

ROCHE AND OTHERS

The clique of Saint Anselm conducts the war against ancient Mass

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Any person, even those less intellectually endowed, is capable of understanding that the crusade waged against the ancient rite, from Traditionis Custodes to the recent Rescriptum, is nothing more than a desire for revenge, a blind fury full of animosity. It is

a matter of simple observation: the Catholic Church finds itself almost bloodless, with bishops hailing homosexuality, 'pampered' priests abusing nuns and being protected by the highest echelons, convents forcibly closed, churches and seminaries increasingly empty, Catholics fleeing the Church.

Excluding Poland, in Western countries at least weekly attendance at Mass is well below 50%: shamefully, Italy home to the Vatican is at 34%, but still makes a good impression compared to Spain (27%), Austria (17%), Germany (14%), and the two tailenders, France and the Netherlands, where not even one in ten Catholics goes to Sunday Mass.

In this scenario, the Dicastery of Divine Worship thinks it's a good idea to waste time and resources on lambasting those who do go to Mass, but to a rite that is not consonant to them. In any company, the Prefect of the aforementioned Dicastery, Msgr Arthur Roche, would have been fired on the spot: not only incapable of revitalising the market, but also incompetent enough to sterilise the few healthy branches that exist.

On closer inspection, Roche's only problem is that he is the wrong man in the wrong place, which is not a small detail. His total lack of liturgical preparation is no mystery; but at the time, the only vacant place he could go to was Divine Worship, vacated by Cardinal Sarah; and so Roche has had to settle in there, like a boatman presiding over a meeting of mountain guides.

The result is that others are in control of Divine Worship; and these others all have one thing in common: they come from the Pontifical Athenaeum of Saint Anselm. Starting with the Secretary, Monsignor Vittorio Viola, who has taught Liturgy there since 2000 and still holds the professorship as Lecturer in Sacramental Liturgy. Then the two Undersecretaries, Msgr Aurelio Garcia Macias and Msgr Krzysztof Marcjanowicz, both with doctorates in Liturgy from Saint Anselm itself. A decidedly unusual situation in a Dicastery of the Roman Curia, where the various theological, philosophical, and liturgical schools should be represented, and which instead is heavily guarded at the top by the gang of Saint Anselm.

But the invasion of Saint Anselm is even greater. To replace Msgr Guido Marini, ordained bishop and appointed to lead the diocese of Tortona, we find the Brianza-born Msgr Diego Giovanni Ravelli, who also holds a licence and a doctorate from Saint Anselm. And the Liturgical Office of the Vicariate of Rome could not be missing. Holding the post of Director since 2011, and in charge of the diocese's liturgical celebrations (from 2019), is Carmelite Fr Giuseppe Midili, a great friend of Fr Marko Ivan Rupnik, also

a licentiate and doctorate holder at the Athenaeum, where he is Ordinary Professor of Liturgical Pastoral.

Evidently for these gentlemen from Saint Anselm, the liturgy must have been something very theoretical, since they are unable to face the reality that afflicts our churches; and also very ideological, given the blinded wrath against young people, children, families, who in their minds all end up under the label of "opponents of the Council", just because they love the ancient Rite.

Christophe Dickès, French historian and journalist, brother of the poet Damien, attempts to bring these desk-bound liturgists back to reality with a splendid article that appeared in no less than the columns of [Le Figaro](#). Dickès points out that the problem with this pontificate seems to be the small traditionalist world, which in France, where it is particularly widespread, represents about 4% of Catholics; hence, "a minority within a minority". A minority evidently considered subversive, since dangerously those who belong to it teach "the catechism to their children, making them learn the Ten Commandments and the prayers that Catholics must know", and with considerable sacrifices try to preserve their children from the "cancel culture", sending them to private or parental schools, which they have to self-finance.

These families love attending the ancient Mass. All snobs? All anti-Conciliar? All Lefebvrians? In truth, after their priestly ordinations in 1988, these people "wanted to show their fidelity to the Holy See by manifesting their spiritual needs, as permitted by Canon Law (Can. 212§ 2)". Fidelity that today is repaid with resounding slaps.

But what do they find in the Mass in the ancient rite? There, Dickès acknowledges, there is "a spirituality and a sacredness" that is less evident in the rite approved by Paul VI. Moreover, it is decidedly "a less clerical rite", a rite in which all "personalism is banished: the faithful pray in a face-to-face with God", without the priest claiming to be their interface.

It is indeed curious that precisely during the pontificate that has made synodality its fixation - under the motto "Widen the space of your tent!" - and anti-clericalism its uniform, it is precisely they who are being hit. And without mercy. No one thought of receiving a delegation from them, to listen to their requests, to meet their needs, as it is the precise duty of pastors to do. Nothing. Only two representatives of the St Peter Fraternity were received. "As for the laity, the priests' mothers, aged 50 to 65, who walked 1500 kilometres from Paris to Rome to lay a petition at the feet of the Vicar of Christ, were received for barely three minutes. 1500 kilometres for a handful of

seconds”.

A behaviour that reveals the false rhetoric that has now become the rule in Rome: it is said that everyone must find a place in the Church, but not the 'Tridentines'; there is talk of valuing the laity, but not those who attend the traditional Mass; there is a scramble to show how much families and children are appreciated and loved, but only those who go to the 'new Mass' or perhaps do not even set foot in church. No welcome, no mercy, no listening to those who are called "*indietristas*" ('backward-looking') every week; towards those at the Latin Mass there seems to be only one command: "re-educate them. By hook or by crook. Synodality seems to be in fashion, but 'they' have but one right: that of suffering in silence", 'Dickès concludes.

There seems to be a peculiar version of the parable of the prodigal son in Rome, where the father chases away the eldest son because he is tired of having him stay with him all the time.