

CAN WE SERVE TWO MASTERS??

It is a mistake to believe that episcopal permissions to attend the traditional Roman Catholic Tridentine Mass (improperly called the "Latin Mass") are given in the best interests of the restoration of that form of Roman Catholic worship. Has it been forgotten that a very few years back, the highest authority in the Commission to promote and protect the Tridentine Mass – ECCLESIA DEI – declared that the Tridentine Mass has no right to exist? The insistent rumblings of the people have stretched the patience of some American bishops into granting grudging permissions. Some willing priests have been assigned to the duty to say the "Latin Mass" as an accommodation to the people, the people little knowing what exactly is being done at the altar. But since the ceremony is in Latin, the people are satisfied and quiet. The people are submissive to the strange hours and the strange places connected with the celebration of the mass. Today, permission for the celebration of the Tridentine Mass can be obtained ONLY from the local bishops – it is not obtained – as most believe from the Pope or some other high authority. The use of the term "Latin Mass" is very deceptive and it does not describe the attitude of return to the ageless Mass.

It seems that some present day ecclesiastical notables are now suggesting that the two "rites" work more closely together in order that the two can work and live compatibly with each other. This is nonsense, and surprising that such an idea is promoted by any reputable and well intentioned theologian.

Those who speak of war and peace amongst the rites are looking more at the political dimensions of the problem rather than the faith dimension of the problem. It cannot but be clear that the discipline of the one observance is not the discipline of the other; that the Catholic life of the one is not the Catholic life of the other; that the worship service of the one is not the worship service of the other; that the Faith of the one is not the Faith of the other; that the belief of the one is not the belief of the other. Each is so different from the other, that the two cannot reasonably be brought together with any degree of compatibility of doctrine. The one simply cannot cohabit with the other, even if Latin is used in both ceremonials. Doctrine – belief – stands between them like a wall. One cannot be East and West at the same time. Traditional and non-traditional cannot be presented and promoted – offered – from out of the same headquarters by the same superior or pastor or priest or teacher. Scheduling them at different hours on a Sunday morning does not solve the problem. To the uninstructed and the uninformed the use of the Latin language demonstrates a workable compatibility. But such ones fail to realize that language has nothing to do with belief.

For the two so-called "rites" to come to a compatible and common and acceptable religious belief would be about as easy to achieve as it