



INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST

April 2007

Dear Friends of the Institute of Christ the King,

Surrexit Dominus vere, alleluia!

Having at long last reached Easter, we rejoice now in the fulfillment of Our Lord's mission upon this earth, the reason for which He was born of a Woman, taking on flesh and becoming Man. **At the Institute, our seminarians continue their path toward fully uniting their own lives to Our Lord's mission in fulfilling their call to become "alter Christus," another Christ.**

During Lent, one of our American seminarians, Abbé Henry Fragelli, came one step closer to this goal, being ordained a Subdeacon by the Most Rev. Luciano Giovannetti, Bishop of Fiesole. Now, we turn with expectation to the ordinations which will take place in June. **As mentioned in my last letter, on June 15th, 2007 at 1:00 pm, on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, we will have the first priestly ordinations of the Institute to be held here in the United States, when two of our American seminarians will be ordained to the Holy Priesthood by His Grace, the Most Reverend Raymond L. Burke, in his Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis.** Our General Superior, Monsignor Gilles Wach, will be present, as well as the Rector of our Seminary, Father Philippe Mora. A contingent from our seminary will also come from Gricigliano to perform the several liturgical roles of the Ordination ceremony and the Pontifical High Mass of His Grace, as well as to form the Schola that will provide the Gregorian Chant. The beauty of this liturgy in the Traditional Latin Rite will be further enhanced by the participation of the St. Louis Cathedral Choir. All are warmly invited to attend this heavenly liturgy and joyous occasion. (In response to some inquiries, tickets are not necessary.)



On the following day, Saturday, June 16th, Abbé Matthew Talarico will celebrate his first Mass at our St. Francis de Sales Oratory in St. Louis, and on Sunday, June 17th, will be the first Mass of Abbé William Avis. Both these first Masses are, of course, open to all, after which the ordinands will give their first blessing as newly-ordained priests, a blessing to which a special power and charisma has always been attributed.



Recently we had a foretaste of the occasion that will be our ordinations in the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis. On March 7th, the feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, co-patron of the Institute, a Solemn High Mass was offered there by the clergy of our St. Francis de Sales Oratory, Fr. Karl Lenhardt, Fr. Jacques Fournier, and

Ordination of Abbé Henry Fragelli to the subdiaconate at the Institute's Seminary chapel in Gricigliano



The Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis

Deacon William Avis. It was the first Solemn High Mass to be celebrated in the Cathedral Basilica in forty-two years. Five hundred faithful were in attendance, along with members of the St. Louis diocesan clergy, including the Most Reverend Robert Hermann, Auxiliary Bishop in St. Louis.

Our choice of the Feast of the Sacred Heart for the date of the first ordinations in the United States is not arbitrary. Devotion to the Sacred Heart is very central to the charism of the Institute of Christ the King. You may recall that it was on this feast last year that our Shrine of Christ the King received its decree of erection. **This year, in preparation for the Feast of the Sacred Heart, we will be holding a novena of Masses celebrated at the Shrine of Christ the King here in Chicago. You may use the enclosed slip to send us your intentions, which will be presented at the Altar of Sacrifice at each Mass offered during those nine days. We ask that during this novena you kindly keep our soon-to-be ordained seminarians most especially in your prayers.**

At our apostolate in Chicago, developments continue. With the Shrine's location near the University of Chicago, a growing number of members of the student body are becoming aware of the availability of the Traditional Latin Mass at such close proximity. Certainly, over time more and more among the students and faculty will discover this sublime treasure, particularly once the currently gutted church is transformed into a jewel of architectural beauty at the service of Catholic life. But already there is some participation in the University. Recently, graduate students of the University among our faithful organized a showing of the movie *The Passion of the Christ*, inviting our Father Andreas Hellmann to give a talk and lead the discussion that preceded the showing. The event was most appreciated.

Elsewhere, in Green Bay, His Excellency Bishop David Zubick conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on nineteen of our young faithful at St. Joseph's Oratory, on Saturday, February 3rd. The ceremony was followed by a reception at which the members of our Oratory, confirmands, family and friends were able to express their gratitude to His Excellency.

As our activities accelerate, and the work of the Institute of Christ the King becomes more widely known in the United States, the demands upon the small staff and limited resources of our American central offices has increased significantly, stretching our operation to the limits. Added to this, of course, are the always present needs of our seminary and preformation program for candidates, particularly given the ever-growing number of vocations. Our base of donations must increase significantly if we are to carry out our mission at the level demanded of us, so that we may continue forming faithful, dedicated priests trained in the Traditional Latin Rite, supporting the work of our apostolates both here and at our missions abroad, and communicating the reality that the treasures of Catholic Tradition are for all.



Bishop David Zubick, flanked by Fathers Moreau and Meney, conferring the Sacrament of Confirmation

*St. Joseph's Altar
celebration at St. Mary
Oratory in Rockford*



For example, one of the activities of our American offices is the upkeep of our website, a particularly powerful tool, not only as a source of information for people of all levels of interest, but also as a vehicle to reach potential vocations. Many of the young men who inquire about a vocation with the Institute of Christ the King find us through the Internet. This tool can be even more effective and more readily and frequently updated, but this, of course, requires more resources in funds and time-of-staff. The witness of a young man of 21 years of age responding to our online questionnaire demonstrates the need:

“I began practicing the Faith at the age of fourteen after a long process of conversion, and had heard that Mass 'used to be in Latin' but wondered and regretted that it was not now. I had no idea that there was a previous liturgical tradition. One day, probably in 2001, I decided to type 'Latin' and 'Mass' into a search engine, and was quite surprised at what I found. [Since then, the 'Traditional Latin Mass'] has kept me on the straight and narrow, and has been a fount of grace. Without it, I am certain that I would not have been able to respond to and to grow in God's Grace as much as I hope that I have. Having recently stayed at Gricigliano [the Institute's Motherhouse and Seminary] has really made me reconsider whether God may be calling me to the priesthood, a call that I may have found hard to discern outside the context of the Classical Latin Mass.” P.C.

I am deeply grateful, in the name of all at the Institute, for your interest and support, and most especially for your prayers, essential to our work, of which you are very much a part. I ask you most urgently to be generous in supporting this our shared apostolic mission. On behalf of Msgr. Gilles Wach, all the priests, oblates, seminarians and sisters of the Institute of Christ the King, I assure you of our prayers to Our Risen Lord for you and all your dear ones, that His Light and Ardent Love will draw you ever closer to His Sacred Heart and ultimately to Heaven.

Yours very truly, in Christ the King,

Msgr. R. Michael Schmitz
Vicar General & Provincial Superior for the United States

PS: Thank you for your continued support in prayer and donations to the Institute of Christ the King. Please send us your intentions so that we may include them in our Novena of Masses in preparation for the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

The Eleventh Annual Seminar of the Latin Mass Community of Rockford will take place on May 19th, 2007, on the general theme “Islam: What the West Needs to Know.” For more information, call 815-965-5971.



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THE JOYS OF HEAVEN

“This is heavenly!” By this exclamation people most often express a feeling that overcomes them in a moment of special happiness, be it caused by the experience of love, beauty, art, or even by more material things such as excellent food or drink. For most of us, Heaven is a place of joy and bliss, and thus, we deem that earthly happiness can become a foretaste of Heaven. However, the essential joy of Heaven certainly does not come from anything linked to our human experiences here on earth.

The source of eternal happiness is God himself, “because we shall see Him as He is”(1 John 3, 2). This does not only entail seeing Him as an object from the outside, but “seeing” here has the connotation of gaining a deeper intuition of His essence. This, for instance, may happen when a loving couple silently looks into each others eyes or when we “read a wish from the eyes” of our loved ones. The depth of such a regard does not halt at the merely exterior and often brings the joy of a more profound, heartfelt, intuitive knowledge and blissful experience.

This sheds light on the mystery of the beatific vision, as defined by Pope Benedict XII in 1336: “We define that the souls of all the saints in heaven have seen and do see the Divine Essence by direct intuition and face to face, in such wise that nothing created intervenes as an object of vision, but the Divine Essence presents itself to their immediate gaze, unveiled, clearly and openly; moreover, that in this vision they enjoy the Divine Essence, and that, in virtue of this vision and this enjoyment, they are truly blessed and possess eternal life and eternal rest.”

Without ever fully capturing the infinite essence of the Almighty One, the Blessed are continuously introduced into an ever more profound supernatural vision of God’s Glory which exceeds all human possibilities and eternally brings greater fulfillment and bliss. In the last lines of the Narnia Stories, C.S. Lewis gives a hesitant description of what that may mean for the Blessed: “All their life in this world and all their adventures... had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on for ever and ever: in which every chapter is better than the one before.”

This is only a scanty fictional description of the inscrutable mystery mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah and St. Paul: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him.” (Is 64,4 (3); 1 Cor 2,9). One fact remains for sure: the satisfaction of all our aspirations and the deep contentment we derive from it will be so complete that all our troubles will be over and, in the blissful contemplation of God face to face, we will possess eternal rest.

Thus, through their spiritual marriage with Christ, the Blessed benefit from the seven “bridal endowments,” three of the soul – vision, possession, enjoyment – and, after the last judgment, four of the body – luminosity, impassibility, agility and subtlety – similar to the body of Christ. According to the common teaching of the most solid theologians, the Blessed not only live without any kind of pain and in perfect harmony with the will of God, but they rejoice in the company of Christ, the Blessed Mother, the angels and all the saints. Though being different in their personal glory according to their merits, all the Blessed will exult in their spiritual gifts and in those of the other Blessed. After the last judgment, their bodies will also be a special source of delight, as shall be the contemplation of the wonders of the New Jerusalem. In addition to celebrating God’s own Glory and all their own graces, the beatific vision in God comprises everything the Blessed may have a holy interest in knowing. This includes all the mysteries that the soul believed in while on earth, the company of those whom death separated from them, the veneration paid them on earth, and the prayers addressed to them.

These are all but a few of the special graces and gifts enjoyed by the Saints, but they reveal a glimpse of their eternal ecstasy and can give us a faint idea of the essential exhilarating happiness coming from the continuous vision of God like an ever brighter ray of light from the morning sun. Hence, it is indeed most desirable to go to Heaven and worthwhile to struggle up the narrow path in this valley of tears. The most pleasurable and happy moment of earthly bliss we ever may experience is only a mere shadow of the smallest joy of heaven! There, one happy day, we shall see God as He is and He shall be all in all!

Msgr. R. Michael Schmitz