



Father James McLucas

Dearest Friends,  
Last year when I addressed *The Latin Mass* conference in Monterey, near the end of my talk I spoke these words: “The situation [for Catholics of tradition] is grim: our only answer is the creation of a canonical structure by the Holy See which will deliver us from those who hate us in our own Church – but who exercise authority over us. I am hopeful, but far from confident, that we will receive relief from the present Holy Father. If we do not, many priests and laity will be forced to make decisions which will be painful. I can only guarantee that, like all major catastrophes in the history of the Church, the solution will be very messy, and far from neat.”

As of February 11 of this year, I entered into my fifth year of the battle to restore my canonical faculties. During this time I have been unable to exercise publicly the functions of an ordained priest of the Roman Catholic Church. The final disposition of this situation remains unresolved. Ultimately, this condition, more than any other, has led me to the reluctant decision to resign as editor-in-chief of *The Latin Mass*. My present and continuing ecclesial circumstance is incompatible with holding the sensitive position of editor-in-chief of a serious Catholic international journal.

# “All things have their season...”

My labors at *The Latin Mass* have been among the most fulfilling of my life. Six and a half years ago I committed this journal to the counter reform required to address the disruption of Catholic life brought about by the liturgical and theological revolution that has been ongoing since the end of the Second Vatican Council. My fellow editors and I were determined to craft an instrument which would accomplish this task through the calm and intelligent discussion of vital ideas, as well as presenting the beauty of Catholic culture – a mission which permits humanity’s graced cooperation in the creative and imaginative exposition of the splendid landscape of the One True Faith upon the canvas of a fallen world. To the extent that we have been successful, the bulk of the credit belongs to you, our loyal readers, and to the artful erudition of our writers.

I cannot depart without reiterating a constant theme of this journal: inherent to beauty is truth – and to my dismay the truth is that there is a converging consensus among Catholics whose insights and judgments I have always valued. They are in ever-increasing agreement that the crisis in the Church is deepening, not abating.

The attempt to eliminate the ancient Mass from the liturgical life of the Church is at the heart of the present calamity – and the ancient Mass will be at the heart of the eventual authentic “counter reform.” Permit me, therefore, to end my final letter in *The Latin Mass* by quoting from a portion of the first letter that

I penned as the new editor:

Frank Sheed, the great street corner Catholic apologist of the twentieth century, once said that the devil despised most the souls in hell who ‘lowered the intellectual level of the place.’

The ancient Mass protected the intellectual health of the Church for at least fifteen centuries because language and ritual escorted the mind and heart toward the transcendent majesty of God. The unambiguous scent of sacrifice enveloped the ancient Mass and properly oriented Catholics toward their need for redemption.

The ancient Mass safeguards culture because it prohibits the order of the two great commandments from becoming inverted, thus uncompromisingly promulgating and protecting the truth about God and man. It effortlessly unveils beauty because it incarnates the Catholic view that reality is a matter of discovery, not of invention.

All who are associated with *The Latin Mass* are determined to immerse you in a Catholic world of faith and culture where Our Lord continues to be made visible, protected from the lengthening shadows of a secularism intent on hiding Him.

Please remember me in your prayers. I will miss you. ✠

*In Domino et Domina,*

Father James McLucas