

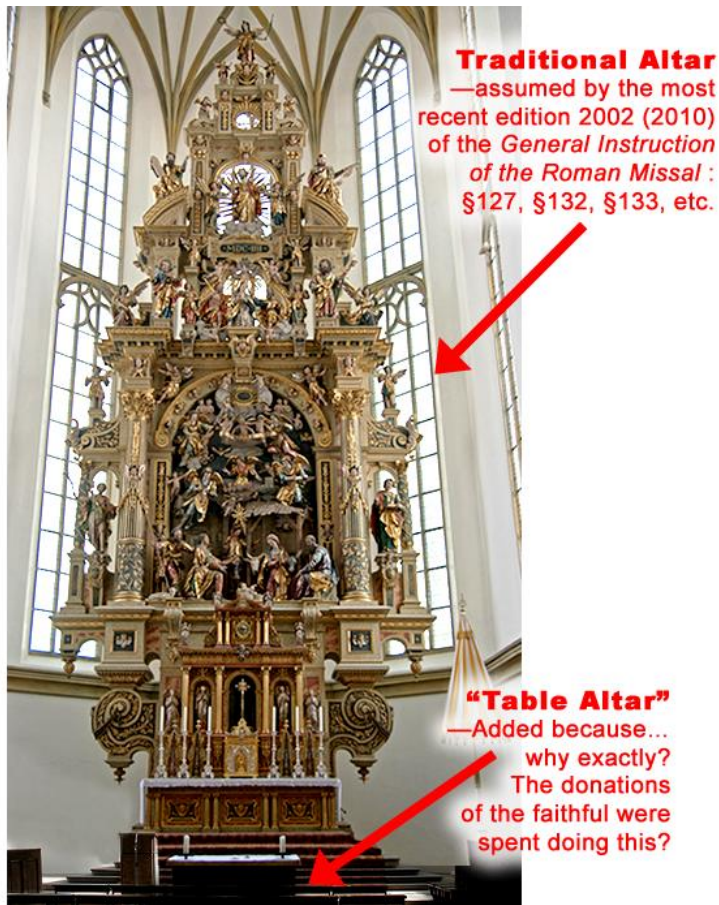
Tridentine Community News

January 22, 2017 – Third Sunday After Epiphany

Lessons From Two Altar Design Philosophies

The below photo, and variants of it with appropriate commentary, have appeared on several Catholic blogs and Facebook pages over the past few weeks. These particular comments were posted at the music resource site Corpus Christi Watershed, www.ccwatershed.org.

How ever it is expressed, the point is well-taken. Our Catholic faith is conveyed in large part by imagery and art. What does it say about our belief in the supernatural, in the fact that Holy Mass is a Sacrifice, in the very reality of the Blessed Sacrament, when we reduce the location of the most holy action known to man from such a majestic High Altar to such a reductionist Table-Altar, devoid of a centrally-located tabernacle? What does it say when we remove such High Altars entirely?



Why, when we have the very best artistic, architectural, and building technology in the history of mankind available to us, do we settle for bland Catholic church designs? How will these nondescript churches attract newcomers to the Faith? Fifty years of experience have demonstrated that the Ordinary Form most often brings with it substandard art and a minimalist ethos.

We need the Traditional Mass. We need it to inspire, encourage, and indeed necessitate the traditional church designs that will

bring open-minded, spiritually hungry people to the One True Faith.

We need *ad orientem* worship, in the Ordinary Form as well as the Extraordinary. We need it to refocus attention on the Holy Sacrifice that is the Mass. We need it to remove attention from the personalities of individual priests, which play no role in worship.

We need kneeling for Holy Communion. If we truly believe that our Lord is really present in the Blessed Sacrament, we must adopt the most respectful, reverent posture available to receive Him, and if that means we have to wait longer for the Communion process to proceed because only a priest or deacon can distribute the Sacrament, so be it. The extra few moments are an opportunity to prepare, and afterwards to give thanks.

We need the prayers of the Traditional Roman Ritual, which actually bless the objects specified, and not just the users of those objects as the Ordinary Form’s Book of Blessings does. The Traditional Ritual’s inclusions of exorcisms of salt, water, and those to be baptized recognize the need for purity with those items and people. The devil is real; we will not accomplish anything for our eternal welfare by ignoring that reality.

We need to live our Catholic faith in all areas of our lives. We need to make the Church calendar a part of our daily thinking. We need to pray for our friends and relatives, living and deceased. We need to go to Confession regularly so that we can receive Holy Communion worthily, to prepare for our own death, and to make us capable of gaining graces for ourselves and others. We need to develop a hunger for gaining indulgences for ourselves and the souls in Purgatory. How can we expect to be assisted down the road if we don’t help others at their hour of need?

It all comes back to the Mass. If we restore a sense of awe of the sacred to our worship, the rest of our Catholic faith will fall in line. The Tridentine Mass inspires commitment; it appeals to young and old, the educated and those with little background, as long as they have a sincere heart and open mind.

There is much work for us to do in this age, but we have God, the Saints, and the Angels on our side when we seek to build up the Church. Let us not just be consumers of what the Church has to offer, but to the extent that our state in life allows, let us be proponents and evangelists of the beauties and graces that our Holy Catholic Faith has to offer. Let us stand up for what is right, liturgically, morally, and yes, architecturally, in charity for the souls of our fellow man. We have been given a great gift in the Catholic Faith; sharing it is a privilege as well as an obligation.

Tridentine Masses This Coming Week

Mon. 01/23 7:00 PM: Low Mass at *St. Josaphat* (Votive Mass for Peace)

Tue. 01/24 7:00 PM: Low Mass at *Holy Name of Mary, Windsor* (St. Timothy, Bishop & Martyr)

Sat. 01/28 8:30 AM: Low Mass at *Miles Christi* (St. Peter Nolasco, Confessor)