

Novus Ordo Missae – III

December 5, 2015

If the evidence for eucharistic miracles taking place within the Novus Ordo Church (see EC 436 and 437) is as serious as it seems, then Catholics must conform their minds to the mind of God, and not the other way round. And Catholics cleaving to Tradition have a special need to work out what God meant by the miracles, because they will not easily understand what he can have meant, when they know how distasteful to him the Novus Ordo Mass (NOM) must be in itself.

For many centuries God has been working such miracles. The primary reason has always been to strengthen the faith of Catholics in a truth of the Faith not easy to believe, but very close to the Heart of God. That after the Consecration at Mass of the bread and wine God himself takes the place of their substance is an occurrence so outside the normal course of nature that this invention of the love of God wishing to give himself as food and drink to his sheep may be practical, but it seems also incredible. So in due time and place God has wrought visible miracles in some shape or form to help doubting souls to believe. A secondary reason for these miracles, especially where there has been some profanation or other of the Holy Eucharist, is to remind Catholics of the sacred treatment and adoration always due to the humble appearances behind which hides God himself.

Both of these reasons apply today when the NOM has severely diminished the sense of the Real Presence without always nullifying it (see EC 437). Who can deny that the rite of the NOM and its practice throughout the Novus Ordo Church, e.g. Communion standing and in the hand, have set countless Catholics on their way to disbelieving in the Real Presence, and countless priests on their way to a lack of due respect in their handling of the Holy Eucharist? Who can deny that both disbelief and disrespect towards it have hugely increased

since the NOM was introduced in 1969? Humanly speaking, the wonder may be not that there have been miracles at all within the framework of the NOM, but that there have not been many more. In any case, God knows best.

However, these miracles – always assuming they are authentic – have lessons also for the Catholics of Tradition who have to some extent or another stood back from the Novus Ordo framework. The lesson most obvious is that not all Novus Ordo Masses are invalid, nor all Novus Ordo episcopal Consecrations nor all priestly Ordinations, as “Traditionalists” can be tempted to think. This is surely because while since the 1960’s a mass of Catholic sheep have become too worldly to deserve to keep the true rite of Mass, they have loved the Mass enough not to lose it altogether. The NOM may have been allowed by God to make it easier for Catholics to leave the Faith if they wanted to, but not impossible to keep it if they wanted to.

Therefore the NOM and the Novus Ordo Church as a whole are dangerous for the Faith, and Catholics are right who have clung to Tradition to avoid the danger. But as they have had to put a distance between themselves and the mainstream Church, so they have exposed themselves to the opposite danger of an isolation leading to a sectarian and even pharisaical spirit, disconnected from reality. There are true sacraments in the Novus Ordo and true Catholics, for whom God cares, and “Traditionalists” should be happy that there are. Let Traditionalists’ relative isolation not make them feel that they are bound to deny that there is anything Catholic at all left in the Novus Ordo. That is unreal, and reality’s pendulum will swing back, as with the leadership of the SSPX, presently failing to see the on-going need for isolation from the mainstream Church. No. Tradition still needs isolation, but with a generous and not an isolationist spirit.

Kyrie eleison.