet know the exact terms of this much talked-about *motu proprio*.

1. If we consider how Roman documents have been received during the last decade by the episcopate and the faithful, we are obliged to say that what prevails is a very great indifference that has frustrated the measures recommended in them by Rome. Whether it be the place of laymen in the liturgy or, more recently, liturgical prescriptions; whether it concern the Declaration *Dominus Jesus* or the condemnation of abortion and euthanasia, one cannot fail to notice that the documents have had no real effect. One can well wonder even now whether the *motu proprio* will not have the same fate.

2. Nonetheless, since the document extends a favor rather than imposes a restriction, and since, moreover, it is addressed to persons who are very interested in the matter, it could well be that the expectations of the faithful and priests will awaken the hierarchies in some countries from their lethargy and disturb their resistance. This is what certain bishops are thinking of when they warn of a risk of liturgical anarchy in their dioceses. Considering the multiplicity of forms the New Mass has taken in reality, one might wonder where this new-found fear of "division" can be coming from. On the contrary, the traditional liturgy has always proven to be a factor of unity, especially because of its sacred language, Latin.

3. It is quite unlikely that this *motu proprio* will be followed by a mass movement. The priests and faithful who desire the old liturgy are proportionally few in number, and the others have lost the taste for it or the interest. It will take many serious efforts to restore to its place of honour in the whole Church the venerable and sacred rite that sanctified centuries and centuries of Christendom.

4. It will be, rather, a movement that will take off slowly, but which will slowly gain strength as the riches and beauty of the lost liturgy are rediscovered. Indeed, simply by granting the Tridentine Mass the right to exist (this Mass was

never suppressed!), it will gradually impose itself since the New Mass cannot rival it.

5. At any rate, a broader permission to celebrate the old Mass is a blessing for the Church. Certainly, the publication of this document might engender a certain confusion “among us,” in the sense that it will create the impression of a rapprochement between the official Church and Tradition. When it happens, an appeal by Rome for renewed unity should be expected. For the SSPX, a greater liberalization of the holy Mass is a cause for rejoicing, a step towards the restoration of Tradition; however, the distrust born of years of self-defence and combat against “those who should be our pastors” will not be easily allayed. Indeed, the New Mass should be considered an effect much more than a cause of the crisis that has afflicted the Church for nearly forty years. In other words, our situation will be practically unchanged by the return of the old Mass so long as it is not accompanied by other absolutely essential rectifications.

6. Ecumenism, liberalism, and this spirit of the world that defiles the Bride of Christ are still the principles animating the Conciliar Church. These principles kill the spirit of God, the Christian spirit. We must understand more than ever the roots of the crisis in order to keep ourselves from rushing blindly into the new situation that would be created by the *motu proprio*. Before thinking of the measures that will need to be taken for our canonical regularization, an in-depth discussion of these questions is indispensable. We hope that Rome at last understands our demand to see any discussions preceded by what we call our preliminaries or preconditions, one of which would be met by the *motu proprio*. For thirty years we have refused to take the poison; it is for this reason that we have been rejected, and it is still the condition (more or less hidden) that Rome imposes for accepting us. Ecumenism, religious liberty, and collegiality remain the points of contention over which we will not budge.

7. What we have been saying up to this point is just speculation. The concrete circumstances, that is, the actual terms of the *motu proprio*, may require other distinctions and clarifications.

Entering Lent, let us remember that the gifts of Heaven are obtained by purifying prayer and penance, that God listens more willingly to the prayer of a pure and humble heart. Let us continue, then, our crusade of prayer, and join to it some voluntary penances to wrest from Heaven what the Churchmen find so hard to give to our souls. Even if God does not seem to listen to our supplications, let us not be discouraged. He is putting us to the test, and wants to make us earn even more merits.

On the First Sunday of Lent

February 25, 2007

+ Bernard Fellay

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To all the SSPX faithful of New Zealand

March 19, 2007
Feast of St Joseph

Dear Faithful,

Let us thank Almighty God and the Blessed Virgin Mary for the recent visit to New Zealand of our Superior General and of Fr. Nély, the Second Assistant. His Excellency was very pleased with what he saw in Auckland and especially in Wanganui, with the school, the Sisters, the constructions and so many of you, who came from all over the islands for the occasion.

The vitality of St Anthony's church and school is certainly an apologetic proof that "the finger of God is there", that Catholic Tradition, lived integrally, is indeed 'alive and kicking'. Oh! not that everything is yet perfect – it will never be on this side of Heaven – but good will aided by divine grace and charity knows how "to work all things unto good" (cf. Rom. 8, 28), how to use every circumstance of life, good and less good, as an occasion to practise virtue. And Christian life is all about the practice of virtue. When the Church wants to canonize a saint, she essentially checks if that person has practised all the virtues in a heroic degree. That constitutes the test of true sanctity: virtue.

Continue therefore the good work the Good Lord has begun among you, and please God, we might be able to apply to you what a great missionary said once of one of his Mass Centres: "You were made a pattern to all that believe in Macedonia and in Achaia. For from you was spread abroad the word of the Lord... In every place, your faith which is towards God, is gone forth, so that we need not to speak anything..." (I Thess. 1, 7-8).

Many of you have certainly heard of the extraordinary success of some fund raising in the USA last year. These 'Challenge Pledge Funds' are the result of the generosity of some generous benefactors who have become convinced in recent years of the absolute necessity of the work of

our dear founder, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, for the salvation of the Catholic priesthood, Catholic schools and Catholic families. More than one million US dollars was raised mainly to support the SSPX schools through these challenge funds. Here is a quote from one of these benefactor's letter to me as he wanted to do the same in Singapore (and it is working very well so far!): ‘Guided by the saintly Abp. Lefebvre, SSPX is restoring authentic Catholicism around the world and developing Soldiers for Christ; therefore it is a privilege, nay an obligation! for each of us to strain one's financial resources in support of this most worthy of causes!’

Seeing the excellent work done in New Zealand, the “Challenge Pledge” is now put to you, dear faithful. Another benefactor, stimulated by such apostolic example, is now determined to do the same and to help you build Catholic families, and save souls, with the help of the priory, the Sisters and the school. He wants to donate to the SSPX in New Zealand, but he wants to see the faithful doing their share as well.

His pledge: he will match – dollar for dollar
All contributions (cash, stock or bonds, etc.)
Up to the sum of NZD \$ 200,000

Deo gratias et Mariae et Sancto Joseph!! This is certainly coming at the right moment with the girls’ school just finished and the Sisters’ convent in the building process. With such combined efforts, even the bank loan may become unnecessary! Or we may envisage stage 3 of the construction earlier than planned...

The deadline for this once-in-a-lifetime offer is set for August 15, 2007, feast of the Assumption of Our Blessed Mother. I put all this in the able hands of the great St Joseph who had the delicate responsibility of providing for the Holy Family itself, and who has never let us down in our efforts to save Catholic Tradition.

All donations for this ‘Challenge Pledge Fund’ should be handed to Fr. Laisney who will keep the benefactor informed of the progress of this drive for the glory of God and the salvation of many souls!

With the assurance of my blessing for all your families and intentions, and best wishes for a fervent Passiontide, Holy Week and Easter ceremonies!

Fr. D. Couture
District Superior



LETTER OF FATHER LAISNEY

2nd April 2007
Holy Monday

My dear Brethren,

Bishop Fellay came and gave confirmations to 8 faithful in Auckland on the 1st March and 43 in Wanganui on the 4th. He also presided over the [advanced] celebration of my silver Jubilee on the third. He was accompanied by Fr. Alain Nély, the first assistant of the Society of St Pius X and our District Superior Fr Daniel Couture. Unfortunately the fourth priest promised to us last December cannot come, since he must replace a sick priest elsewhere. God willing, we may receive one brother: please pray for this. This year we have 130 students in total from Junior 1 to Form 7, which represents a sizeable increase from last year. Mr Trevor Briggs went back to his dear Australia; in his place we hired two fully qualified teachers, Mr. & Mrs. Foster who have been a great asset for the school.

Above you can see the present state of our new school building: on the left, phase one, completed, fully fitted and in use. The four classrooms house our Forms 1 to 6 girls at the ground level, and the top floor is fully occupied by our Sisters. On the right, the bottom level is up, and the level of the additional two classes and refectory-kitchen for the Sisters will be up within the coming days. We applied for a bank loan several months ago to enable phase two of the construction to go ahead. It is now approved, but I want to draw on it as little as possible. To date we have managed to have only \$100 drawn on it, but we have \$50'000 private loans and \$200'000 loaned by the district. But phase two of the construction is going to dig deep into the bank loan, thus costing us interest. We rely on your charity for the repayment: please respond generously to Fr Couture's appeal! May God reward you a hundredfold for it now and with eternal life after.

Father François Laisney

Schedule of Masses for New Zealand

Weekly

Wanganui:

- Sundays: 8:00am Low Mass — 10:00am High Mass
Daily: 7:00am Mass - 11:25am Mass (except Thu.) - 5:30pm Rosary
Thursdays: All day Adoration from after the morning 7:00am Mass to
Rosary and Benediction at 5:30pm; Mass at 6:00pm.
Fridays: 5:30pm Stations of the Cross
Saturdays: 5:30pm Perpetual Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour,
with Rosary and Benediction.
First Fridays: 6:00pm Mass, with Exposition and whole night Adoration.

Auckland:

- Chapel of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. John Fisher
103 Avondale Road; Avondale—priest: 021 188 2653 or 06-344 7634
First Fridays: 7:00pm Mass, with Holy Hour.
Saturdays: 9:30am Confessions and 10:00am Mass every week.
Sundays: 8:30am Confessions; 9:00am Mass; Adults' instruction after
Mass.

Ngaruawahia/Hamilton:

- Sundays: 2:00pm Mass. Location Change, please ring tel. 07- 855 1790

Wellington (Tawa):

- Chapel of St. Michael the Archangel; 32 Beauchamp Street; Linden;
Tawa. Tel. 04- 232 7297
Sundays: 9:30pm Mass: every Sunday except May 6th, 13th and 20th at
5:00pm.

Napier:

- Dunstall's Funeral Chapel; Cnr Edwardes & Bowers Streets; Napier.
Tel. 06- 843 9446
Mass at 5:00pm on the following Sundays: April 15th, May 13th, June 3rd
and 17th.

Christchurch:

- Rose Historic Chapel; 866 Colombo Street; Christchurch. Tel.03-359 7372
Mass at 9:30am on the following Sundays: April 8th and 29th, June 10th.

Dunedin:

- 6 City Road; Dunedin. Tel. 03- 474 1805
Mass at 4:30pm on the following Sundays: April 8th and 29th, June 10th.