Editors Note: We are happy to publish this reflection on the past-Vatican II era from Raymond Marcin in conjunction with republishing his excellent examination of the Oath Against Modernism.

Raymond B. Marcin

These "Confessions" are the beginnings of the thoughts and reminiscences of an eighty-six-year-old Catholic who has had a life-long a life-long involvement in, the Catholic Faith. I write these reminiscences in the hope that they might be of some interest to those Catholics who still adhere to their Catholic heritage and are struggling, as I have been, with the changes in the Catholic Church— "seed" changes that began sixty years ago in the Second Vatican Council and that have grown into "sea" changes in recent years under the leadership of our current Holy Father, Pope Francis.

My *hope* is that the reader of these "Confessions" might find a clearer understanding of what the Catholic Church once was, how and why it has changed (I believe) for the worse, and (in later articles) whether there are viable solutions for the crisis that now engulfs our Catholic Faith.

My *fear* is that my critiques and proffered solutions in these "Confessions" might turn the reader away from the Catholic Faith. To turn my *fear* into a *hope*—I hope the reader will understand that my critiques and proffered solutions to what has been happening within the Catholic Church are not aimed at disparaging the Catholic Faith, but rather at affirming its truths as best I can in the current chaos that besets our Church, and from the memories that inform my aged perspective.

And finally, I hope the reader may be moved to think more deeply about the basic teachings of Jesus that gave originating birth to our Catholic Faith.

Copyright © catholicfamilynews.com. All rights reserved.

Catholic Family NEWS

March 2025 Vol. 32 Issue 3 $3.50US / $3.50CDN / $2.00UK

The Economic Debate
Turn to page 3



What is Distributism?
Turn to page 9



The Legacy of Justin Trudeau
Turn to page 17



"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you" (1 Corinthians 11:23)

Bishop Richard Williamson and Dr. David Allen White: Requiescant in Pace

By Murray Rundus

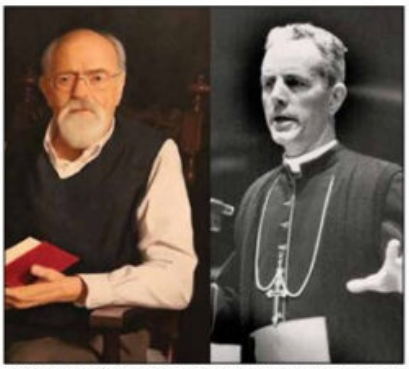
The beginning of 2025 has been a tragic month for traditionalists, losing two heroes of the traditionalist movement. The first was Bishop Richard Williamson, formerly of the SSPX who after suffering a brain hemorrhage passed away on Wednesday Jan. 29, 2025. Just less than two weeks later, his friend and fellow traditionalist pioneer Dr. David Allen White passed away in his home on Feb. 11. Both men were monumental in their influence on the traditional Catholic movement. Many people owe their vocations, ordinations, conversions, and more to these men. We ought to remember their legacies, pray for their souls, and continue to pass on what we received from them.

Bishop Williamson

His Lordship was born in England during the year of 1940 to English and American parents. A gifted student, young Richard Williamson excelled at school and even went on to study at the University of Cambridge. This intellectual life would translate to his later time with the Society of St. Pius X where he emphasized the need for the seminarians to be cultured, and we can see his academic excitement in his now well-regarded lectures that so many are familiar with. Dr. White, in his introduction to a set of the Bishop's letters, said of him: "One of the great insights granted to Bishop Williamson that reappears throughout his writing is the need for such cultural grounding to keep a soul centered and a mind ordered, especially in the noise and devastation of the contemporary scene. Inclining to analyze things intellectually (which of course makes him a true devotee of St. Thomas Aquinas and the *Summa Theologica*, the bedrock of all seminary training), he also nevertheless understands the special need in our time for artistic beauty to fill the heart and artistic truth to move the soul, helpful complements to the ultimate truths of the Catholic faith."[1]

Williamson was born into Anglicanism, but like many Protestants of the modern age became discontented with it and became an atheist. Williamson in reflecting on these times often said that rather than being a Protestant or an atheist, he was a liberal. I relate to this, as the boundaries of "Protestant" or "intellectual atheist" culture are so blurred in the modern period, and I believe anyone who has spent time as an adopter of either of these positions will know that the same spirit animates them, the one of narcissistic, hedonistic Liberalism. He would later break out of this liberal shell in 1971, being received into the Catholic Church and soon advised to pursue the seminary. Williamson did not fit the mold of what the seminaries

Continued on page 28



Dr. David Allen White, left, and Bishop Richard Williamson, right

Reviewing Trump's First Days

By Stephen Kokx

It is obvious Donald Trump has learned a thing or two since first winning the presidency in 2016. The flurry of executive orders he has signed, coupled with a much-improved cabinet and messaging team, is a massive upgrade since the last time he lived at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

So far, Trump 2.0 seems to be relying on a "flood the zone" approach that makes it nearly impossible for Democrats and their media allies to keep up with him.

I laughed out loud when 86-year-old Congressman Maxine Waters and a group of her fellow aged Democrats were scolding an innocent security guard outside the Department of Education's headquarters in Washington DC last month for not allowing them to enter. What they would have done after entering is anyone's guess. Maybe use the bathrooms?

By all indications, Trump's second term is shaping up to be one of the most consequential four years of any president since Franklin Roosevelt. In some ways, it could be as impactful, if not more so, than Abraham Lincoln's time in office. But that depends on many factors and it is important to look at current events through a Catholic and not a "conservative" lens so our judgment is not clouded.

The Pro-Life Movement and Trump

The biggest surprise over the past month and a half has been President Trump's pro-life policies. While he hasn't walked back his support for in-vitro fertilization yet, Trump did get rid of a Biden-era rule that directed the military to pay for travel expenses for service members who were crossing state lines to obtain abortions.[1] He also signed an executive order recommitting the federal government to abide by the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits taxpayer dollars from being used for abortions.[2]

Trump surprisingly delivered remarks to this year's March for Life by way of recorded message. His Catholic Vice-president J.D. Vance spoke at the event in person, telling the exuberant crowd that "no longer will the federal government direct FBI raids on the homes of people like Mark Houck and

Continued on page 15



Please check this label for expiry date. Renew ad on pg. 27.

CATHOLIC FAMILY MINISTRIES, INC.
P.O. BOX 694, NIAGARA FALLS, ON, L2E 6V5

Copyright © catholicfamilynews.com. All rights reserved.

March Issue Out Now!

The 1950s

Not many people alive today will have clear memories of the condition of the Catholic Church in the post-World-War-II era. Churches were full. Most city and suburban churches offered five crowded Masses every Sunday. Saturday Confession lines were tediously long. Parishes were well staffed with pastors and curates. Parishioners followed the Sunday (and daily) Mass attentively with their Latin/vernacular missals. Seminaries were full. Catholic grade schools were staffed completely with nuns. Children learned and understood the timeless truths of the Catholic Faith from their age-appropriate "Baltimore" catechisms. All seemed well—better than well. The Church was thriving. It really was.

I remember those days well. They formed my adult mindset. I attended a Sisters-of-Mercy grammar school in the 1940s, a Jesuit high school in the early 1950s, and spent my college years studying as a seminarian for the parish priesthood in the late 1950s. I believed in and trusted the Catholic Church of the 1940s and 50s.

Near the end of the 1950s, however, a new scent was in the air. In the Autumn of 1958, the austere yet highly revered Pope Pius XII died. Several days later, the Catholic world welcomed the personable new Pope, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, whose chosen papal name (John XXIII) seemed to herald a refreshing newness to the papacy after thirty-six years of Popes named "Pius". (Pius XII had been our Pope since 1939. Before Pius XII, Pius XI had reigned between 1922 and 1939.)

Conversations among my fellow seminarians, however, seemed to anticipate *change* as well as newness. Many began to speak excitedly about changes in the Church, and enthused happily about doing away with Latin, modernizing the Mass, and easing the strictness of Catholic moral principles. It was my first experience with division within the Catholic Church.

I remember one troubling group-conversation in particular. A fellow seminarian named Dick McBrien, who was a year ahead of us on the trek towards the priesthood (and an advocate for change in the Church), seemed somewhat upset, and he told (really "warned") us that in a few short years, unless Church law was changed, we would all be required to take something called the "Oath Against the Heresy of Modernism" (a requirement that Church law imposed world-wide on all seminarians, as they approached ordination to the priesthood). Dick explained that the Oath would prevent all of us from advocating for changes in Catholic teachings and would prevent us from trying to "modernize" the Church.

Copyright © catholicfamilynews.com. All rights reserved.

[Parenthetical interlude—The Church law requiring the Oath was not changed until a decade or so later. My friend Dick McBrien presumably took the Oath Against the Heresy of Modernism, despite his conscience-wrenching opposition to it, and went on to become Rev. Richard P. McBrien (1936-2015), author of many articles and books on the theme of modernizing the Catholic Church, including a mammoth tome entitled simply *Catholicism* which became the required text in religion courses at many Catholic colleges and universities throughout the nation (despite a scathingly negative review of the tome by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops[1]). I have an autographed copy of one of Dick's earliest books, entitled *Do We Need the Church?*.]

Getting back to the excitement among my old seminary classmates about changes in Church teachings—I had *not* entered the seminary in order to change or modernize the Church, but rather to become a priest in the Church as it was—as I had believed and trusted it to be. So, my friend Dick's attitude towards the Oath Against the Heresy of Modernism, as well as the excitement that so many of the other seminarians were experiencing over the prospect of "modernizing" the Church, confused me.

The sense of "belonging" in the seminary seemed to diminish inside me. I agreed with *none* of the activist changes that the other seminarians seemed so excited about. The loss of that sense of belonging weighed on my mind and, at the end of the school year in 1959, I decided to take a year's leave of absence from the seminary to think things over. I never returned from that leave of absence.

Three years later, Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council.

Copyright © catholicfamilynews.com. All rights reserved.



The Second Vatican Council

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)

In the Second Vatican Council the Catholic Church changed. Shortly after the close of the Council, the Catholic Mass changed. The Catholic Church and the Catholic Mass "modernized."

Copyright © catholicfamilynews.com. All rights reserved.

My memory is that most Catholics greeted the changes as surprisingly new and interesting developments in their age-old and seemingly never-changing Catholic Faith. In short, they greeted the changes with a bit of the excitement that I had seen in the eyes of my old seminary classmates. It seemed as if many Catholics agreed with the thought that there had been something wrong with the Church—something that needed fixing, or at least modernizing. Again, the sense of not belonging troubled my mind.

Most Catholics welcomed the "New Mass" because it was in the vernacular, and they accepted their new participatory role of happily and loudly giving what had been the altar boys' muffled responses to the priest in the "old Mass"—not fully realizing that the "New" Mass was not simply the "old Mass" translated into the vernacular, but rather was a subtly changed "Liturgy".

The "old Mass", known as the Tridentine Mass, was understood to be the non-bloody re-presentation of Jesus' *Sacrifice* on Calvary—the "old Mass" had always been referred to, throughout the ages, as the "Holy *Sacrifice* of the Mass."

The New Mass, known as the "Novus Ordo" Mass, focused then as it still does now on celebrating the commemorative-meal theme in remembrance of the Last Supper, and it is punctuated by a participatory, communal "Sign of Peace" in which the people attending the Novus Ordo Liturgy exchange hand-shakes and pleasantries with their neighbors for about half a minute just before getting in line to be *handed* their Lord and Savior (God Himself) in Holy Communion.

Accompanying the changes in the imposition of the New Mass—perhaps not surprisingly—has been the *cessation* of belief in the Real Physical Presence of Our Lord Jesus (body, blood, soul, and divinity) in the consecrated host, among a clear majority of the Catholic laity—a 2019 survey by the Pew Research Center concluded that two-thirds of Catholics no longer accept the doctrine of the Real Presence.[2]

As a result of all the changes, after a decade or so of credulous enthusiasm among the laity, the downward trend toward the Church of today began to take hold.

Churches were no longer full. Sunday Masses began to decrease slowly in numbers and in attendance. Saturday Confession lines slowly shortened and finally disappeared. As vocations to the priesthood slowly dried up, parishes slowly became understaffed. Nuns slowly disappeared from Catholic parochial-school faculties. References to the old Baltimore Catechism became guaranteed laugh-lines in sermons. Slowly, as the initial credulousness and enthusiasm waned, the Church began to seem alien to some Catholics who remembered the Church of their youth. The Church was no longer thriving. It really wasn't.

Copyright © catholicfamilynews.com. All rights reserved.

Examining the Oath Against Modernism

---

[1] See, on the Internet, Review of Fr. McBrien's *Catholicism*, at https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=541&CFID=121743&CFTOKEN=22026492 .

[2] Gregory A. Smith, "Just one-third of U.S. Catholics agree with their church that Eucharist is body, blood of Christ," *Pew Research Center,* Sept. 5, 2019.

Copyright © catholicfamilynews.com. All rights reserved.