

good will it do? Might it not be well, while we still use the Latin, to make a significant pause here? Could we train our representatives at the altar, the servers, to say this 'Amen' forthrightly, with a sense of having agreed to give all to the Father, by, with, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Ghost? And could the priest wait, please, until they have said 'Amen' before continuing? Why all the rush?

The rubrics of the Mass provide many opportunities (more than my knowledge can suggest) for the priest to show by his bodily actions and his manner of speaking that we are indeed present at a sacrifice, that it is the same sacrifice offered on Calvary, that it is efficacious for us to be here. Then we can begin, here and now, to know why we should attend Mass frequently.

Some of us have been moved by grace to attend daily Mass, often (I am not included here) with great hardship, in inclement weather, against the antagonism of near relatives, and so on. But apparently there are many many others who have not yet received this grace. I suggest, humbly and respectfully, that a little attention to the drama of the Mass will move yet more of us to come to Mass. We do need to understand why the Mass is so important; I plead for instruction of the faithful during the Mass by means of the due performance of its dramatic words and acts. If we really understood, who can tell the results?

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## 2. EVENING MASS IN A VERMONT VILLAGE

OURS IS A small mission parish in Vermont. This is the first year that we have had evening Mass once a week during Lent. Tonight the members of our church family will be gathering for the third evening. We will come to offer ourselves with thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father in union with his Son, our Lord.

There will be mud and slush on the cars that are driven in from outlying areas 'off the black top'. In the congregation there will be men who have spent the day working in mines, bakeries, factories, offices. A number will have observed the necessary fast of three hours previous to Mass so that they may receive

Communion. With them at the altar rail will be women who have worked in offices and mothers whose family cares started very early in the day. Children will be kneeling beside them. For all these, the words of the postcommunion prayer will have special meaning:

‘May the Sacrament of Thy Body and Blood, O Lord Jesus Christ, which we have received, sanctify our minds and hearts, that we may deserve to become partakers of the Divine Nature’.

Our congregation is not large, sixty last Thursday evening, and we are certainly not a sophisticated group. Because we are a small assembly in God’s Household, there is an intimacy in our worshipping together that visitors sometimes speak of wistfully. We can hear every word that our priest says. At the Sunday Mass and the two week-day Masses we make all the responses customarily made by altar boys, including the *Judica* and *Confiteor*, and they are made, I believe, intelligently. We say the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*. We also pray the *Pater Noster*, and we say the *Domine non sum dignus*. The prayers and lesson are read in English by men of our parish. After reading the Gospel in Latin our priest reads it to us in English. On week-days when there are only a few of us, we place our own hosts on the paten held by the altar boy at the railing.

I am a convert, very grateful to have had this experience of the liturgy. The Missal has been indispensable, but for use at home only. The parts of the Mass in which we participate are soon learned by heart. The original instruction was given by a layman who says that the people, and especially the children, picked it up quickly. In the six years since I have been in the parish there has been no instruction. Newcomers have picked it up from the original group. The chief contribution of our priest is that he offers Mass slowly, audibly and reverently.

Summer visitors from Europe and from our own country speak with enthusiasm of the spirit of the Mass in our chapel. Parishoners from neighbouring towns, especially young married couples and families with children, join us frequently.

I appreciate Father Pepler’s remarks about liturgy’s being an action rather than words. However, in the next parish, where I go to Mass on weekdays when there is none here, this is what I

find: communion before Mass; then the few people present finger their Rosaries in prayer throughout the Mass. How can they have any idea of the Mass as a sacrifice in which they should be participating before they receive the Living Bread?

As for 'mystery', I sympathize with Father Pepler's thought. Because silent, wordless prayer was the medium most 'natural' to me before coming into the Church, I could be a person who preferred a silent congregation. But I fear that non-vocal participation often means that in many a mind and heart there is vacuity, or at least much vagueness. The Mass means so much to me that I yearn for every person to experience it in so far as he is able—to participate in the exchange of gifts and to perceive within himself the fruit of redemption.

Because it is essentially difficult for man to keep his balance, and because he has a natural tendency to exaggerate, there probably are some unfortunate results of the Liturgical Movement; but for its solid accomplishments, some of us in this country village are deeply grateful.

Tonight as we go out of our chapel there will be an almost full moon lighting up the patches of snow on the hillsides. May the words of the Collect of tonight's Mass remain with us, as part of our inward experience:

'Grant us, O Almighty God, so to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent, that we may deserve to be numbered for ever among the sheep that hear His voice'.

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### 3. BAD EFFECTS OF BAD TRADITIONS

Mr Griffith Bowen, of Ebbw Vale, writes in the 'Catholic Herald' of July 12 as follows:

SOME TIME AGO a few of my fellow workmen started to show some interest in our religion and I took considerable pains to answer all their questions and correct the many false ideas they had. One objection (a common one) was that Catholics worship