

# Tridentine Community News

November 6, 2022 – Twenty-second Sunday After Pentecost

## *A Reflection on Sacramental Validity vs. Reverence*

Almost from its very beginning, the Novus Ordo Mass has suffered from abuses in the way it is celebrated in certain places. This has understandably caused sorrow and frustration in many of the faithful, to the point where some adopted unfortunate extreme views, such as questioning whether the new rite of Mass was valid. Looking at the situation from three viewpoints will demonstrate that in most cases, that is not a concern; properly celebrated, the Novus Ordo Mass and sacraments are most definitely valid.

Longtime readers of this column may remember an analogy that has been used several times: Indulgences are heaven's frequent flyer miles. Both are earned by performing relatively simple tasks, and both can result in gaining upgrades, the ultimate upgrade in the case of indulgences: heaven. Mileage and loyalty programs can serve as an analogy for the current topic at hand, as well.

As a hobby, pursuing points programs can be a lot of fun. With relatively little effort, you can find yourself in a large suite in a beautiful hotel, for example a Park Hyatt or a St. Regis, at zero cost. Your points pay for this treatment. If you do this repeatedly, you can become accustomed to getting top-flight accommodations in big cities where those sorts of hotel properties are available.

Of course, not every trip takes you to New York, Los Angeles, or London. Far more trips take you to smaller towns where the only options might be a Holiday Inn Express or a La Quinta. As preferable as that Waldorf Astoria might be, it's just not available where you are. So is that Hampton Inn not a valid hotel? Of course not, it's fine, just not what you would choose if you had other options. Likewise, a properly celebrated Novus Ordo Mass is perfectly acceptable and valid if your preferred Tridentine Mass is not available at a suitable time and location where you happen to be.

This is not the same thing as having to stay in a disgusting, dirty, unmaintained, no-name motel. One might choose to sleep in one's car rather than endure such a dump. If the absolute only choice for a Sunday Mass where you're at is an irreverent, improvised Ordinary Form, the Church would excuse you for not fulfilling your Sunday obligation in such a place. Fortunately, being devoid of acceptable alternatives is a rare occurrence.

One can also make a food analogy: You might prefer filet mignon to hamburger meat, but would you ever maintain that a fast food hamburger is not beef? Of course it is, and sometimes that's your best or only option for a meal.

On a more serious note, this writer has had the privilege of training several diocesan exorcists how to celebrate the Traditional Mass. Those priests have fascinating stories to tell about their exorcism experiences, stories that are both frightening and yet paradoxically faith-affirming. It's not often that humans have direct contact with the spiritual realm the way exorcists do.

A recurring theme exorcists mention is that demons are sticklers for legalities. They know who is authorized to do what. For example, one exorcist was mentoring a young exorcist in another diocese. A demon speaking through a possessed person taunted the mentor, "You're not the exorcist in this diocese. I don't have to pay attention to you here." Such a statement proves that demons 1) recognize the validity of Novus Ordo ordinations in the first place, and 2) know who the bishop's designated exorcist(s) are and realize they must obey them.

One exorcist mentioned that demons, or more specifically possessed persons, can remain in attendance at a Novus Ordo Mass almost up until the Consecration, whereas they tend to get up and leave a Traditional Mass earlier on, especially a High Mass. Demons cannot tolerate the overlapping levels of praise of God when choir chants, for example, the Introit while the celebrant reads it.

Demons, being angels, have superior intellect to humans, even if they choose to exercise it for the wrong ends. If they recognize Novus Ordo sacraments as valid, and if they respect the hierarchical structure of bishops and priests in the Church, then the Church's governance and structure is in force and real. Arguments in favor of sedevacantism or against the Novus Ordo fall apart under such evidence.

That being said, a desire for reverent, solemn worship, with the objective of pleasing God as best we can, is a separate subject, and certainly a goal for which we should all strive.

## *Diocese of Maasin, Philippines Mandates Ad Orientem*



A reader sent us a photo of Bishop Precioso Cantillas of the Diocese of Maasin in the Philippines celebrating All Souls Day Mass in the Novus Ordo. His diocese is apparently the only one in the world to mandate *ad orientem* celebration of all Masses. The closest we have in North America is arguably the Diocese of Gallup, New Mexico, where Bishop James Wall has urged but not mandated *ad orientem* celebration among his priests. See Bishop Wall's letter on the subject here:

<https://dioceseofgallup.org/celebrating-the-mass-ad-orientem/>