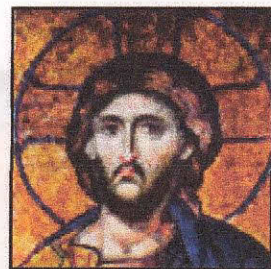


CELEBRATING THE MASS IN LATIN

JUNE 20 AT THE CATHEDRAL



Fr. Rhone Lillard, F.S.S.P., who had been serving in the diocese as a deacon, was ordained at the end of May and will return to celebrate his First Solemn High Mass here at the Cathedral on Sunday, June 20. This 10:00 a.m. Mass will be in the Extraordinary Form of the Latin Rite, which means this celebration will follow the 1962 rubrics (that is, the rubrics in place before the Vatican Council.)

It has been over 40 years since older Catholics prayed the Mass in this style, but they may remember how solemn and beautiful it was. Younger Catholics and converts may have only heard about this venerable style. Perhaps they've seen it in movies, without realizing how closely connected are the old and new styles (*what we call the Extraordinary and the Ordinary Forms*) of celebrating the Eucharist. For this reason it might be helpful for you to know what to expect and how to participate in this form of the Mass.

When people experience the Extraordinary Form of the Mass, their reaction is generally positive. They like the Mass and find it easy to pray, but they commonly ask three very important questions:

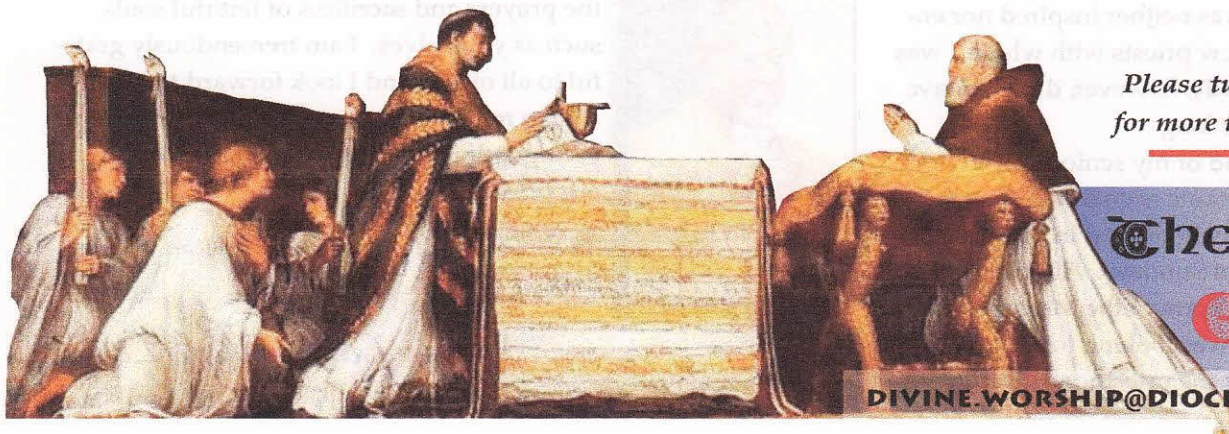
- WHY DOES FATHER PRAY WITH HIS BACK TO THE PEOPLE?
- WHY IS LATIN THE LANGUAGE OF THE MASS, WHEN NO ONE SPEAKS LATIN ANYMORE?
- and
- WHY IS THERE SO MUCH SILENCE?

Let's take some time to answer these important questions this Sunday and next so that you will be better able to pray the Mass which Fr. Lillard celebrates on the 20th.

In the older form of the Mass, and sometimes as well in the newer form, the priest faces the altar instead of the people. He isn't really turning his back on the faithful, though it can look that way. What he is really doing is facing in the same direction as the people, so that as he prays to the Father, it is clear that he is praying on behalf of the people. Think of the priest as the point of a spear, leading the way forward.

Another reason, as Bishop Slattery explained it in his September 2009 column in the *Eastern Oklahoma Catholic*, is that the most ancient liturgical practice of the Church was for the priest and the people to face the east together. Bishop Slattery wrote: "When we study the most ancient liturgical practices of the Church, we find that the priest and the people faced the same direction, usually toward the east, in the expectation that when Christ returns, He will return "from the east." At Mass the Church keeps vigil, waiting for His return. This position is called either *ad orientem*, "toward the east" or *ad Deum*, "to God."

The second and third question may be more vexing: 'Why pray in Latin if no one speaks Latin?' and 'Why is there so much silence in the older form of the Mass?' This silence seems like dead space - especially for those of us who are used to lots of hymns and lots of activity! Let's answer these two questions next week in this same space in the Cathedral Sunday bulletin.



Please turn this page
for more information.

The Latin
Mass

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FR. RHONE LILLARD, F.S.S.P.

NEWLY ORDAINED FR. RHONE LILLARD WILL CELEBRATE A FIRST SOLEMN MASS OF THANKSGIVING ON SUNDAY, JUNE 20 HERE AT THE CATHEDRAL IN THE EXTRAORDINARY FORM

Though I was baptized Methodist, there was not much religion in my house while I was growing up. At 13, I began looking into Christianity on my own, reading Sacred Scripture and praying. Fortunately I never became too involved with any particular denomination.

At the age of 15, however, some neighbors who were good Catholics began coming around the house. Initially, I put forth the usual fatuous arguments against praying to Our Lady and the saints, however after much reading and praying, I came to understand the indispensable role of the Mother of God in our spiritual life and in the redemption of man.

Moreover – *through the intercession of Our Lady, as well as St. Pio* – I soon became convinced of the truths of the Catholic Faith. Shortly thereafter I entered the one true ark of our salvation, the Catholic Church.

Because of the very faithful Catholics who were instrumental in my coming into the Church, I had some understanding of the troubles afflicting the Church at the time of my conversion. Though I was a daily communicant and involved with the Legion of Mary, I was becoming more and more frustrated with the local parish and was neither inspired nor encouraged by the few priests with whom I was in contact. Our Lady, however, did not leave me in this state for long.

Toward the end of my senior year in high school (1989), I became acquainted with the traditional mass being offered in San Diego (my hometown) on Sundays. After assisting at the Extraordinary Form of the Mass, I knew I had found what I was looking for. Shortly thereafter I began considering the priesthood. But I did not have a

clear understanding of what God wanted from me. So as I tried to figure out God's will, I went to work for a couple of years.

I entered the seminary in 1992; but left after 3 ½ years in order to try to fill some of the many gaps in my education. In 1996 I entered Thomas Aquinas College in California, and after graduating in June of 2000, I entered the Ph.D. program at the University of Dallas. This was a decisive time for me, for when I began graduate studies, I set aside thoughts of a possible vocation to the priesthood.

In Dallas, however, I became acquainted with the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter, whose priests were serving in Dallas. Their example, the many graces I received at their Masses, and the kindness and prayers of the parishioners I knew, helped to clarify the question of my vocation.

In 2005 I entered the Fraternity's seminary and was ordained a priest on May 22, 2010.

My journey to the altar has been long, but the longer I have traveled the more convinced I have become that I have been carried much of the way, especially when things were difficult or unclear, by the prayers and sacrifices of faithful souls such as yourselves. I am tremendously grateful to all of you and I look forward to being able to remember you at the altar and to repay your goodness with the Body and Blood of our beloved Savior.



In the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Our Lady,

Father Rhone Lillard

