

Tridentine Community News

August 26, 2007

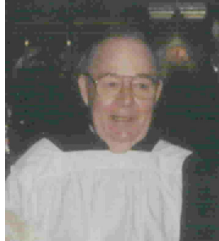
The Father of Detroit's Latin Mass Movement

The year was 1982. DVDs and the Web were over 10 years away. "Portable entertainment" still often meant a pocket AM transistor radio (such a quaint term) with a plastic earphone, permanently tuned to CKLW. The Sony Walkman was a new fad, primarily because it was the first portable, relatively hi-fi, stereo device. But something we take for granted today had not yet appeared: Stereo TV broadcasts.

It was in this environment that WDIV-TV, Channel 4, decided to try an experiment: They would partner with a local FM radio station to simulcast an event, so that viewers could hear stereo audio accompanying the video. But that event had to warrant the extra effort. It really had to benefit from that stereo audio. What event did they select? The 1982 Christmas Eve Novus Ordo Latin Midnight Mass at Old St. Mary's Church in Greektown.

The pressure was on. Who took the ball and organized a Mass with an orchestra, solemn ceremonies, and altar servers, worthy of such an important broadcast? Worthy of displacing the usual televised Mass from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral? It was the man who arguably pioneered the Latin Mass movement in Detroit, Richard Langrell. Before the 1984 *Quattor Abhinc Annos* and 1988 *Ecclésia Dei* Tridentine Mass Indults, Dick Langrell was essentially the lone lay organizer of solemn Latin Masses in this region.

Shortly after the 1982 broadcast, Dick refocused his efforts on Detroit's St. Joseph Church, today St. Josaphat's cluster partner, where he was the prime mover in upgrading a low-profile *ad orientem* Novus Ordo Latin Mass into a more solemn liturgy, with a full team of altar servers as well as a choir every other week. Dick trained legions of boys and men to serve at the altar. A retired dispatcher for the Detroit Fire Department, Dick had the demeanor of a professor: a patient teacher, yet fearless to insist that priests and servers alike follow the rubrics of the Mass exactly as Rome specified. Dick trained from memorized rubrics; reference books like Bishop Peter Elliott's *Ceremonies of the Modern Roman Rite* had not yet been published. Dick gained his knowledge directly from studying the (Latin) rubrics in the Novus Ordo *Missále Románum*.



We have Dick to thank for the fact that the Latin Masses at St. Joseph remained *ad orientem* in a time of political opposition. Dick was responsible for convincing St. Joseph's then-pastor Fr. Thomas Bresnahan to hold solemn processions of the Blessed Sacrament, with two thuribles. And the Ordinary Form Latin Mass that people experience today at Assumption Grotto is really attributable to Dick's work: Fr. Perrone was the weekend assistant at St. Joseph for many years in the 1980s and witnessed and learned from Dick's exacting standards.

It was Dick's dream that the Tridentine Mass return to the Archdiocese of Detroit. One of his happiest moments was attending the (Tridentine) First Mass of a newly ordained priest in

1998 at Windsor's Assumption Church, interestingly now the home of Windsor's weekly Traditional Mass. Days before he passed away in 2003, he took great solace in learning that Windsor's indult Mass had moved into a "real" church, St. Michael's, from its previous humble nursing home chapel location.

It would therefore be a source of great joy to Richard Langrell to learn that the very first announced and scheduled Tridentine Masses in the Archdiocese of Detroit in the wake of the Pope Benedict XVI's Motu Proprio, *Summórum Pontíficum*, will be at his own parish, Detroit's St. Joseph Church.

New Tridentine Mass Site: St. Joseph Church

Fr. Mark Borkowski has decided that St. Joseph Church will regularly host Tridentine Masses, for a variety of reasons: Several people who attend St. Josaphat's Tridentine Mass are in fact current or former members of St. Joseph Parish. St. Joseph has a strong, experienced Latin music program and is known for *ad orientem* Latin Masses in a beautiful Gothic setting.

Starting on October 28, 2007, the 10:30 AM Mass at St. Joseph Church on the fourth Sunday of each month will be a Tridentine Missa Cantata, just like St. Josaphat and Assumption's Masses. This will not affect St. Josaphat, which will continue to hold its own Tridentine Mass the same day at 9:30 AM.

On Christmas Eve, the Midnight Mass at St. Joseph will be a Tridentine Mass with Orchestra. St. Josaphat and Assumption Tridentine Music Director Wassim Sarweh will lead the chant portions of the Mass. This will address the request of many in our region for a Tridentine Midnight Mass.

On Christmas Day, there will be Tridentine Masses at 9:30 AM at St. Josaphat in Detroit and at 2:00 PM at Assumption in Windsor, as usual, to accommodate those who prefer daytime Masses.

Fr. Borkowski also holds out the possibility that St. Joseph may host the occasional Tridentine Low Mass on weekdays; and the occasional Missa Cantata on special feast days. This column will keep you posted on the details as they are worked out.

Intercessions From the Pioneers

Detroit and Windsor now have two powerful intercessors for the Extraordinary Form of the Mass: Seven months after Dick Langrell passed away in 2003, Cardinal Maida announced the Detroit indult at St. Josaphat Church, 20 years after Pope John Paul II permitted such a thing. In a previous column, we mentioned Dick's counterpart in Windsor, Murray Harris. Six months after Murray passed away in 2006, the Windsor indult was permitted to move to Assumption Church, Windsor's most appropriate location, where Murray had always wanted the Tridentine Mass to be celebrated. Surely these are not coincidences. In both practical and spiritual ways, these two pioneering men paved the way for the beautiful weekly Classic Form Masses that we enjoy today on both sides of the river.

Comments? Ideas for a future column? Please e-mail tridnews@stjosaphatchurch.org. Previous columns are available at www.stjosaphatchurch.org