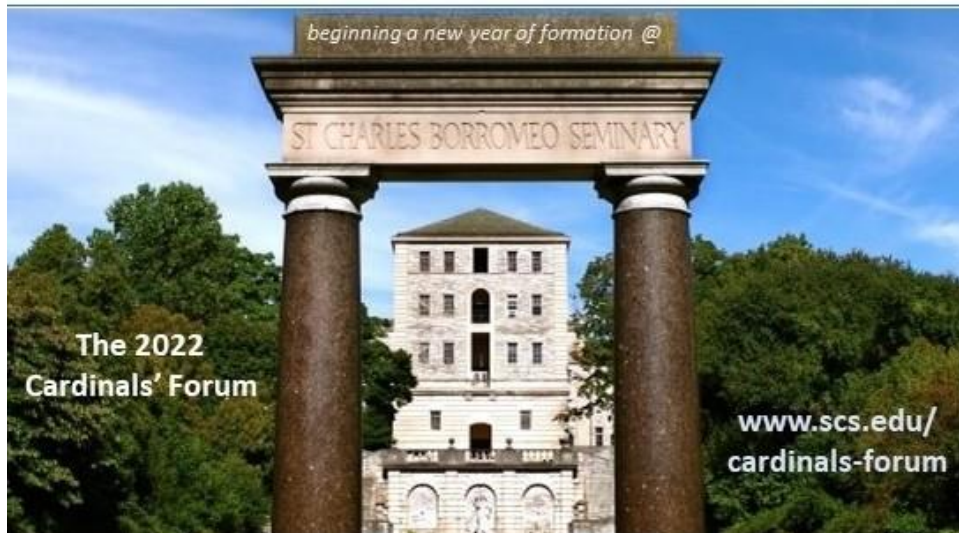


“From Sunday to Sunday”
the liturgical formation of the People of God



presentation by

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Desidero Desideravi, Pope Francis

[The Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis bears a subtitle: “on the Liturgical formation of the People of God” with a Latin Scripture citation of Jesus’ very words at the Last Supper, translated: “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you, before I suffer.” Luke 22:15

Verse 16 completes our Lord’s statement, and is worthy of considering: “for, I tell you, I shall not eat it [again] until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God.”]

Kingdom of Christ

Jesus Christ is King! In the words of institution, our Lord eagerly desires to eat the Passover with us, he invites us to *pray* with Him. “Thanks to the shedding of the blood of the Immaculate Lamb, now each might set about the personal task of achieving his own sanctification, so rendering to God the glory due to Him.” He established the divine Priesthood, a salvific mission passing down the treasure, tradition, and prayer of the Church from generation to generation.¹ A chief vehicle for this mission has been Sacred Art, Architecture, and the greatest of the arts, music.²

In contrast, modern man has an infatuation with novelty, desiring to readily eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Lord unworthily, not only directly in the Eucharist, but within an atmosphere of novel creativity, which has misshapen the Sacred Liturgy. Pope Francis specifically speaks of this in the section titled “Ars celebrandi”, whereby stating that we should not be “mere rubricists”, yet he rightly informs us that it is even worse to have “wild creativity without rules.”³ Additional Popes and Theologians have written about the importance of a true Ars Celebrandi; namely, a necessity of a tri-fold Liturgical act, it must be True Art, Holy, and Universal.⁴

Within the realm of Sacred music, primarily understood as “Singing the Mass” this wild creativity came to a height in the last millennia, even before Vatican II. Sung Liturgical prayer gave way to fully spoken texts, personal emotion, popular ideologies, and experiments in “making the Mass relevant.” This continues in our present day, where we attempt to separate Catholicism into factions: liturgically, culturally, or aesthetically. The heavenly liturgy is not simply whatever we make of it, it requires our study, care, formation and guard. Jesus desires to love us and share the heavenly banquet with us, he desires to pray with us, daily! In this way, by participating regularly in and at Mass, we become a defender of truth and love, guarding our faith from being misshapen.

St. Charles Borromeo

Perhaps the most ardent defender of the Sacred was St. Charles Borromeo. His important life during the 16th century counter-reformation provides us a surprising

parallel to the times we live in today. As an instruction following the Council of Trent, he wrote two large books of 33 chapters⁵ equivalent to hundreds of pages on the design, ordering, and embellishment of churches and her Catholic worship. These words were not contrived, but based on ancient writings, classical Greek and Roman architecture, as well as Magisterial teachings, again, passed down from generation to generation. St. Charles received his doctorate in Civil and Canon Law and he collaborated with classically minded experts of his time, such as Palladio, Michelangelo, the famous Medici family, St. Ignatius of Loyola, and many others resulting in some of the greatest masterworks of Church art and architecture of all time.

St. Charles was a rubricist in the right sense. Because of him we have such things as a grand central nave, or perhaps the Church of the Gesu or rebuilt St. Peter's Basilica. We would be amiss to discard his writings and patronage. The Liturgy and her music are chiefly to be drawn from ancient Sacred Scripture and timeless elements of a long-standing faith. Our music must be authentic and alive, exemplary and engaging, God-centered and salvific. It deserves all our reverence and respect, hospitality and hope. It mostly requires our humility, to receive what others have passed down in beauty, truth and goodness. "Obedience alone on our part would be an adequate response."⁶

Proposed Solution

In conclusion, it may be helpful to list 12 ways we may increase our prayer life. In this way we can analyze our liturgical heartbeat. If we pray these with a sincere heart, we will joyfully see the richness of our faith.

1. Praying the Sign of the Cross more regularly and Genuflection
2. Praying while we bow at the Names of Jesus, Mary, the Holy Trinity, and Saints on their Feast days
3. Praying the Sung Presidential Prayers: Opening, Offertory, and Post-Communion Collects
4. Praying of the Sung Psalms and Propers: Entrance, Psalm, Alleluia, Offertory, Communion, Divine Office

5. Praying the Sung Ordinary: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Acclamations, Agnus Dei
6. Praying the prayers of the Saints: i.e. Eucharistic hymns of St. Thomas Aquinas, Te Deum of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine, etc.
7. Praying the many Litanies, invoking Saints and Angels
8. Praying the Angelus, Marian Antiphons, Holy Rosary
9. Praying Gregorian Chant and Sacred Choral Music
10. Praying in bible studies, sodalities, and formation opportunities, (Join choir: Pope Francis said we should promote the schola cantorum in every parish!)
11. Praying for our Priests and Seminarians, for their liturgical formation
12. Praying in Devotions such as Eucharistic Processions and Eucharistic Adoration

This is our Faith. This is the Faith of the Church. We need not be afraid of it. For if we are to be its guardians, and truly desire unity, we must not distance ourselves from our ancestors. They prayed in unity with one another throughout the world by use of a common language: the Liturgy, which is not subject to our time, tastes or pleasure. It requires our time, talent and treasure. Musically, the treasury of chant and choral music have remained integral to the Sacred Liturgy throughout time, albeit developing. We must hold on to our faith, and can prudentially add to it, without discarding tradition. For God lovingly desires us in His Kingdom, and He desires to *pray* with us.

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¹ Pius X, Pius XI, Ven. Pius XII. Mediator Dei. 1-2, Vatican II, Pope Benedict XVI.

² Sacrosanctum Concilium, 112.

³ Francis. Desidero Desideravi. 48.

⁴ St. Pius X, Pius XI, Ven. Pius XII. Vatican II, St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI, etc.

⁵ St. Charles Borromeo, *Instructiones Fabricae et Supellectilis Ecclesiasticae*.

⁶ Skeris, Msgr. Robert. Theology of Sacred Music.