

Tridentine Community News

August 30, 2020 – Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

San Francisco Cathedral Outdoor Masses

It may be Ordinary Form, but it's impressive nonetheless: To accommodate regulations in San Francisco limiting Mass attendance to 12 faithful per outdoor Mass, on Saturday, August 22, St. Mary's Cathedral arranged 13 simultaneous Masses to be celebrated in the plaza in front of the church.



Hmmm...couldn't something like this be done indoors? What if we had...let us call them...“Side Altars”?

The Fallout from Invalid Sacramental Formulæ

For decades Traditional Catholics have debated whether certain Sacraments they have witnessed celebrated were valid or not. This was a subject about which most ordinary Catholics never thought. This past week, not only did the discussion enter the Catholic mainstream, it also made the secular press. Fr. Matthew Hood – who by the way used to attend the Tridentine Mass at St. Josaphat Church while a seminarian – discovered his Baptism had been performed with invalid words, thus automatically invalidating every other Sacrament he had received, including Ordination. Archbishop Vigneron arranged for all of his Sacraments to be re-administered according to valid formulæ, rectifying the situation. But what if a similar thing had happened to a bishop? The priests he had ordained would have all been invalid. The domino effect would have been mind-boggling.

To be valid, Sacraments must have proper matter, form, and intention. In the case of the Eucharist, matter is unleavened bread and wine. Examples of invalid matter include leavened bread, crackers [this writer once saw Triscuit crackers used], no-gluten hosts [there must be some gluten, thus low-gluten hosts remain valid], and grape juice [low alcohol wine such as Mustum is allowed under certain circumstances].

Form is the prayer structure and physical procedure. Fr. Hood was the victim of invalid form in the words. Another example is changing the words of consecration of the Eucharist.

Intention is self-explanatory. Validity does not depend on the celebrant being free of sin, but it does require the priest to want to do what the Church intends. This is the hardest to judge and likely the rarest of the three requirements to be at fault.

Ecclésia Supplet

Holy Mother Church understands that circumstances and human nature can result in Sacraments not being performed correctly. Example: All of the hosts that are to be consecrated at a Mass are supposed to be in a ciborium placed on the corporal (small square altar linen) at the center of the altar. It is not uncommon for the priest at the offertory to move objects around and neglect to move the ciborium back on to the corporal. When the consecration occurs, the ciborium is therefore not on the corporal as it is supposed to be. Does that mean the hosts are not consecrated? No, *Ecclésia supplet* – “the church supplies” for the deficiency – rest assured, the Hosts have indeed been consecrated. Another example: The priest is distracted by an insect flying around the altar and omits a sentence or paragraph of the prayers before Holy Communion. Does this invalidate the Mass? No – it's an honest oversight, indeed the celebrant was likely trying to protect the Blessed Sacrament.

So what is not covered by *Ecclésia supplet*? A priest or deacon's repeated, habitual, non-accidental use of invalid form or matter. It is this writer's belief that the most common fault in the Sacraments nowadays is the use of invalid words of absolution in Confession. While not authoritative, an anecdote from a few years ago might be useful: this writer asked a priest who is a canon lawyer what to do if one receives an invalid absolution. Certainly one could ask the priest to use the correct words, and one could even have a card handy to present to the priest with those words. However the canon lawyer stated that if the penitent had approached the Sacrament with all sincerity, he would indeed be absolved, but the penalty due for his sin would be transferred to the priest who performed the invalid absolution. That is indeed a logical example of *Ecclésia supplet* – the Church does not put undue burden on the penitent to be an expert in liturgical or canon law matters. Nevertheless, once aware of a priest who habitually employs invalid form, one should make every effort to seek out a different priest for that Sacrament in the future.

Communion Antiphon Anomaly in the Ordinary Form

A longstanding oddity in the Novus Ordo Mass has been that there are *different texts* to be used for the Communion Antiphon if the antiphon is read by the priest (text in the Altar Missal) versus when it is sung (original Latin text in the *Graduale Romanum*). An interesting article explaining the history of this discrepancy was published by Corpus Christi Watershed last week:

<https://www.ccwatershed.org/2020/08/19/explained-missal-vs-gradual-text-ordinary-form/>

Tridentine Masses This Coming Week

Tue. 09/01 7:00 PM: Low Requiem Mass at *Holy Name of Mary, Windsor* (Daily Mass for the Dead)

Fri. 09/04 7:00 PM: High Mass at *Old St. Mary's* (Votive Mass in Time of Pestilence) – Celebrant: Fr. David Pellican

Sat. 09/05 8:00 AM: Low Mass at *Miles Christi* (St. Lawrence Justinian, Bishop & Confessor)