

CONVICTIONS



Number 26 - September - October 2010

40 years of the
Society of St. Pius X

Dear Readers,

This year the Society of Saint Pius X is celebrating its 40th anniversary. Bishop François Charrière, bishop of the diocese of Freiburg in Switzerland, signs the official document for the erection of the Society on November 1st, 1970. Shortly after, the new order's small seminary in Freiburg moves to Ecône, receiving many young men knocking at the door. The growing congregation experiences its first serious setback in 1972 when the French bishops brand Ecône as a "wildcat seminary". On November 21st, Archbishop Lefebvre states publicly that the Society holds firmly, with all its heart and mind, to Catholic Rome, but refuses to follow the Rome of Neo-Modernist and Neo-Protestant tendencies, provoking worldwide indignation.



The Archbishop is then summoned before the cardinals Garone, Tabera, and Wright in February and May 1975. Shortly thereafter, Bishop Mamie, successor of Bishop Charrière, suppresses the Society illegitimately. The Archbishop takes little account of these unlawful machinations and continues with the formation and ordination of priests. The following year Paul VI denounces him as "disobedient to the new liturgy." Cardinal Benelli asks the Archbishop to celebrate the New Mass at least once, promising in the name of the pope that this gesture will suffice to solve all the Society's problems. The Archbishop refuses and on June 29th, he publicly ordains 12 priests. On July 23rd, the Archbishop is struck with a 'suspensio a divinis,' forbidding him to ordain priests and even celebrate Mass – the "New Mass," that is, as Archbishop Lefebvre observes with a smile. Such illegitimate means, however, do not deter this "bishop of iron" and his work for Tradition.

In 1988, after a constant bout of negotiations, Archbishop Lefebvre signs, wanting to show Rome his good faith, signs an obscure protocol on the 5th of May. The following day, the Archbishop realizes that there are no assurances that Rome's end of the bargain will be promptly or properly fulfilled. He withdraws his signature and decides to proceed with the consecrations of auxiliary bishops for the Society. Called "Operation Survival," these episcopal consecrations were absolutely justified considering the unjust persecution of faithful Catholics and the betrayal of the Faith by Roman authorities following the Second Vatican Council.

The day after the consecrations, the Archbishop and the four bishops will supposedly be 'excommunicated.' A media campaign stigmatizes the Society as 'schismatic.' The young bishops promise to continue the work of the Archbishop after his death (which occurs in 1991). Today they continue to ordain priests, administer the Sacrament of Confirmation all over the world, and encourage the faithful in this noble struggle.

In 2000, as a sign of their devotion to Rome and the pope, the four Society bishops travel as pilgrims to Rome to commemorate the Holy Year. Together with more than 300 priests, hundreds of religious, and more than 5000 faithful – the biggest pilgrimage yet recorded for the a Holy Year - they give evidence of the vitality of Tradition. Tradition cannot be overlooked any longer! A first Rosary Crusade, proclaimed in 2007, inspire the pope to write his stunning *Motu Proprio* 'Summorum Pontificum' which emphasizes that the 'Old Mass' was never abrogated and that every priest has the right to celebrate it and every faithful has the right to attend it. The second Rosary Crusade (2009) encourages the pope to remove the stigma of the excommunication imposed in 1988. Since then Tradition is given a voice in the doctrinal discussion between the Society and Rome.

From the beginning, the Society experienced every possible affliction. Be it the persecution from the modernist, liberal forces in the Church or the accusation of betrayal hurled by the confused sedevacantists, be it internal dissensions, quarrels, and even defections on the part of her members: at every moment of her existence the Society has suffered acutely from human fragility and from sin. Yet she has long endured this violent combat and continues to grow worldwide thanks to God's loving providence and his merciful grace. The Society of St. Pius X defends what seems to be outdated and forgotten. It keeps careful watch over what seems already lost. God has called this priestly organization, despite its abundant human frailty, to be a witness of the Faith, a veritable voice crying out in the desert, "Make straight the way of the Lord!" (John 1:23)

Let us, dear faithful, consider this advice of St. Paul, advice the Society strives to put into practice daily: "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, according to their own desires, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: And will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables. But be thou vigilant, labor in all things, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill thy ministry. Be sober." (2 Tim. 4:2)

Future difficulties are inevitable! May God keep us ever faithful to the heritage of the Church and to the example of our venerated founder, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre. Let us beg almighty God to fill us with his grace so that we may be aware of the great responsibilities confided to us in these turbulent days, daring in hope and ready to suffer in imitation of our Lord. Thus we will be found worthy to cooperate in the restoration of our Holy Mother the Church.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Father Jürgen Wegner

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Mrs. Livia Dora

The Society of Saint Pius X from 1970 to 2010

40 years of the Society

Official presentation of the Society's history, published on the website of
the General House of Menzingen
www.fsspx.org

The foundation

In the years of the Council, Archbishop Lefebvre, while Superior General of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost, receives some anguished appeals from distraught seminarians. Indeed, the degradation of the priestly formation is already felt a little everywhere. He guides them toward the seminaries or universities which were

considered as more "traditional". Unfortunately, the conciliar revolution seems to have to sweep everything away. People everywhere are abandoning the priesthood, neglecting pious exercises, prayer, recitation of the rosary, and devotion to the Blessed Virgin and to the Saints. Catholic education is de-

stroyed; new methods made a clean sweep of the past, from solid philosophy to the permanent magisterium of the Church, the Divine Liturgy giving place to the most diverse and the least sacred experiences. Acknowledging that

the other proposed institutions are of no avail – such as the French Seminary of Rome or the papal University of the Lateran – Archbishop Lefebvre soon finds himself free from all duties, having been forced to resign as head of the Holy Ghost Fathers in 1968. A retired bishop at 68 years of age, he then, moved by Providence, decided to open by himself a house of formation in Fribourg, Switzerland. October, 1969 arrives and the house on the road "Vignattaz" finds the first seminarians knocking at its door, asking for a truly Catholic spiritual foundation. At the same time, they take classes at the local Catholic University.

1969-1970: It is a crucial year for the Church, one in which the new mass is imposed. At Fribourg, the beginnings are difficult: Archbishop Lefebvre falls ill and several seminarians depart. At the same time, in the Valais, a group of fervent Catholics purchase property in Ecône, sold to them by the canons of the Great Saint Bernard. They hoped to save the buildings from profane usage, desiring to preserve the property as a religious house. The new buyers soon donate the entire property to Archbishop Lefebvre who in turn decides, during the early years, to institute there a year of preparation or of spirituality, a preparation before the studies of philosophy and theology. Thus in the autumn of 1970, 11 new seminarians enter at Ecône while their



1969 : A group of fervent Catholics bought back the house and land of the Great St. Bernard Canons at Ecône.

more advanced classmates head off to Fribourg to continue their formation.

Above all, on November 17, 1970, Archbishop Lefebvre proudly announces to his seminarians the official establishment of the priestly Society of Saint Pius X in the diocese of Fribourg by His Excellency Bishop Francis Charrière. The formal acknowledgement was signed on the 1st of November, 1970, the feast of All Saints. The Catholic Church thus recognized the foundation of the priestly Society of Saint Pius X. On February 18, 1971, the cardinal prefect of the Congregation of the Clergy sends a letter of praise for the work accomplished. Fortified with the recognition and the blessing of the Church, the Society of Saint Pius X seems in store for a promising and serene future.

The expansion and the first difficulties

In June of 1971, the Archbishop blesses the cornerstone of a new residence at Ecône, one needed to house the numerous seminarians who outgrew the existing structures. The early apostolate is still very limited: in 1972, the Society has a presence only in Great Britain and California, also supplying a chaplain to a small girls' school in France. In December of 1972, a French newspaper campaign is launched. Certain bishops are annoyed to see young men departing for what they consider a "wildcat seminary".

In 1973, a new house opens in Armada, Michigan, to accommodate a North American seminary. Then in 1974, the Society acquires a former Novitiate of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart in Albano-Laziale, near Rome.

In October of 1974, 40 new candidates present themselves at the door of the seminary. At Ecône, the aspirants to the priesthood number 130, without counting the 5 postulant brothers. But suddenly a storm breaks. On November 11, 1974, two apostolic Visitors arrive at Ecône. These two prelates, Msgr. Descamps and his secretary, Msgr. Onclin, put forward remarks that shock the seminarians: "the ordination of married people was normal," noted the visitors, adding that they "did not accept an unchanging Truth," and finally expressing "doubts about the traditional understanding of Our Lord's Resurrection." Scandalized and not wishing to collaborate with that which Pope Paul VI had already

called "the auto-demolition of the Church," Archbishop Lefebvre publishes his formal declaration of November 21, 1974.

Declaration of November 21st, 1974

We hold firmly with all our heart and with all our mind to Catholic Rome, Guardian of the Catholic Faith and of the traditions necessary to the maintenance of this faith, to the eternal Rome, mistress of wisdom and truth. We refuse on the other hand, and have always refused, to follow the Rome of Neo-Modernist and Neo-Protestant tendencies, which became clearly manifest during the Second Vatican Council, and after the Council, in all the reforms which issued from it.

In effect, all these reforms have contributed and continue to contribute to the destruction of the Church, to the ruin of the priesthood, to the abolition of the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments, to the disappearance of the religious life, and to a naturalistic and Teilhardian education in the universities, in the seminaries, in catechetics... No authority, not even the highest in the hierarchy, can compel us to abandon or to diminish our Catholic Faith, so clearly expressed and professed by the Church's Magisterium for nineteen centuries.

...

It is impossible to profoundly modify the Lex Orandi without modifying the Lex Credendi. To the New Mass there corresponds the new catechism, the new priesthood, the new seminaries, the new universities, the "Charismatic" Church, Pentecostalism: all of them opposed to orthodoxy and the never-changing Magisterium. This reformation, deriving as it does from Liberalism and Modernism, is entirely corrupted; it derives from heresy and results in heresy, even if all its acts are not formally heretical.

It is therefore impossible for any conscientious and faithful Catholic to espouse this reformation and to submit to it in any way whatsoever. The only attitude of fidelity to the Church and to Catholic doctrine appropriate for our salvation is a categorical refusal to accept this reformation. That is why, without any rebellion, bitterness, or resentment, we pursue our work of priestly formation under the guidance of the never-changing Magisterium, convinced as we are that we cannot possibly render a greater service to the Holy Catholic Church, to the Sovereign Pontiff, and to posterity.

That is why we hold firmly to everything that has been consistently taught and practiced by the Church concerning faith, morals, divine worship, catechetics, priestly formation, and the institution of the Church, until such time as the true light of tradition dissipates the gloom which obscures the sky of the eternal Rome.

Doing this, with the grace of God, the help of the Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, and St. Pius X, we are certain that we are being faithful to the Catholic and Roman Church, to all of Peter's successors, and of being the Fideles Dispensatores Mysteriorum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi In Spiritu Sancto.

+ Marcel Lefebvre

The condemnations

On February 13, 1975, Archbishop Lefebvre is invited "to talk" with the members of a commission of three cardinals (Their Eminences Garone, Wright and Tabera). Following this meeting, the Archbishop is then informed that they have instructions to conduct a proceeding against him, without him having had knowledge of the competence of any "court". He "appeared" a second time on the 3rd of March. On May 6, 1975, without a trial, the Society is illegally suppressed by Bishop Mamie, successor to Bishop Charrière in the See of Fribourg, the sentence being "immediately effective." Archbishop Lefebvre must immediately abandon 104 seminarians, 13 professors and the staff, sending them away without further ado, and that just two months before the end of the school year! All this occurred in 1975, a year

proclaimed by the Holy Father to be a "year of the reconciliation."

Having appealed this injustice, Archbishop Lefebvre takes all the seminarians on a pilgrimage to Rome for the Holy Year. By 1975 the Society numbers 15 priests and one bishop.

During 1976, facing the calm resistance of the "Iron Bishop", more drastic measures are taken: (illegal) blockage of the appeal presented by Archbishop Lefebvre to the apostolic Signature by intervention of the Secretary of State, Cardinal Villot followed by a letter of the Secretary of State to the Episcopal conferences of the entire world by which the Ordinances are invited to not grant the incardination in their diocese to the applicants from the Society of Saint Pius X, and finally the

Sermon at the Priestly Ordinations, Hot Summer, July 29th 1976 (extracts)

My dear friends, dear confreres, dear brethren...

Ah, I know well that the difficulties are numerous in this undertaking which we have been told is foolhardy. They say that we are in a deadlock. Why? Because from Rome have come to us, especially in the last three months, since March 19th in particular, the Feast of Saint Joseph, demands, supplications, orders, and threats to inform us that we must cease our activity, to inform us that we must not perform these ordinations to the priesthood...

But if in all objectivity we seek the true motive animating those who ask us not to perform these ordinations, if we look for the hidden motive, it is because we are ordaining these priests that they may say the Mass of all time. It is because they know that these priests will be faithful to the Mass of the Church, to the Mass of Tradition, to the Mass of all time, that they urge us not to ordain them. In proof of this, consider that six times in the last three weeks-six times-we have been asked to re-establish normal relations with Rome and to give as proof the acceptance of the new rite; and I have been asked to celebrate it myself. They have gone so far as to send me someone who offered to concelebrate with me in the new rite so as to manifest that I accepted voluntarily this new liturgy, saying that in this way all would be straightened out between us and Rome. They put a new Missal into my hands, saying "Here is the Mass that you must celebrate and that you shall celebrate henceforth in all your houses." They told me as well that if on this date, today, this 29th of June, before your entire assembly, we celebrated a Mass according to the new rite, all would be straightened out henceforth between ourselves and Rome. Thus it is clear, it is evidence that it is on the problem of the Mass that the whole drama between Ecône and Rome depends...

I said as much to those who came from Rome. I said so: Christians are torn apart in their families, in their homes, among their children; they are torn apart in their hearts by this division in the Church, by this new religion now being taught and practised. Priests are dying prematurely, torn apart in their hearts and in their souls at the thought that they no longer know what to do: either to submit to obedience and lose, in a way, the faith of their childhood and of their youth, and renounce the promises which they made at the time of their ordination in taking the anti-Modernist oath; or to have the impression of separating themselves from him who is our father, the Pope, from him who is the representative of Saint Peter. What agony for these priests! ...

Tomorrow perhaps, in the newspapers, will appear our condemnation. It is quite possible, because of these ordinations today. I myself shall probably be struck by suspension. These young priests will be struck by an irregularity which in theory should prevent them from saying Holy Mass. It is possible. Well, I appeal to Saint Pius V-Saint Pius V, who in his Bull said that, in perpetuity, no priest could incur a censure, whatever it might be, in perpetuity, for saying this Mass. And consequently, this censure, this excommunication, if there was one, these censures, if there are any, are absolutely invalid, contrary to that which Saint Pius V established in perpetuity in his Bull: that never in any age could one inflict a censure on a priest who says this Holy Mass...

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

threat of suspension if Archbishop Lefebvre proceeds with the priestly ordinations at the end of the year. Henceforth, the knot around which “the drama of Ecône” unfolds concerns the explicit acceptance of all of the Second Vatican Council, of all the decisions and reforms which issue from it, beginning with the New Mass. If only Archbishop Lefebvre would concelebrate the new rite just once, then (they promised) all difficulties would be smoothed away.

The summer of 1976 comes, the famous “hot summer.” After the ordination of twelve priests on June 29th, Archbishop Lefebvre is struck with a suspension a divinis, a penalty which, he humorously remarks, forbids him to say the Mass ... that is, the New Mass! On August 29, 1976, he goes to Lille to celebrate Mass before thousands of the faithful. He delivers there a resounding sermon which immediately makes the headlines.

Another trial falls upon Archbishop Lefebvre and his still fragile work when, at the start of the new academic year in 1976, some of his professors fail to appear. The Archbishop in turn decides to direct himself the seminary of Ecône, with a new staff of professors. By 1977, all of the professors are members of the Society.

The Society continues

In fall, 1975, a seminary was opened at Weissbad, in the German-speaking district of Appenzell, directed by Fr. Franz Schmidberger. In October of 1977, the Society numbers 40 priests, 150 seminarians, 20 houses and three seminaries (Ecône and Weissbad in Switzerland, and Armada in the United States).

In 1978, the seminary of Weissbad is moved to Zaitzkofen, in Bavaria, Germany. The following year another seminary is opened in Buenos Aires with 12 first-year seminarians. The seminary of Armada then moves to Ridgefield, some 100 miles from New York. Archbishop Lefebvre then stops directing the seminary of Ecône and takes residence in Rickenbach (canton of Soleure) where he establishes his General House. Rev. Fr. Tissier de Mallerai replaces him as rector of the seminary.

The suspension of 1976 had never ended the Society’s contact with Rome, but there was little hope of an agreement before the election of John



In 1976 : At Lille, the Mass of the « Challenge to Pope Paul VI ».

Paul II, the young Polish pope. The Archbishop, in fact, during an interview in November, 1979, proposes a solution that seems to satisfy the new pope. He speaks of “the Vatican II Council received in the light of Tradition.” But Cardinal Seper, who is present, intervenes by denouncing the attitude of the prelate from Ecône, one who “makes of the mass a flag,” he says in a contentious tone. The interview ends there abruptly. In 1980, the Society numbers 82 priests, and still one bishop.

A new Superior General

On June 29, 1983, at the sermon given during the ordinations at Ecône, Archbishop Lefebvre announces that Fr. Schmidberger, whom he had named the preceding year as his vicar general, will take his place beginning that very day as Superior General of the Society.

Battle against the scandals in the Church – expansion

Late in 1983, the Society enters a new stage in its history. Earlier that year John Paul II expressed great sympathy for Martin Luther, the same year Protestants celebrated the five-hundredth anniversary of his birth. More than ever, the Pope commits himself to “the rights of man” and adopts a form of “ecumenism” condemned by his predecessors. Faced with so many scandals coming from the top, Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop de Castro Mayer of Campos (Brazil), write the pope an open letter on November 21, 1983. They do it in the spirit of Saint Paul publicly resisting Saint

Peter, when he "did not walk according to the Gospel" (Galatians 2, 14).



May 5th, 1988 : Signing of the « protocol ». Satisfaction and mistrust. Standing are Fathers Laroche and Tissier de Mallerais, the Society's negotiators.

In 1985 the Society numbers 156 priests and one bishop and Archbishop Lefebvre publishes at Albin Michel's house an "Open Letter to Confused Catholics" in which he explains, in clear language accessible to all, the reasons for his resistance, faced with the destructive reforms of Catholicism. Unfortunately, at a synod of that same year, an extraordinary synod held for the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council, John Paul II decides to continue by going still further. He convokes, for the 21st of October, 1986, an ecumenical reunion at Assisi, where all religions, united and placed on an equal footing, will together invoke their various gods. Once again, Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop de Castro Mayer react vigorously, successors of the apostles, strong in the faith. They denounce in particular an implicit syncretism and the pope's blatant neglect of the first commandment.

During this worsening crisis, the Society continues to grow. In France, the Seminary of Flavigny-sur-Ozerain (Côte-d'Or) opens its doors to accommodate an overcrowded residence hall at Ecône. Furthermore, the Society increases its apostolate in a spectacular manner, opening new houses in Gabon, Chili, New Zealand, the West

Indies, Zimbabwe, and India. The Society henceforth has a presence on six continents, spread over 23 countries.

The consecrations

The apostasy of conciliar Rome is now reaching its height, and when the pope confirms the spurious thesis of "religious liberty," Archbishop Lefebvre announces at the ordinations of June 29, 1987, that he will not hesitate, if God wills it, to consecrate successors in the episcopate so that the work of the Society may continue.

Rome reacts immediately by proposing to visit to the houses of the Society in order to better evaluate the training their priests receive and to witness by the Society's fruits of holiness and worldwide apostolate. Archbishop Lefebvre rejoices and welcomes the apostolic visitor, Cardinal Edouard Gagnon of the congregation of the Priests of St. Sulpice, along with his secretary Msgr. Camille Perl. This visit recognizes the illegitimacy of the penalties and suppressions previously imposed. How could these two eminent prelates visit a religious society that supposedly had been dissolved and officially should no longer exist? The cardinal, moreover, assists at the Mass of the "suspended" bishop on December 8, 1987, at Ecône. (1) The same day, he declares: "I wish to say that we have been quite amazed. Everywhere we hold a great admiration for the piety of the persons, for the actuality and importance of the works, especially in what concerns the catechism, the formation, the administration of the sacraments. Certainly we have in our hands all that we need to make a very positive report."

This report would never appear and would be, basically, hushed up. To this day, it has never been published. On the other hand, one can still read in the Visitors' Book of the seminary of Ecône the wish of the cardinal that "the marvelous work of priestly formation accomplished here shine one day for the good of all the holy Church".

Archbishop Lefebvre then postpones the date of the consecrations in the hope of an acceptable agreement. Later, in spite of all that has happened, the Archbishop signs a doctrinal form after a new meeting at Rome, on May 5, 1988, with Cardinal Ratzinger. The next day, the Archbishop requests new guarantees concerning the consecration of bishops that would be in charge of Tradition. The

refusal of these indispensable conditions leads Archbishop Lefebvre to decide to consecrate four bishops himself from the ranks of the Society on June 30, 1988. The Archbishop believes that he is justified in performing such irregular consecrations considering the case of necessity in which the Church presently finds Herself. The pope, however, explicitly refuses the Archbishop permission to proceed with these consecrations. This refusal, however, was unjustified, for the pope

should always seek to give the Church the indispensable means for her common good. For more details about the legitimacy of the consecrations of 1988, see the theological study of the magazine *Si Si No No*, *Courier de Rome*.

In March of 1988, the sixth seminary of the Society, Holy Cross Seminary, is opened up in Australia. In September of the same year, the seminary of the United States is moved to Winona, in

Sermon on the occasion of the episcopal consecrations

June 30th, 1988

Your Excellency, dear Bishop de Castro Mayer, my most dear friends, my dear brethren,

...

We place ourselves in God's providence. We are convinced that God knows what He is doing. Cardinal Gagnon visited us twelve years after the suspension: after twelve years of being spoken of as outside of the communion of Rome, as rebels and dissenters against the Pope, his visit took place. He himself recognized that what we have been doing is just what is necessary for the reconstruction of the Church. The Cardinal even assisted pontifically at the Mass which I celebrated on December 8, 1987, for the renewal of the promises of our seminarians. I was supposedly suspended and, yet, after twelve years, I was practically given a clean slate. They said we have done well. Thus we did well to resist! I am convinced that we are in the same circumstances today. We are performing an act which apparently... and unfortunately the media will not assist us in the good sense. The headlines will, of course, be "Schism," "Excommunication!" as much as they want to - and, yet, we are convinced that all these accusations of which we are the object, all penalties of which we are the object, are null, absolutely null and void, and of which we will take no account. just as I took no account of the suspension, and ended up by being congratulated by the Church and by progressive churchmen, so likewise in several years - I do not know how many, only the Good Lord knows how many years it will take for Tradition to find back its rights in Rome - we will be embraced by the Roman authorities, who will thank us for having maintained the Faith in our seminaries, in our families, in civil societies, in our countries, and in our monasteries and our religious houses, for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.



Minnesota, to the lovely buildings restored from a former novitiate of Dominicans. In 1988, the Society numbers 209 priests and 5 bishops.

The jubilee

On November 19, 1989, at Bourget, near Paris, Archbishop Lefebvre celebrates the jubilee of his 60 years of priesthood before 23,000 faithful. The following year, the Society of Saint Pius X celebrates 20 years of existence. It numbers, in 1990, 236 priests and 5 bishops.



Deaths of Archbishop Lefebvre and Bishop de Castro Mayer – consecration of a bishop

On March 25, 1991, Archbishop Lefebvre renders his soul to God. Visiting Ecône, and in recollection before the tomb of the founder of the Society, a cardinal whispers: "Thank you, Your Grace." A month later, April 26th, his companion in combat, Bishop de Castro Mayer, passes to a better life. In the year of the death of its founder, the Society numbers 249 priests and 4 bishops.

The following year, Bishop Tissier de Malle-rais, assisted by Bishop Williamson and Bishop de Galarreta as co-consecrators, consecrates Dom Licinio Rangel auxiliary bishop for the Society of Saint John Mary Vianney at Campos, Brazil.

This same year, 1992, the Society opens a house in the Philippines, developing its apostolate in the Far East after the fall of the iron curtain. On March 25, 1993, the first Mass is celebrated at Schloss Schwandegg, the new General House of the Society, located at Menzingen, in the canton of Zug. This new property also accommodates the novitiate of the Oblate Sisters until the number of

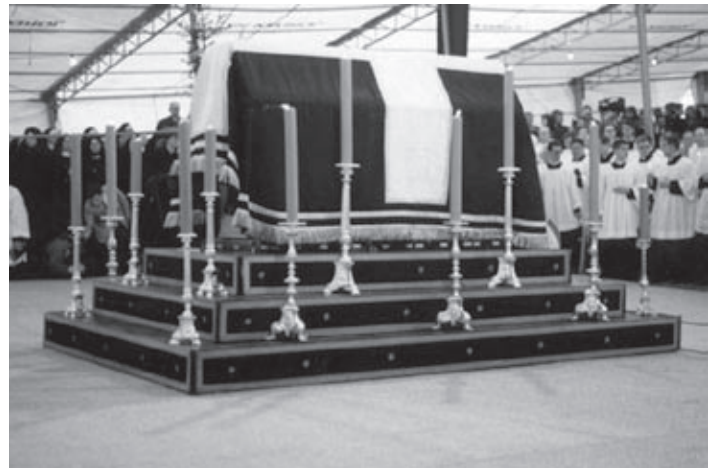
vocations causes the sisters to set up their novitiate at Salvan, in the Valais.

General Chapter, elections

In July 1994, Bishop Fellay is elected Superior General, succeeding Fr. Schmidberger, who in turn is elected first Assistant General. The following year the Society celebrates its silver jubilee at Ecône and the cornerstone of the future church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is blessed. In 1995, the Society numbers 329 priests and 4 bishops.

End of the century

During the years 1994-1999, the Society sees a peaceful growth. "Tradition" (2) as a whole develops, thanks to the success of Archbishop Lefebvre's life-long work, "Operation Survival." The increasing numbers of clergy, religious vocations,



and the faithful in general, especially the blossoming of large Catholic families, validate the choices of the "rebel" bishop. The Society also expands geographically, desirous in such a dire state of necessity to help save as many souls as possible, regardless of latitude or longitude. While the religious spirit falters in the post-conciliar Church, the "experiment of Tradition" appears to be very successful!

Pilgrimage to Rome in the year 2000

In the jubilee year, Bishop Fellay decides to lead a pilgrimage to venerate the Apostles at Rome, in this way hoping to show the Society's attachment to the heart of the Roman Catholic Church, to the papacy, as well as our refusal to allow ourselves to be enclosed in a so-called schismatic attitude. More than 5,000 faithful – a record for the Holy Year! – visit the major Basilicas in the middle of August. One newspaper title pro-

claimed: "Five thousand excommunicated people in Saint Peter's Basilica!" The article emphasizes, through this kind irony, a significant aspect of the present crisis: those who seek to keep the faith and who fight against the enemies of Catholicism are banished from the Church.

"Contacts" with Rome

Favorably impressed by this demonstration, Cardinal Castrillon Hoyos, prefect of the Congregation of the clergy newly placed at the head of the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission (3), seizes the occasion to establish closer "contact." A vague solution is put forward without any concrete structure. Once again, the understanding of the members of the hierarchy towards Tradition exhibits clear limits. The eyes are still far from being opened to the depth and the origin of the tremendous crisis which has shaken the Church for already 40 years.

In the footsteps of Archbishop Lefebvre, the Superior General decides that the time has not yet come for a full collaboration, and that all pursuit of a purely practical agreement – a juridical status in the bosom of the conciliar Church – is bound to fail. In response, Bishop Fellay tries to focus the debate on the basics, namely doctrinal questions. In accordance with the desire of Archbishop Lefebvre expressed not long before his death, if the Tradition must resume contact with the Roman authorities, it must do so only to address doctrinal problems. Bishop Fellay also asks for two signs of reassurance, indications that something has truly changed in the Vatican. He requests the liberation of the traditional Mass for all Catholic priests and the lifting of the unjust censures which weigh heavily on the Society's bishops, supposedly excommunicated since 1988. In the year 2000, the Society numbers around 400 priests.

The doctrinal combat:

The problem of the liturgical reform

From the beginning of his combat for the faith, Archbishop Lefebvre justified and explained, through conferences, articles, and books, the reasons behind his point of view. He never ceased to denounce modern errors or to propose the necessary remedies, especially concerning the most recent council. Numerous authors, both ecclesiastics and laymen, have also, of course, defended the faith at the first signs of this modern disaster,

but it would be exhausting to cite them all. The Society, hoping to continue to bring these current problems to light, has founded newspapers, hosted interviews and conferences, sustained by periodicals, and of course authored numerous publications intended for the catechetical and doctrinal formation of the faithful.

Such works deepen the analysis of "the spirit and the letter" of Vatican II and expose its dire consequences. In 2001, the Society publishes a work on the liturgical reform entitled "Novus Ordo Missae," one which renews the critiques made of this neo-protestant rite. A challenge directed to the Holy Father and to several cardinals, as well as to numerous bishops, it has, to this day, yet to be satisfactorily answered.

From ecumenism to silent apostasy

In January of 2004, Bishop Fellay and his two Assistants (Father Schmidberger and Bishop de Galarreta) with the other two bishops (Bishop Tissier de Mallerai and Bishop Williamson) together send the cardinals a text entitled "From ecumenism to silent apostasy – 25 years of pontificate". This document was originally intended to be given to the pope during his jubilee, but the state of his health leads the Superior General instead to address it to the cardinals. Bishop Fellay presents the document during a press conference, which is attended by some forty members of the Vatican, on February 2, 2004.

There again, the rigorous demonstration has not received, to this day, a serious response and, much less, a refutation. Nevertheless, the accusation is serious. If there is indeed a "silent apostasy" (the exact words of the pope) spreading particularly throughout Europe, it must have a cause.

The text argues the new modern form of ecumenism inescapably breeds indifferentism (4) which leads precisely to apostasy.

The election of Benedict XVI

In 2005, Bishop Fellay hails the election of the new pope as "a glimmer of hope." Although accepting the doctrine of Vatican II on religious liberty and false ecumenism, as shown by his visits to the synagogues and the mosques, Benedict XVI is conscious of the actual situation of the Church, of the grave crisis that She undergoes, and the failings, if not the vices, of the liturgical reform. As to

From Ecumenism to Silent Apostasy –

25 years of John Paul II's pontificate

43. Considered from a pastoral aspect, one must say that the ecumenism of the last decades that it leads Catholics to a "silent apostasy" and that it dissuades non-Catholics from entering into the unique ark of salvation. One must reprobate "the impiety of those who close to men the gates of the Kingdom of heaven". Under the guise of searching for unity, this ecumenism disperses the flock; it does not carry the mark of Christ, but that of the divider par excellence, the devil.

44. As attractive as it may first seem, as spectacular as its ceremonies might be watched on the Television, as numerous as the gathered crowds might be, the reality remains: Ecumenism has made of the Holy City the Church a city in ruins. Following an utopian ideal – the unity of the human race – the Pope has not realized how much this ecumenism which he has pursued is truly and sadly revolutionary: it inverts the order willed by God.

45. Ecumenism is revolutionary, and it affirms itself as revolutionary. One remains impressed by the succession of texts that remind us of this: "The deepening of communion in a constant reform [...] is without a doubt one of the most important and distinctive traits of ecumenism." "On taking the idea which John XIII had expressed at the opening of the Council, the Decree on ecumenism represents the formulation of doctrine as one of the elements of continuing reform." At times this affirmation is adorned with ecclesiastical unction in order to become a "conversion". In the case in point, there is very little difference. In the two cases, that which existed before is rejected: "Convert. There is no ecumenical reconciliation without conversion and renewal. There is no conversion from one confession to another. [...] Everyone must convert. We must not ask firstly 'what is wrong with the other', but rather 'what is wrong with us; where should we begin to clean house?'" Typical of its revolutionary characteristic, this ecumenism makes an appeal to the people: "In ecumenical activity, the faithful of the Catholic Church [...] will consider, with loyalty and attention, all that has need to be renovated in the catholic family itself." Truly in this *aggiornamento*, this state of intoxication, the head has need to be overrun by the members: "The ecumenical movement is a somewhat complex process, and it would be an error to wait, from the catholic side, that everything be done by Rome. [...] The intuitions, the challenges must also come from local Churches, and much must be done on a local level before the universal Church makes it her own."

the Society of Saint Pius X, after 35 years of existence, it numbers 451 priests and 4 bishops.

The General Chapter, held at Ecône in 2006, witnesses the re-election of Bishop Fellay for a new mandate of twelve years. At his side are elect-

ed Fr. Niklaus Pfluger, first Assistant, of Swiss origin from the canton of Soleure, and Fr. Alain-Marc Nely, second Assistant, a Frenchman. They then confirm the Society's doctrinal position. On July 15, 2006, the General Chapter declares:

In the exchanges which it has had in these last years with Rome, the Society was able to see the validity and the necessity of the two preliminaries (5) which it has requested, which would procure a very great good for the Church in restoring to it at least a part of its rights to its characteristic Tradition. Not only the treasure of graces which are enjoyed by the Society would spread more fully, but it would provide in this manner the medicine of which the mystical Body needs so much to be healed.

If, after their fulfillment, the Society awaits the possibility of doctrinal discussions, it is still with the aim of making the voice of traditional doctrine resound more strongly in the Church. In fact, the contacts which it will maintain occasionally with the Roman authorities have as their end only that of helping to establish again the Tradition which the Church cannot renounce without losing her identity, and are not in the pursuit of an advantage for itself, nor to arrive at an impossible and purely practical "agreement." The day in which Tradition regains all its rights, "the problem of reconciliation will no longer have a *raison d'être*, and the Church will see again a new dawn" (6).

The following year, Benedict XVI publishes, on July 7, 2007, a *motu proprio* in which he at last declares that the Tridentine Mass has never been abrogated, and every priest has the right to celebrate it. The Society rejoices at this news, although it rejects the presentation of two legitimate forms of one Latin rite, an ambiguous expression obviously intended to placate more liberal bishops, those who are vehemently hostile to Tradition.

On January 21, 2009, after a good many difficulties in the course of the year 2008, the Holy See publishes a decree from the cardinal-prefect of the Congregation of the Bishops annulling the effects of the so-called excommunications of 1988. The doctrinal discussions, admittedly necessary, could at last begin. They start in the fall of 2009, and are continuing. One year later, celebrating its 40th anniversary, the Society numbers 4 Bishops, 529

Priests, 195 Seminarians, 117 Brothers, 176 Religious Sisters, 82 Oblate Sisters, 1 General House, 6 Seminaries, 161 Priors, 725 Mass Centers, 2 College Institutes, 90 schools, and 7 Retirement Homes for senior citizens. The Society is present in 31 countries, and extends her apostolate in 32 others. The good fight for the faith continues so that the rights of Christ the King may again be recognized in His Church and in society at large.

(1) Let us remember that the penalty of suspension a *divinis* forbids those who incur it from the public celebration of the sacraments. The public assistance, and in choir dress, by Cardinal Gagnon at the Archbishop's Mass introduced at least a serious doubt of the validity of the anterior sanctions.

(2) The word "Tradition" must be well understood, for it has various meanings. In a primary sense, it designates one of the two sources of Revelation confided to the Church by its Founder, the other being Holy Scripture. It is characterized by the very fact that it is unwritten. These two sources are equal in dignity, but Tradition holds precedence in time, and furthermore, it produced Holy Scripture. In its primary sense, the word is written with a capital letter. In a second sense, the word signifies the traditions coming from the Apostles, and which are transmitted in the course of history. These have not the same dignity as the first, but must be respected with veneration. They may eventually be put aside in certain circumstances by the proper authorities if they become useless or misunderstood. Finally, the word signifies different elements of the life of the Church, formed throughout the centuries under the influence of the two first. This tradition is the reflection of the

faith of the Church, living from the revealed deposit, which gives rise, through the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, to various manifestations of this faith and of this divine life. These elements are not inviolable and may change and be transformed with time, however they must be treated with respect and precaution, because they represent the expression of the faith in a given period, and their imprudent elimination or change would inevitably result in a weakening of this faith. Lastly, the term "Tradition", with or without a capital letter, is used today to mean those who wish to live it and cannot resign themselves to the loss of a treasure discarded by modernism, nor to be subjected to the doctrinal and religious disintegration which follows.

(3) Commission established in 1988 by this same *motu proprio* intended to receive those who would like to keep Tradition while "reintegrating" into the fold of the Church. The Society of Saint Pius X absolutely refuses to unite itself with this institution, because it considers that it has never left, under any circumstances, the bosom of the Church.

(4) A condemned doctrine which maintains that the membership in one religion or another is of little importance for salvation, because they are all capable of providing for man's salvation.

(5) The complete and unconditional liberty for the Tridentine Mass and the withdrawal of the decree of excommunication of the four bishops of the Society.

(6) Letter from Archbishop Lefebvre of June 2, 1988 to Pope John Paul II.



Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat!

*Sermon at Paris for the 50 years of priesthood,
given on September 23rd, 1979*

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre

My dear brethren,

Allow me before beginning the few words which I would like to address to you on the occasion of this beautiful ceremony, to thank all those who have contributed to its magnificent success.

Personally, I had thought of celebrating my sacerdotal jubilee in a private, discreet manner at the altar which is the heart of Ecône, but the beloved clergy of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet and the beloved priests who surround me, invited me with such insistence to permit all those who desired to unite themselves in my thanksgiving and my prayer on the occasion of this sacerdotal jubilee, that I could not refuse and that is why we are gathered here today—so great in numbers, so diverse in origin—having come from America, from all European countries which are yet free. Here we are united for the occasion of this sacerdotal jubilee.

Why this ceremony?

How then could I define this gathering, this manifestation, this ceremony? A homage, a homage to your faith in the Catholic priesthood, and in the holy Catholic Mass. I truly believe that it is for this reason that you have come, in order to manifest your attachment to the Catho-

lic Church and to the most beautiful treasure, to the most sublime gift which God has given to man: the priesthood, and the priesthood for sacrifice, for the Sacrifice of Our Lord continued upon our altars.

This is why you have come; this is why we are surrounded today by these beloved priests who have come from everywhere and many more would have come were it not a Sunday, for they are held, by their obligation to celebrate Holy Mass in their parishes, and they have told us so.

Love for the Catholic Mass

I would like to trace, if you will permit me, some scenes to which I have been a witness during the course of this half century, in order to show more clearly the importance which the Mass of the Catholic Church holds in our life, in the life of a priest, in the life of a bishop, and in the life of the Church.

As a young seminarian at Santa Chiara, the French Seminary in Rome, they used to teach us attachment to liturgical ceremonies. I had, during that time, the privilege of being a ceremoniar, that which we call a “master of ceremonies,” having been preceded in this office by no

less than His Grace Mgr Lebrun, the former Bishop of Autun, and by His Grace Mgr Ancel, who is still the Auxiliary Bishop of Lyons. I was therefore a master of ceremonies under the direction of the beloved Fr. Haegy, known for his profound knowledge of the liturgy. We loved to prepare the altar; we loved to prepare the ceremonies and we were already imbued with the spirit of the feast on the eve of the day when a great ceremony was to take place upon our altars. We understood therefore, as young seminarians, to love the altar.

“Domine dilexi decorem domus tuae et gloriam habitationis tuae”. This is the verse which we recite during the Lavabo at the altar: “Lord I have loved Thy house and the glory of Thy dwelling.”

This is what they taught us at the French Seminary in Rome under the direction of the dear and Reverend Fr. LeFloch, a well loved Father, who taught us to see clearly the events of the time through his commentaries on the encyclicals of the popes.

I was ordained a priest in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart of the rue Royale in Lille on September 21, 1929, by the then Archbishop Liénart. I left shortly afterwards—two years afterwards—for the missions to join my brother who was already there in Gabon. There I began to learn what the Mass truly is.

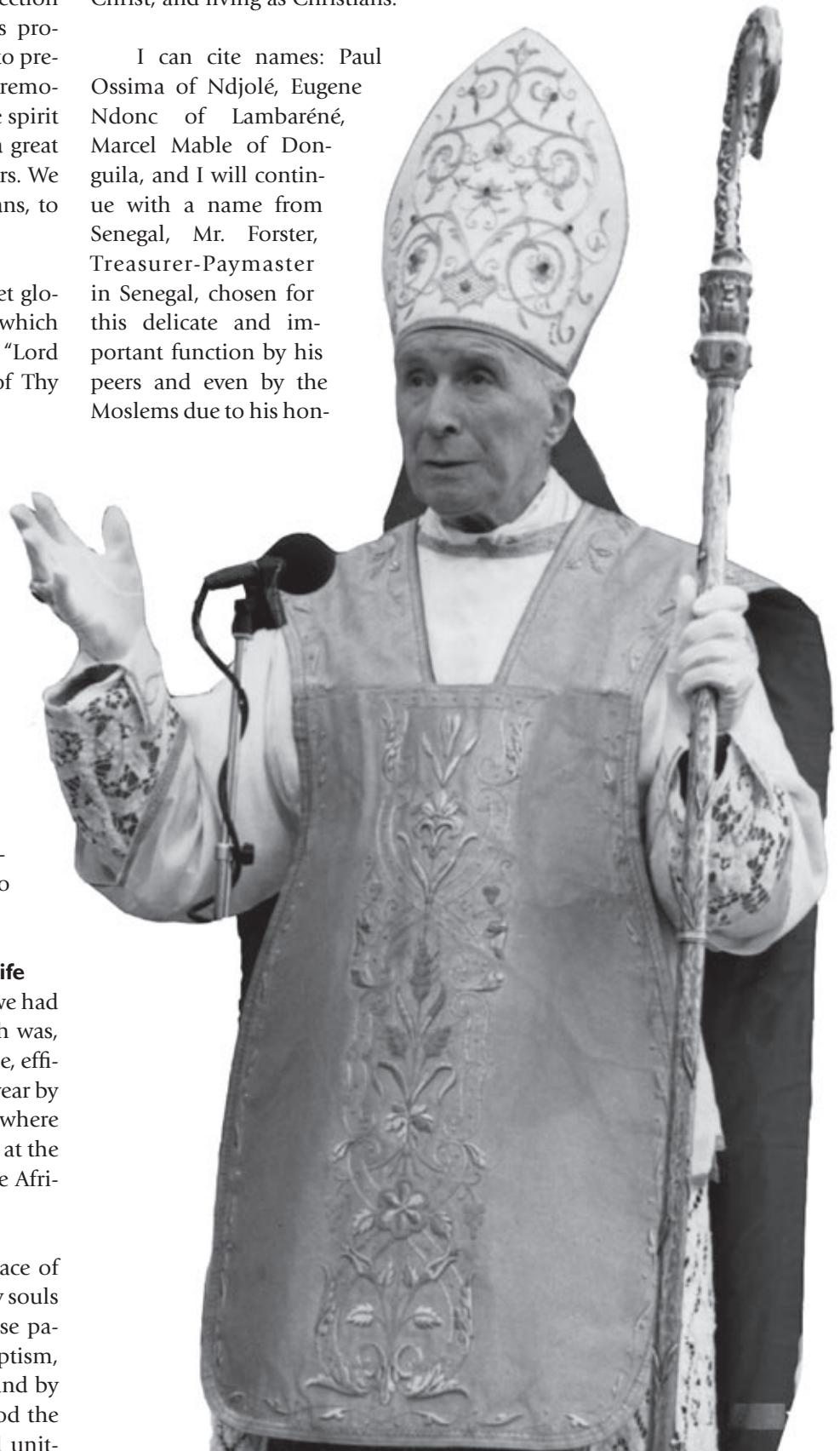
Importance of the Mass in catholic life

Certainly I knew by the studies which we had done, what this great mystery of our Faith was, but I had not yet understood its entire value, efficacy and depth. This I learned day by day, year by year, in Africa, and particularly in Gabon, where I spent 13 years of my missionary life, first at the seminary and then in the bush among the Africans, with the natives.

There I saw—yes, I saw—what the grace of the Holy Mass could do. I saw it in the holy souls of some of our catechists. I saw it in those pagan souls transformed by the grace of baptism, transformed by assistance at Holy Mass, and by the Holy Eucharist. These souls understood the mystery of the Sacrifice of the Cross and unit-

ed themselves to Our Lord Jesus Christ in the sufferings of His Cross, offering their sacrifices and their sufferings with Our Lord Jesus Christ, and living as Christians.

I can cite names: Paul Ossima of Ndjolé, Eugene Ndonc of Lambaréné, Marcel Mable of Donguila, and I will continue with a name from Senegal, Mr. Forster, Treasurer-Paymaster in Senegal, chosen for this delicate and important function by his peers and even by the Moslems due to his hon-



esty and integrity. These are some of the men produced by the grace of the Mass. They assisted at the Mass daily, communicating with great fervor and they have become models and a light for those around them. This is just to list a few, without counting the many Christians transformed by this grace.

I was able to see these pagan villages become Christian, being transformed not only, I would say, spiritually and supernaturally, but also being transformed physically, socially, economically and politically. Because these people—pagans that they were—became cognizant of the necessity of fulfilling their duties, in spite of trials, in spite of the sacrifices of maintaining their commitments, particularly their commitment in marriage. Then the village began to be transformed little by little under the influence of grace, under the influence of the grace of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Soon all the villages wanted to have one of the Fathers visit them. Oh, the visit of a missionary! They waited impatiently to assist at the Holy Mass in order to be able to confess their sins and then to receive Holy Communion. Some of these souls also consecrated themselves to God: nuns, priests, brothers, giving themselves to God, consecrating themselves to God. There you have the fruit of the Holy Mass.

Why did all this happen? It is necessary that we study somewhat the profound motive of this transformation: SACRIFICE.

The notion of sacrifice is a profoundly Christian and a profoundly Catholic notion. Our life cannot be spent without sacrifice, since Our Lord Jesus Christ, God Himself, willed to take a body like our own and say to us: "Follow Me, take up thy cross and follow Me if thou wilt be saved." And He has given us the example of His death upon the Cross; He has shed His Blood. Would we then dare—we, His miserable creatures, sinners that we are—not to follow Our Lord in pursuit of His Sacrifice, in pursuit of His Cross?

There is the entire mystery of Christian civilization. There is that which is the root of Christian civilization: the comprehension of sacrifice in one's life, in daily life, the understanding of Christian suffering, no longer considering suffering as an evil, as an unbearable sorrow, but shar-

ing one's sufferings and one's sickness with the sufferings of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in looking upon His Cross, in assisting at the Holy Mass, which is the continuation of the Passion of Our Lord upon Calvary. Once understood, suffering becomes a joy and a treasure because these sufferings, if united to those of Our Lord, if united to those of all the martyrs, of all Catholics, of all the faithful who suffer in this world, if, united to the Cross of Our Lord, they, then become an inexpressible treasure, a treasure unutterable, and achieve an extraordinary capacity for the conversion of other souls and the salvation of our own. Many holy souls, Christians, have even desired to suffer in order to unite themselves more closely to the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ. There you have Christian civilization:

Blessed are those who suffer for righteousness sake.

Blessed are the poor.

Blessed are the meek.

Blessed are the merciful.

Blessed are the peace-makers.

These are the teachings of the Cross; it is this that Our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us by His Cross. This Christian civilization, penetrating to the depths of nations only recently pagan, has transformed them, and impelled them to desire and thus to choose Catholic heads of state. I myself have known and aided the leaders of these Catholic countries. Their Catholic peoples desired to have Catholic leaders so that even their governments and all the laws of their land might be submissive to the laws of Our Lord Jesus Christ and to the Ten Commandments.

If, in the past, France—said to be Catholic—had truly fulfilled the role of a Catholic power, she would have supported these colonized lands in their new-found Faith. Had she done so, their lands would not now be menaced by Communism, and Africa would not be what it is today. The fault does not so much lie with the Africans themselves as with the colonial powers, which did not understand how to avail themselves of this Christian faith which had rooted itself among the African peoples. With a proper understanding they would have been able to exercise a brotherly influence among these nations by helping them to keep the Faith and exclude Communism.

The conversion of pagans through the sacrifice of the Mass

If we look back through history, we see immediately that what I have been speaking of took place in our own countries in the first centuries after Constantine. For we too are, in our origins, converts. Our ancestors were converted, our kings were converted, and down through the centuries they offered their nations to Our Lord Jesus Christ, and they submitted their countries to the Cross of Jesus. They willed too that Mary should be the Queen of their lands.

One can read the admirable writings of St. Edward, King of England, of St. Louis, King of France, of the Holy Roman Emperor St. Henry, of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and of all the saints who were at the head of our Catholic nations and who thus helped to make Christianity. What faith they had in the Holy Mass! King St. Louis of France served two Masses every day. If he was traveling and happened to hear church bells ringing to announce the consecration, he would dismount to adore on bended knee the miracle being performed at that moment. There indeed was Catholic civilization! How far from such faith are we now, how far indeed!

There is another event which we are bound to mention after these evocations of Christian civilization in Africa, and in our own history, that of France particularly. A recent event, an event in the life of the Church, and an important event: the Second Vatican Council. We are obliged to declare that the enemies of the Church knew very well, perhaps better than we, what the value of just one Mass is. There was a poem once written on this subject in which one finds words attributed to Satan showing how he trembles each time a Mass, a true Catholic Mass, is celebrated because he is thus reminded of the memory of the Cross, and he knows well that it was by the Cross that he was vanquished. The enemies of the Church who perform sacrilegious masses in the well-known sects, and the Communists, too, know what value is to be had from one Mass, one true Catholic Mass.

I was recently told that in Poland the Communist Party through their "Inspectors of Religion," keep under surveillance those priests in Poland who say the Old Mass but leave alone those who say the New. They persecute those

who say the Old Mass, the Mass of All Time. A foreign priest visiting Poland may say what Mass he pleases in order to give the impression of freedom, but the Polish priests who decide to hold firm to Tradition are persecuted.

I read recently a document about the PAX movement which was communicated to us in June of 1963 in the name of Card. Wyszynski. This document told us: You think we have freedom; you are made to think that we have it, and it is the priests affiliated with PAX, who are friends of the Communist government, who spread these ideas abroad because they are propagandists for the government, as is even the progressive French press. But it is not true; we are not free.

Card. Wyszynski gave precise details. He said that in the youth camps organized by the Communists the children were kept behind barbed wire on Sundays to keep them from going to Mass. He told, too, how vacation hideaways organized by the Catholic priests were surveyed from helicopters to see if the youth were going to Mass. Why, why this need to spy upon children on their way to Mass? Because they know that the Mass is absolutely anti-Communist and, how indeed could it be otherwise? For what is Communism if not "all for the Party and all for the Revolution"? The Mass, on the other hand, is "all for God." Not at all the same thing is it? All for God! This is the Catholic Mass, opposed as it is to the program of the Party, which is a satanic program.

You know well that we are all tested, that we are all beset with difficulties in our lives, in our earthly existence. We all have the need to know why we suffer, why these trials and sorrows, why these Catholics are lying sick in their beds; the hospitals are full of sick people. Why?

Why sufferings, trials and sorrows?

The Christian responds: to unite my sufferings to those of Our Lord on the altar, to unite them on the altar and through that act to participate in the work of redemption, to merit for myself and for other souls the joy of heaven. Now it was during the Council that the enemies of the Church infiltrated Her, and their first objective was to demolish and destroy the Mass insofar as they could. You can read the books of Michael

Davies, an English Catholic, who has written magnificent works which demonstrate how the liturgical reform of Vatican II closely resembles that produced under Cranmer at the birth of English Protestantism. If one reads the history of that liturgical transformation, made also by Luther, one sees that now it is exactly the same procedure which is being slowly followed and to all appearances, still apparently good and Catholic. But it is just that character of the Mass which is sacrificial and redemptive of sin, through the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which they have removed. They have made of the Mass a simple assembly, one among others, merely presided over by the priest. That is not the Mass!

It is not surprising that the Cross no longer triumphs, because the sacrifice no longer triumphs. It is not surprising that men think no longer of anything but raising their standard of living, that they seek only money, riches, pleasures, comfort, and the easy ways of this world. They have lost the sense of sacrifice.

Line-up for a true crusade

What does it remain for us to do, my dear brethren, if in this manner we deepen our understanding of the great mystery which is the Mass? Well, I think I can say what we should have: a crusade! A crusade supported by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, by the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, by that invincible rock, that inexhaustible source of grace, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. This we see every day. You are here because you love the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. And these young seminarians who are in the seminary in Ecône, the United States, and Germany—why do they come to our seminaries? For the Holy Mass, for the Holy Mass of All Time which is the source of grace, the source of the Holy Ghost, the source of Christian civilization; that is the reason for the priest.

It is necessary that we undertake a crusade, a crusade which is based precisely upon these notions of immutability, of sacrifice, in order to recreate Christianity, to re-establish a Christendom such as the Church desires, such as She has always done, with the same principles, the same Sacrifice of the Mass, the same sacraments, the same catechism, the same Holy Scripture. We must recreate this Christendom! It is to you, my dear brethren, you who are the salt of the earth

and the light of the world, that our Lord Jesus Christ addressed Himself in saying: "Do not lose the fruit of My Blood, do not abandon My Calvary, do not abandon My Sacrifice." And the Virgin Mary, who stands beneath the Cross, tells you the same thing as well. She, whose heart is pierced, full of sufferings and sorrow, yet at the same time filled with the joy of uniting herself to the Sacrifice of her Divine Son; she says to you as well: "Let us be Christians; let us be Catholics."

Let us not be borne away by all these worldly ideas, by all these currents of thought which are in the world, and which draw us to sin and to hell. If we want to go to heaven we must follow Our Lord Jesus Christ. We must carry our cross and follow Our Lord Jesus Christ, imitating Him in His Cross, in His suffering, in His Sacrifice.

Crusade for young people

Thus I ask the youth, the young people who are here in this hall, to ask the priests to explain to them these things that are so beautiful and so great, so as to choose their vocations, whatever be the calling that they may elect—be they priests or religious men and women, or married by the Sacrament of Matrimony, and, therefore, in the Cross of Jesus Christ, and in the Blood of Jesus Christ, married in the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Let them comprehend the greatness of matrimony, and let them prepare themselves worthily for it—by purity and chastity, by prayer and reflection. Let them not be carried away by all the passions which engulf the world. Thus let this be the crusade of the young who must aspire to the true ideal.

Let it be as well a crusade for Christian families. You, Christian families who are here, consecrate yourselves to the Heart of Jesus, to the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Oh, pray together as a family! I know that many of those among you already do so, but may there always be more and more of you who do so with fervor. Let Our Lord truly reign in your homes!

Cast away, I beg of you, anything which impedes children from entering your family. There is no greater gift that the Good God can bestow upon your hearths than to have many children. Have big families; it is the glory of the Catholic

Church—the large family! It has been so in Canada, it has been so in Holland, it has been so in Switzerland and it has been so in France—everywhere the large family was the joy and prosperity of the Church. There are that many more chosen souls for heaven! Therefore do not limit, I beg you, the gifts of God; do not listen to these abominable slogans which destroy the family, which ruin health, which ruin the household, and provoke divorce.

Return to the land

And I wish that, in these troubled times, in this degenerate urban atmosphere in which we are living, that you return to the land whenever possible. The land is healthy; the land teaches one to know God; the land draws one to God; it calms temperaments, characters, and encourages the children to work.

And if it is necessary, yes, you yourselves will make the school for your children. If the schools should corrupt your children, what are you going to do? Deliver them to the corrupters? To those who teach these abominable sexual practices in the schools? To the so-called “Catholic” schools run by religious men and women where they simply teach sin? In reality that is what they are teaching to the children: they corrupt them from their most tender youth. Are you to put up

with that? It is inconceivable! Rather that your children be poor—that they be removed from this apparent science that the world possesses—but that they be good children, Christian children, Catholic children, who love their holy religion, who love to pray, and who love to work; children who love the earth which the Good God has made.

Finally, a crusade as well for heads of families. You, who are the head of your household, you have a grave responsibility in your countries. You do not have the right to let your country be invaded by Socialism and Communism! You do not have the right, or else you are no longer Catholics! You must fight at the time of elections in order that you may have Catholic mayors, Catholic deputies, so that France finally may become Catholic again. That is not mere politics, that is to wage a good, campaign, a campaign such as was waged by the saints, such as was waged by the popes who opposed Attila, such as was waged by St. Remy who converted Clovis, such as was waged by Joan of Arc who saved France from Protestantism. If Joan of Arc had not been raised up in France we would all be Protestants! It was in order to keep France Catholic that Our Lord raised up Joan of Arc, that child of seventeen years, who drove the English out of France. That, too, is waging a political campaign.



The royalty of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Surely then this is the sort of politics which we desire: the politics of the royalty of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Just a few moments ago you were heard to chant: "Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat". Are these but words, mere lyrics, mere chants? No! It is necessary that they be a reality. You, heads of the family, you are the ones responsible for such realization, both for your children and for the generations which are to come. Thus you should organize yourselves now, conduct meetings and hear yourselves out, with the object that France becomes once again Christian, once again Catholic. It is not impossible, otherwise one would have to say that the grace of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is no longer grace, that God is no longer God, that Our Lord Jesus Christ is no longer Our Lord Jesus Christ. One must have confidence in the grace of Our Lord Who is all-powerful. I have seen this grace at work in Africa. There is no reason why it will not work as well here in these countries. This is the message I wanted to tell you today.

And you, dear priests, who hear me now, you too must make a profound sacerdotal union to spread this crusade, to animate this crusade in order that Jesus reign, that Our Lord reign. And to do that you must be holy. You must seek after sanctity and manifest it to others, this holiness, this grace which acts in your souls and in your hearts, this grace which you receive by the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist and by the Holy Mass which you offer, which you alone are capable of offering.

I shall finish, my dearly beloved brethren, by what I shall call my testament. Testament—that is a very profound word—because I want it to be the echo of the testament of Our Lord: "Novi et aeterni testamenti".

"Novi et aeterni testamenti"—it is the priest who recites these words at the consecration of the Precious Blood—"Hic est enim calix Sanguinis mei: novi et aeterni testamenti". This inheritance which Jesus Christ gave to us, it is His Sacrifice, it is His Blood, it is His Cross, the ferment

of all Christian civilization and of all that is necessary for salvation.

And I say to you as well:

for the glory of the Most Blessed Trinity,
for the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
for the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary,
for the love of the Church,
for the love of the Pope,
for the love of bishops,
of priests, of all the faithful,
for the salvation of the world,
for the salvation of souls,
keep this testament of
Our Lord Jesus Christ!
Keep the Sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
Keep the Mass of All Time!

And you will see civilization reflourish, a civilization which is not of this world, but a civilization which leads to the Catholic City which is heaven. The Catholic city of this world is made for nothing else than for the Catholic City of heaven.

Thus by keeping the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, by keeping His Sacrifice, by keeping this Mass—this Mass which has been bequeathed to us by our predecessors, this Mass which has been transmitted from the time of the Apostles unto this day. In a few moments I am going to pronounce these words above the chalice of my ordination, and how could you expect me to pronounce above the chalice of my ordination any other words but those which I pronounced 50 years ago over this same chalice—it is impossible! I cannot change the words! We shall therefore continue to pronounce the words of the consecration as our predecessors have taught us, as the Popes, bishops and priests who have been our instructors, have taught us, so that Our Lord Jesus Christ reign, and so that souls be saved through the intercession of our Good Mother in heaven.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen!

The most significant event in my life

St. James the Apostle, in all his majesty, welcomes pilgrims at the entrance of his cathedral.

By Mr. J. M. Gussoni

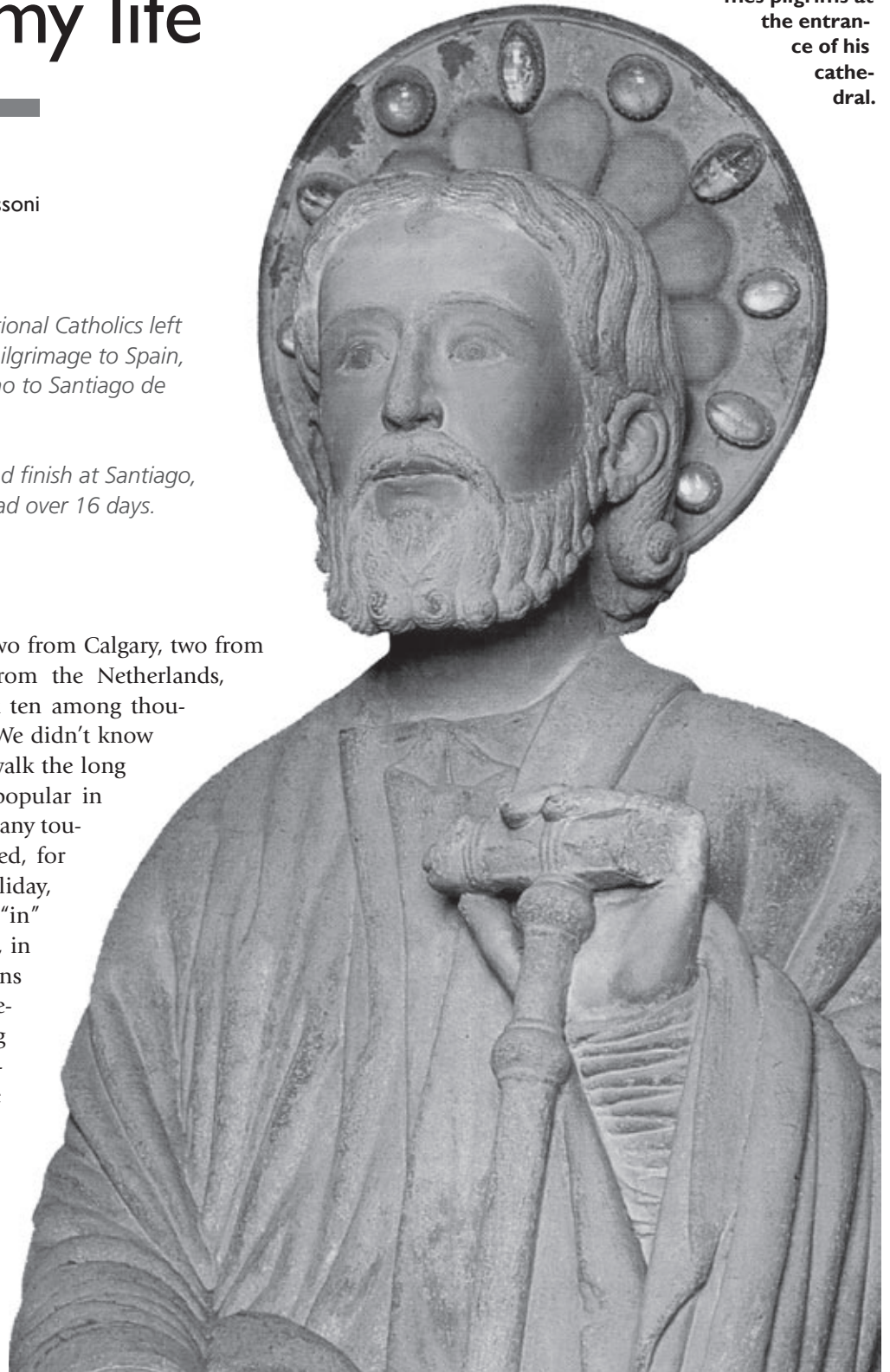
This past summer a group of traditional Catholics left their various homelands to go on pilgrimage to Spain, walking along the ancient Camino to Santiago de Compostela.

Our plan was to start at Burgos and finish at Santiago, a 500 kilometre journey spread over 16 days.

Ten pilgrims made up the group, two from Calgary, two from Kitchener, two from Toronto, two from the Netherlands, and two from Germany. We were but ten among thousands who were walking to Santiago. We didn't know whether all the other would actually walk the long road; the Camino has become very popular in these last few years and has attracted many tourists, tourists attached to luxury. Indeed, for some it was an inexpensive walking holiday, for others to walk the Camino was the "in" thing to do. What made the difference, in our case, were our prayerful intentions and daily Mass, celebrated in the cathedrals of Burgos and Leon, and among the numerous village churches scattered along the route. This involved some serious planning on Fr. Wegner's part. Just imagine a German priest contacting the local Spanish sacristan, requesting that he open the church!

The Camino

The Camino (or 'Trail' in Spanish) affected every pilgrim differently. Each step along the way





Bronze shell fixed in the stone of sidewalks in the town of León.

was part of a growth process. On the walk itself, while still living the experience, the lessons are often not clear; however, once you have left the journey and returned home, you are then able to look back and appreciate all the pilgrimage had to offer. The Camino is not so much about the destination of Santiago, nor the number of kilometres walked. It is about what happened to you on the way, what took place within you.

The Camino can serve as a metaphor for life itself. We are all on a journey toward a destination, and we experience the ups and downs of life like the hills and valleys of the Camino. We fall down and get up again, our eyes always fixed on our goal. We get lost, seek advice, and then return to the path. There are many signposts pointing out the way. We get tired and don't want to go on, but we must continue, otherwise we fall back and get lost, left behind along the way. It is the same for our pilgrimage through life. It is how we live, how we respond to what life brings us, which creates our own spiritual journey and determines its success. This journey has all the ingredients of a profound life experience. You are on a pathway carrying everything you will need on your back. You are out in nature, in a strange country, alone in the unknown, far from all that is familiar. As a pilgrim, you learn what really matters to you in your own life. All vanity is stripped away, all comfort and ease, and you come in contact with your true self. You are forced to focus on your final destination and must reflect on how you want to reach that place.

Our group of ten started at the magnificent gothic cathedral at Burgos where Fr Wegner said Mass at one of the many side altars. We were all very conscious that we were beginning an important journey and we prayed earnestly for a successful pilgrimage.

Arrows guide the pilgrim

Step by step, we left Burgos. The light was already fading as we followed the yellow arrows and scallop shells marking out the Camino. These arrows guide the pilgrim through all sorts of terrain: sprawling city streets, farmlands, rocky hillsides, gentle meadows, and tiny villages. They are painted on trees, stones, fence posts, and corners of buildings. You can find them engraved into the sidewalk or scrawled beneath a stop sign. Indeed, if there's room for paint the-

re is likely to be a yellow arrow! It would seem that, because the Camino is so well marked, it is impossible to lose the way. Think again! Many beautiful distractions can cause the pilgrim to miss a marker, as happened to this writer more than once while stopping to take pictures.

Torture of minds

Outside Burgos we entered the Meseta, a vast, featureless plain that tortures the minds and bodies of so many pilgrims. The Camino crosses land that resembles the steppes of Eastern Europe or the prairies of Canada. There is nothing but green vegetation and brown earth as far as the eye can see in all directions. Worst of all, there are no trees, thus little shade. Add to that the burning heat and you can see why some think this is the worst part of the journey. In our case, however, it really wasn't that bad. Along the trail, on the edges of the fields there were seas of flowers overflowing alternately with red poppies, yellow sun-flowers, purple thistles, and yellow daisies, just to name a few. This profusion of colour among the straw-laden fields brightened up the landscape like bright paint spread generously on a blank canvas. Many birds also inhabit the Meseta, and the skies above are filled with aerial hunters. You can see kestrels, falcons, and even the occasional eagle. It takes more patience to find birds that live low to the ground in the fields, but the song of the lark often accompanies you on that long, flat trek, lightening your burden. In every village there was a church, and every church had a belfry where storks tended their nests.

One feature of the Meseta that really stood out was the steep hill beyond Castrojeretz. We had stopped for breakfast at about 9am (as was our custom) and made sure our water bottles were filled for the journey ahead. We chanced upon an Irish woman from Mayo also having a bite to eat. She explained that she was travelling the Camino on her own and, once finished, was heading to Australia for a further vacation. We parted quickly and instead focused our attention on mounting the massive hill – perhaps Small Mountain – that loomed ahead of us, the Alto de Mostelares. The only way to reach the top of this hill in good order is to take slow, easy steps. Halfway up this climb the woman from Ireland overtook us with giant strides! At the top weary pilgrims were rewarded with plenty of fresh-run-

**Burgos:
Spires of
Santa Maria
Cathedral.
Master piece of
gothic art.**



ning drinking water and a fantastic view of the plains below.

There are many legends attached to the Camino. The scallop shell which many pilgrims wear is said to have originated when followers of St James were carrying his body by boat and landed on the shore where a wedding party was taking place. This scene caused great fear among the merry-makers and the horse on which the groom was riding rushed into the sea, both being drowned. St James, however, worked a miracle. Horse and rider came out of the waters very much alive, decked, however, in scallop shells and seaweed! To this day, the scallop shells found on the shores of Galicia remain a symbol of the Camino. The scallop shell can also serve as a metaphor. The grooves in the shell, which come together at a single point, represent the various routes pilgrims traveled, eventually arriving at a single destination: the tomb of Saint James in Compostella.

St James spent time preaching in the Iberian Peninsula and after his death (c. 45 AD) was buried in Galicia. The most compelling of these stories refers to a hermit who is said to have seen a bright star with a glowing light that fell to earth amidst a field where the bones of St James were subsequently found. This "field of the star," in Latin *campus stellae*, became the Spanish toponym Compostella.

There are also traditions associated with the Camino like the custom of carrying stones from your homeland. These stones are a symbol of the burdens that you want to get rid of during the journey. At the Cruz de Ferro (literally the Iron Cross), in the mountains behind Astorga, you throw away your stones, for to reach this point in the journey is a major accomplishment. The mountain trail winds slowly upward to a height of 1505 meters, and you drop your stones along this arduous path as tokens of triumph, both over the Camino and over self. Today, the pile of rocks is so large that only the most daring pilgrims will climb to its summit and deposit their rocks directly at the foot of the large Cross erected on the mountaintop.

At the western end of the Meseta we reached the city of Leon. The Cathedral here is another masterpiece of Gothic architecture. It is famous

for its 125 medieval stained glass windows which spread colorful, rippling beams of light across the nave. At our Mass on one of the Cathedral's side-altars we were joined by other pilgrim-walkers who were on their way to Santiago.

Leon is where many begin their pilgrimage. By starting here many people avoid the so-called dull and boring Meseta. These new comers would overtake us and greet us with a loud and cheerful "Hola" or "Buen Camino". We weary ones, who had been on the Camino for over a week by this time, could only mutter a weak response.

Refugios

By the time we had reached Leon we were experienced walkers and campers. We camped at night rather than use the accommodations called 'refugios' or 'albergues'. There were a number of advantages to this choice. First, it was inexpensive, as all fields along the Camino are free for pilgrims to stay the night. You also have the freedom to stop where and whenever you want. Those using the refugios are under pressure to find accommodations before they are full, and the good ones have no vacancies by the early afternoon, limiting them in the distance they can travel each day. We fell asleep under the stars to the chirping of cicadas and woke to more sounds of nature: bird songs, rooster calls, the braying of a donkey, or the ringing bells around the necks of nearby cows.

The refugios are another story. They may be small or large, old or new, spotless or dirty; most have bunk-bed, and men lounge indiscriminately in the same rooms as women. I have been told there is little silence in these dorms. Throughout the night you hear the sounds of wheezing, coughing, or the clearing of a throat; you hear the puffers and snorters, whistlers and grunters, snorers of all kinds. It's a veritable symphony of dissonance!

After a few days of walking we had learned never to be caught without water. Along the Camino you will come across public fountains where you can fill up your water bottle. Most fountains are helpfully labeled "potable" or "non-potable". It was essential to keep an adequate supply of water on hand because keeping well hydrated was essential to success. You learned never to

Cross on the side of the road leading to Compostela.





Mount Cebreiro, detail of the basis of the calvary showing St. James as a pilgrim.

drink water from an unsigned fountain. Those fountains were useful, however, for doing your laundry, or better yet, cooling your feet.

Food

Food was less of a problem. Cafes and bars along the Camino would offer breakfast of café con leche or freshly squeezed orange juice along with toast, croissants, or a choice of 'bocadilla' (sandwiches). Everyone eventually tried the bocadilla. A crusty baguette is cut in half, and then each half sliced lengthwise and filled with ham, cheese, chorizo, salami or a combination them all. You could also substitute a tortilla, which in Spain is not a flour or corn product but an egg omelet or quiche. At lunch time you would be offered menu 'del dia' or menu 'de peregrinos'. This substantial meal would cost about €10 and would consist of 2 to 3 courses, including wine. Getting food on the Camino is an exercise in patience. If ten people are ahead of you ordering a coffee and sandwich, the server makes the coffee, then the sandwich for that first person. No money exchanges hands. She then deals with the second person, and so on, each order being individually made. When you have finished eating you join the line-up to pay, often having to remind the server what you bought, as she had forgotten.

Hobbling stage of the journey

At Leon some of us entered the hobbling stage of our journey and needed to find medication for blisters. We all suffered from blisters, and it didn't seem to matter whether you wore boots or shoes. Some of our blisters were the size of a dime, others as large as or larger than a loonie. We learned how to treat blisters with moleskin, and discussed the efficacy of other remedies. We also learned how to walk with blisters. After 30 minutes of walking, once your feet have warmed up, you feel no pain until you again stop walking. What a great incentive to keep going! I say we all suffered from blisters. Perhaps the only exception was Fr. Wegner, who seemed rather to be walking on water throughout the pilgrimage!

A day and a half out of Leon we reached Astorga. Our backpacks were becoming too heavy and we needed to lighten the load. We debated what to ditch, keeping only the essentials. Groundsheets, books, and certain articles of clo-

thing were removed from our backpacks. At the main Post Office in Astorga we handed over a parcel containing 9kg of non-essential dead weight. The clerk knew without prompting which address in Santiago we should mail the parcel.

Astorga marks the beginning of mountain country. The Camino becomes a stony path heavily used by local farmers and cattle. The surrounding country is filled with heather, broom, and wild thyme. There are steep hills and even steeper descents through sleepy hamlets and river valleys. It is all very attractive and probably the most scenic part of the Camino. At one point the Camino becomes a stone track where the ascent is very steep, a 25-30% gradient over a distance of 900 meters. The view at the top gives the impression of walking along the roof of the world!

At O Cebreiro we were able to rest for a few hours. This is a most attractive village, high in the mountains, with stone houses that have thatched roofs. Fr Wegner said Mass at the ninth-century Iglesia de Santa María Real. This is the oldest fully intact church on the Camino. A number of other pilgrims were also able to attend. It is said that the Holy Grail was once hidden here in the Middle Ages. There is also a legend that in the fourteenth century a local farmer is said to have fought his way through a snowstorm to get to Mass in the church. The priest exclaimed his disbelief that the farmer would go to such lengths just to get a bit of bread. At his Mass the priest noticed that the bread and wine had turned into flesh and blood.

Inter-dependance

A walking pilgrimage of such great length gives you opportunities to face many challenges. You walk kilometer after kilometer over rough stones, dusty roads, rutted farm tracks, normally under a blazing sun. Then add to that a 15 kilogram backpack. After a while your shoulders and back become stiff and painful. You try to reduce the pain by shifting the pack as you walk along. You pull straps together here, make them looser there; you stop to move the weight around inside; you adjust the hip belt, or put your hands under the pack to relieve the pressure. You try to adjust every strap that can be adjusted. By this stage of the journey you have become an experienced backpacker.



A pilgrimage also forces you to think about another challenge – your independence, or rather your inter-dependence. None of us can live without the help of the others. Situations arise when we have to allow others to do what we cannot do for ourselves. This writer was often helped along by the others, and he is grateful.

We were a group of ten, and became twelve when a couple from Belgium joined us mid-way. The kindness of everyone was a constant lesson. Every gesture of goodness stood out as a lesson of love and encouragement. Kindness was also extended to us by strangers. For example, our parcel of excess stuff presented a problem. When we reached the Santiago Post Office, we were not able to collect the package because the name on the parcel (Fr Wegner) did not match the name on the passport of the person picking it up. We explained the situation to the clerk, who then talked to her supervisor. The answer was, “The rules cannot be changed and that’s it!” No discussion! The clerk was embarrassed and apologetic. We said a silent prayer to St James. Minutes later this clerk asks us to describe the parcel. We are able to give the exact dimensions and colour, including the kind of cord used to wrap the parcel, plus its contents. She handed it to us and we were on our way. We thanked her and told her that we would say a pray for her at the tomb of St James.

On another occasion I had to spend a night in one of the refugios because the pain in my left foot was too intense. On leaving the next morning I saw two German women, mother and daughter, rubbing balsam wax into their feet, and then covering their feet with powder. The daughter said to her mother, referring to me, “He’s an Englishman,” so the mother explained in broken English what she was doing. She kept rubbing her chest. The daughter (in better English) explained that it was the custom to rub this wax into your chest when you have a cold. They also had been treating their feet daily with the same ointment since they started out at Burgos and had not experienced one blister! Looking at my blistered feet she then gave me a tube of this wax.

Plenary Indulgence

At Santiago Cathedral the custom is to embrace the statue of St James. You have to wait

in a long line, but after some weeks on the Camino you have cultivated the virtue of patience. Most then venerate the relics and then offer up prayers and petitions, hopes and wishes which have travelled all that long distance from home. I had written about 9 petitions in an envelope, but there was no receptacle for my plea, a coincidence which I initially found odd. On further thought, however, this made sense. With thousands filing through the Cathedral each day where would all this paper go? Fr Wegner then said Mass on the relics of St James. All the altars along the route had relics, but this altar was certainly the best endowed of the Camino.

Outside the Cathedral in the city itself there were throngs of people milling about, not just pilgrims or tourists, but all those associated with the commercial activities of the big city. In contrast to this hustle and bustle, Galician musicians, dressed in costumes of another era, played an ancient form of bagpipe, accompanied by women, similarly dressed, who performed old folk dances. This provided a pleasant diversion to the noisy city activities. The thought occurred to me that perhaps the bagpipe might not be a Scottish instrument. God forbid!

What happens next? We all parted ways. As some said their good-byes, there is a hint of a sorrow because everything has come to an end. Yet this element of sadness was overshadowed by the great joy springing from the knowledge that you finally reached Santiago. The journey was over. The prayer that was started at Burgos has been answered, and you give thanks. St James has not let you down. You finally return to your regular life, your daily routines, telephone calls, answering letters and e-mails, hearing the latest news on the radio or TV, and, worst of all, paying bills! The interior silence and quiet reflection of 16 days walking is broken. It is hard to return home without being a changed person, one who somehow misses the Camino.

Conclusion

If a retreat is important for spiritual growth, so too is a pilgrimage, especially a long, arduous one. No pilgrimage, however, is over until you assimilate what has happened along the way, and this leaves an indelible impression on the mind. In my case, the Camino pilgrimage was one of the most significant events in my life.



**Cathedral of León.
Detail of the southern
entrance.**

In memory of our beloved Maria Burke

By Mrs Livia Dora

This is not a life story but a short sketch from some main circumstances taken from her life.

I remember Maria Burke with a happy memory as a God-loving humble and happy person smiling often. A person who loved to laugh, who loved birthday parties, but also really loved to help people. But most of all, she loved God and had a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Maria left this earth on the morning of Holy Saturday, which fell this year on a First Saturday, April 3rd, 2010. Previously she had been given Last Rites by Father Yves Normandin (her honoured confessor). The funeral was held on Wednesday April 7th, with a Requiem Holy Mass celebrated at the beautiful traditional chapel of the Precious Blood Retirement Residence in Levis, Quebec, by Father Medard Bie-Bibang. She was buried at Mont Marie cemetery, not far from the residence where she had been living since almost the beginning of its opening as a home for the elderly.

Maria died in her 93rd year in the nearby hospital where she was often received due to her fragile health. She had been a devout member of the Third Order of the Society of St. Pius X.

Throughout all her life she suffered very much. I remember her telling me that as a child she lived in a Catholic orphanage in London, England, which was run by the Sisters whom she loved dearly. As a child she had been suffering with rheumatic arthritis and could not walk. The nuns took her to Lourdes in France, where she was cured by the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This left a deep impression on her soul for the devotion to Our Lady, to the Blessed Trinity and specially to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, and St. Michael the Archangel.

She said with loving words: "Our Lady made me able to walk but she made sure I may not be able to dance!". Maria limped a bit all her life and she also suffered from arthritic pain, especially during the time of Lent, which pain she offered up to Jesus instead of the fasting which she could not keep because of a serious condition of diabetes, due to which she would from time to time fall into a coma – but these annoyances did not keep her back from doing good.

She told me that during World War II, when most men in England were in the army, she for



a time drove a truck with munitions, and did other works of charity to help out where it was needed. She was a person of quick decisions of good will, but she sometimes needed to be reminded to reflect before acting, which she humbly accepted.

If I remember well, she told me that in England she was a nurse, but when she came to Canada she had been employed in a home. She loved children. She was short of stature and also short-sighted, quick to walk, or rather run. It was probably due to these characteristics that it happened that she had at least two serious accidents when a car and later a van knocked her to the ground. She suffered back and hip injuries and other serious pains.

When in the Sixties the Mass changed, she could not bear it, and went to Mexico where she bought candlesticks, altar clothes, and there someone gave her a beautiful carved crucifix as a gift. All these things she brought to Toronto, and somewhere she bought an altar Missal, cruets, and all the things needed for Holy Mass. When she heard about Father Yves Normandin who was saying the Traditional Holy Mass all over Canada, she wrote him a letter inviting him to Toronto. He accepted, came and if I remember well, he said his first Holy Mass at the late Miss Elizabeth Gail's home. Later the Mass was celebrated in a rented room which belonged to the University of Toronto. Since the beginning of our little group at the University room, a small group of the faithful, about 3-5 persons started to come together at Maria's apartment for every Wednesday to say the 15 decade Rosary, kneeling, to ask for graces to be able to have a church. This practice we still keep at the Church of the Transfiguration, in thanksgiving for the goodness of Our Lord and to ask for graces in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

It was at the University room where I saw Maria for the very first time, as she was occupied with setting up the altar (a table) with an altar stone brought with all the necessary things needed. Some other ladies were also helping her. She had set up an altar in her apartment, where occasional Holy Masses were celebrated by the priest who said the Holy Mass on Sunday, and then on the following Monday before leaving Toronto, he would come there to say Mass,

also for those of us who were assembled there. Maria would always invite all of us for a delicious hot breakfast afterward, while one of the faithful would drive Father to the airport right after breakfast.

In 1977, the Society of St. Pius X bought the priory at Shawinigan, and Father Vignoulou was sent there as Prior, assisted by Fr. Méry. When Father Jacques Emily became District Superior of Canada (1985), Maria again showed her worth and asked him to come to Toronto, to join our little group with the Society. It was only when this was realized that we were finally able to buy the old Baptist church, which under his supervision was renovated to be suitable as a Catholic church, and named the "The Transfiguration", because it was discovered on the Feast of the Transfiguration (August 6th) in 1991, and was bought later that same year on the Feast of All Saints.

Maria then helped much with the renovations and later mainly in the kitchen to care for the priest and for the helpers, of whom several (very generously) came on Mondays by car from Levis, Quebec, and drove home for the weeks end. They did this sacrifice for a few weeks, to help with the carpentry, plumbing, and paintings – a true Catholic cooperation never to be forgotten.

Maria was so generous that she gave all her best cookware for the use of the church kitchen, completely forgetting her own needs. Only when she came home did she realize that she had no pot left to cook her own meals.

After much work, her health really started to decline and she became too tired to help others, she finally decided to move to the Precious Blood Residence which by then had opened its doors for seniors. Once that decision was made, Maria made sure to have a room close to the chapel where she spent much time in prayer daily.

To her great regret, slowly, she had almost completely lost her sight and could not read her daily prayers anymore; but even then she said: "God's will be done."

Maria is survived by her daughter Mercia, and her grandson Michael. May she rest in peace.



Working at the re-fitting of the new Toronto chapel. Maria Burke is on the right.



Intimate celebration at the church of the Transfiguration. Rev. Fr. Emily, Maria Burke and a few collaborators.



Important work on the inside and the outside of the Toronto chapel.





Altar of the Carthusians in Burgos, Cathedral of Burgos, rose-window of the Cathedral, processional cross at the Cathedral's museum.



Camping for the night: the pilgrims prepare their tents. The Meseta, torture for the minds and the feet.



Castile, early morning: the pilgrims cast long shadows. Mass in the cathédral of Leon



Ascent of the mountains of Galicia in late afternoon. Sunset.



The Cathedral of Compostela, Mass at the tomb of St. James, the Main altar over the relics. Sunset over the «End of the World» at the end of the pilgrimage, west of Compostela

Memories of the Pilgrimage to Compostela

