

Tridentine Community News

February 11, 2007

Tridentine Travelogue: The Masses of Los Angeles, California

Perhaps more than any other metropolitan area in North America, Los Angeles and its suburbs cover a vast region. The distance from the northern suburb of Valencia to the southern extremity of San Juan Capistrano is almost 90 miles. From the western reaches of Ventura to the eastern tip of San Bernardino is about 130 miles. Commute times are exacerbated by heavy traffic at all hours, necessitating that drivers plan journeys around freeway trouble spots (see www.sigalert.com, and you will never complain about the Lodge or I-75 again). In 45 minutes, you can drive from Pontiac to Windsor, but 45 minutes will barely traverse Orange County during the daytime.

The northwestern third of this region is covered by the vast Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The southern suburbs are covered by the Diocese of Orange (County), discussed last week, while the eastern region is the Diocese of San Bernardino. In the Los Angeles Archdiocese, His Eminence, Roger Cardinal Mahony, has decided to meet the needs of the faithful devoted to the Tridentine Mass by offering multiple Masses at multiple locations.

On the first Sunday of the month, Mass is held at the chapel of the Jeanne Jugan Residence of the Little Sisters of the Poor in San Pedro, a community right on the Pacific Ocean in the southwestern part of the diocese.

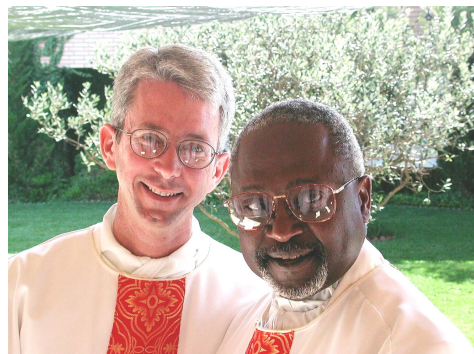
On the second Sunday, the St. Teresita Medical Center Chapel in Duarte is the place to be. This facility is operated by the Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart. Duarte is located east of downtown Los Angeles.

On the third Sunday, Mass is held at St. Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula, in the northwestern edge of the diocese.

On the fourth and fifth Sundays, Mass is held at St. John Vianney Chapel, a nicely appointed church on the grounds of the Daniel Murphy High School just west of downtown L.A.

One Mass is held every Sunday: Strangely, it is held in the westernmost outpost of Ventura, at the Mission San Buenaventura, another of Fr. Junipero Serra's historic missions.

Aside from the Ventura and Santa Paula Masses, each of the moving weekly Masses have one thing in common: the celebrant of all of them is the intrepid Fr. Robert Bishop, CMF. A legend in Southern California, Fr. Bishop has supported the Tridentine Mass since the indult Masses began. He travels extensively, leading



retreats and appearing at various Tridentine-related events throughout California and across the U.S.

In the accompanying photo, Fr. Bishop (right) is visiting with Norbertine Fr. Gabriel Stack from St. Michael's Abbey in Orange County, another outpost of support for tradition.

Optimists would say that Cardinal Mahony scatters the Masses to allow faithful from every part of this far-flung diocese to attend the Tridentine Mass at least once per month. Skeptics say that it prevents the formation of a stable community in any one place. Realists would guess that a significant part of the congregation simply moves around from site to site each week.

San Secondo d'Asti, Ontario, California

In the Diocese of San Bernardino, east of Los Angeles, the indult Mass is held at a unique church, San Secondo d'Asti. This historic church was built to serve the resident workers of what was once the world's largest contiguous vineyard, the Italian Vineyard Company. Rather egotistically named after the vineyard's founder, Secundo Guasti, the church is the centerpiece of a company town modeled after his childhood home of Asti, Italy.

Most of the vineyard's property was purchased by Los Angeles in the 1950s to become the Ontario Airport, one of metro L.A.'s five major passenger airports. Approximately one square mile of the Guasti town was preserved and turned into a sort of Greenfield Village for wine. Old commercial and residential buildings and tasting rooms have been preserved. Wine is still sold, and a few fields are still used to grow grapes. The sight is odd and anachronistic, wedged between the huge airport, hotels, and office buildings.



All Masses in San Secondo d'Asti's small sanctuary are celebrated *ad orientem*, and the parish's traditional outlook parallels its historic stucco architecture. More information and history is at: www.sansecondodasti.com

Questions? Comments? Ideas for a future column? Please e-mail info@windsorlatinmass.org with your thoughts.