



From the President...



This month, rather than running a feature article, I want to pose some thoughts and questions regarding where we go from here. Most specifically, I want to explore in greater detail the canonical structure of the Personal Apostolic Administration created for the Padres de Campos in Brazil and what this can mean for us.

On the 28th of June, 2002, Pope John Paul II, by Papal Bull, gave by pontifical mandate to Father Fernando Rifan, the position of coadjutor of the Personal Apostolic Administration of St. John Mary Vianney in the territory of Campos, Brazil, and at the same time, proclaimed him “Titular Bishop of Cedomusa with all the rights and obligations that belong to the Episcopal dignity and to that position in accordance with the law.” When the then administrator, Bishop Licinio Rangel passed away, Bishop Rifan became the official administrator of the S.S.J.V.

As we learn from Bishop Rifan in his Pastoral letter published in *Latin Mass* magazine in Spring of 2003, “This apostolic mandate is the canonical mission, which gives legitimacy to the Episcopal consecration, and it is of such importance that the Council of Trent sets an anathema against anyone who would say that without having this canonical mission, one is a legitimate preacher of the Word of God and minister of the sacraments.”

Bishop Rifan is a successor of the Apostles the same as any other bishop, but the P.A.A. he governs is uniquely dedicated to celebrating the liturgy solely according to the books of 1962.

What is a Personal Apostolic Administration? **It is a diocese without borders headed by a successor of the apostles.** In the case of the S.S.J.V., Bishop Rifan says: “In our Apostolic Administration, for our tranquility and security, we preserve with great love and devotion the faculty which the Holy Father has granted us: the use of the traditional liturgy and discipline, this great treasure of the Church, as our own *propritate* and authentic profession of the Catholic Faith, in perfect communion with the Chair of St. Peter. The Holy Father assures us that our attachment to the traditional liturgy of the Roman Rite is legitimate. We preserve Latin in the liturgy because it ‘is a clear and noble indication of unity and an efficacious antidote against all corruption of pure doctrine’ (Pope Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*)”.

Perhaps most important to us, Bishop Rifan writes: “The Holy See has also granted to our Apostolic Administration permission to exercise pastoral care of the faithful attached to the traditional liturgy **outside** of the territory of Campos (with the agreement of the local bishop), with the intention that they will remain in communion with the Church. We already have outside of the diocese of Campos about a thousand persons inscribed in our Apostolic Administration who benefit from the traditional liturgy of our ministry thanks to the good relations and agreements with the bishops of other dioceses.”

“...We remember that our Apostolic Administration is personal and not territorial; this means that **it may exercise jurisdiction, not only in the territory which constitutes the Campos diocese, but also over persons outside of Campos attached to the traditional liturgy** (Decree *Animarum bonum IX*). The priests should remind the faithful that **this inscription is necessary**. Any person who refuses to inscribe declares himself exclusively subject to the diocesan bishop, with all the corresponding duties, and lacking, therefore, the privileges granted to the subjects of the Apostolic Administration.”

I bring this subject to your attention for the following reasons:

1. For the fourth time since we established *Una Voce* – Springfield Area in 1999, God has given our bishop the opportunity to accept priests dedicated to the Traditional Latin Mass (and Sacraments) to serve us in southwest Missouri and he has refused.
2. The messages from Rome in recent years have become more urgent that persons attached to the

traditional liturgy be granted access to it. In 1998 the Pope, on the anniversary of *Ecclesia Dei* again urged bishops worldwide to provide for us. On May 24, 2003, by the will of the Pope, Cardinal Castrillón celebrated a solemn high Mass in the Traditional Liturgy at St. Mary Major. His sermon that day, by its wording, indicated that the Traditional Mass is a separate rite without directly saying so. We have been stating this since Father John Mole wrote his book, *Whither the Roman Rite?* where he most ably expounded on this subject. Bishop Rifan in his statement quoted above clearly believes it is a separate rite. In a recent interview with Ramon Arroyo of EWTN, Cardinal Ratzinger stated in regard to the Traditional Mass: “What has been holy for the Church in the past remains holy and cannot be abolished.” Francis Cardinal Arinze and Jose Cardinal Medina have both weighed in positively on the topic since May 24th.

3. The establishment by the Holy Father of the Personal Apostolic Administration of the Society of St. John Vianney in Brazil with Bishop Rifan now its head is a direct sign the Pope means business.

Is now the time for us to petition for inscription into the P.A.A. the Pope established in Brazil? What would be the benefits? Drawbacks? What would it entail? What would be the role of *Una Voce* – Springfield Area?

Is now the time? I believe so for the following reasons: we have been given the opportunity by God through the Holy Father to have a bishop dedicated to our rite. After all the prayers, penances, and following Church law in a petition process, we have arrived at a point where clearly we must be open to possibilities other than some day being granted permission for the use of the 1962 liturgical books by a diocesan bishop who does not accept the differences in the rites as real. If we are ever to have priests to serve us and a normal parish life, we must not be blind to what, in my opinion, God has set before us. Moreover, the more laity who petition Bishop Rifan for inscription into his P.A.A., the stronger his position before the Pope for either expanding his territorial rights or urging the establishment of a P.A.A. in North America. I remind our chapter that we have petitioned Cardinal Castrillón no less than three times in the past four years for a canonical structure that would grant us the use of the 1962 liturgical books without interference from a diocesan bishop. Is this God’s answer to our petition?

What would be the benefits? Membership in the Personal Apostolic Administration would give us our own bishop: Rifan. We would no longer be under the authority of the diocesan bishop, whomever he may be. This means that our children could be confirmed in the old rite either by Bishop Rifan when he travels to North America to celebrate the sacraments at F.S.S.P. parishes, for example, or by surrounding bishops with permission of Bishop Rifan who would undoubtedly grant it. We would have our choice of Tulsa, Kansas City, Little Rock, Mountain Home, or Cherokee Village. Weddings and baptisms as well as First Holy Communions would apply in this case as well. The F.S.S.P. need have no qualms about offending a diocesan bishop such as ours, because that would no longer apply. If diocesan priests in other dioceses are serving an *Ecclesia Dei* community, they too would have no worry because we would have Bishop Rifan’s blessing.

Members of the P.A.A. could form a corporation to establish an escrow account to start funding for a chapel for the members. While under current circumstances Masses and Sacraments could not be celebrated in our diocese, with trust in God’s Providence, we could proceed once we have been inscribed into the P.A.A. We could use the building for meetings, prayer groups, catechetics and Bible studies as well as social events until such time as Bishop Rifan were able to supply us with priests or a P.A.A. for North America were established. It would be the beginning of a normal parish life. If a P.A.A. were established for North America, we could transfer our inscription if need be. Remember that private chapels have always existed in the history of the Church for various reasons. Under “good” Queen Bess when the priests were hung, drawn, and quartered as were the Catholics who hid them, private chapels were the only ways the faithful got to Mass.

What would be the drawbacks? The first would be not having a priest until circumstances change. But I submit we will *never* have a priest if we don’t take the first step. Remember that God is the one who opened this door, not man. He does not play with us. Secondly, in our rush-rush society, the inconvenience of communication to a foreign country could cause delays and necessitate lead time for permissions for sacraments, etc. This is a small price to pay for belonging to Bishop Rifan’s P.A.A. We also have email to speed things up. Bishop Rifan speaks English so language is not a barrier. Third, the ignorance of local Catholics and clergy concerning the legitimacy of the rites according to the 1962 liturgical books could cause some hard feelings. We would have to be willing to put up with misunderstandings in spite of our best efforts to educate others.

What would it entail? This is the easy part. We can send a letter petitioning Bishop Rifan for inscription

into his P.A.A. Then we pray and wait for his answer. The worst he can say is no.

What would be the role of *Una Voce* – Springfield Area? In keeping with our Purposes defined in our Constitution and By-laws, we could draft the petition and collect signatures for the petitioners' convenience. We could publish a petition form in our newsletter for those who can't attend meetings so they could sign their own and the chapter could forward all of the petitions in a packet to Bishop Rifan. We would continue our role of educating others as to the meaning of the Traditional Mass, promoting the use of Latin as the official language of the Church through our studies of the Mass and the Sacraments, and we could explain the structure of the P.A.A. under canon law to the skeptical or curious. Further we would continue our prayers, penances, and sacrifices for priests and bishops to understand and accept us as fully Catholic, not as some troglodytes frozen in some previous age of the Church which they would prefer never to have existed if they even give it any thought at all.

From the very beginning of the establishment of our chapter, I have said that Our Lord means for the Traditional Mass to be freely available in this diocese and that it will happen in His time and in His way for the greatest benefit of souls. We hear in the Bible: "Your ways are not My ways, your thoughts are not My thoughts." I believe that God has deliberately withheld the grace from our bishop to grant the Traditional Mass because He wishes to accomplish this good in a way that will benefit the entire Church, not just our local community. It will be done through human means by the grace of God aided by the intercession of the Blessed Mother. Each person must examine his own conscience to decide if he is willing to move forward in this matter. We have absolutely nothing to lose and everything to gain.

To put our situation into perspective, we are in a spot similar to our Byzantine and Maronite brothers and sisters. They, too, must go far out of Springfield to attend Mass in their own rite. In the last two centuries these Eastern Catholics were so badly treated by the American Latin-rite bishops that many of them turned to the Orthodox Church whose liturgy was identical and where they were welcomed. Thus, the Patriarch of Rome lost many of his fold. Today, Byzantine Catholics are accepted and their rite respected, but the damage has been done. Entire generations have been lost to full union with the Church. Our Holy Father has given us a possibility which, for the good of souls, we need to look at long and hard so that we do not thwart His will but rather facilitate its accomplishment.

If you have questions on this subject, please contact me by email: basozarkmo@worldnet.att.net or by phone evenings, 581-3648. I look forward to a discussion on this subject at our next meeting. Also, I don't want any members to feel pressured to join in this action. Although I see no reason not to do it, others may be more hesitant or outright opposed. If so, this is a personal decision which must be made after sufficient reflection and prayer.

Library Rules

The library has notified us that their security will be demanding us to leave at 9:00 each meeting. Apparently some homeless people have contrived to remain overnight in the library undetected, which has caused the stepped-up security. For this reason, all presentations will, of necessity, be restricted to 45 minutes so we have time to socialize since we see each other so seldom otherwise.

October Presentation

Your president will take the stage in October to teach how to use the Traditional Roman hand missal without getting hopelessly lost. Really, it's not that difficult once you get the basic idea. Please bring your missals with you. The missals contain much more than the Proper (What's that?) and the Common (What's that?) of the Mass. Come and learn the language so you will be even better prepared to assist at your next Traditional Mass. If you don't have a missal, someone will share with you.

Thanks to George Mueller for the excellent presentation he gave on how to read Sacred Scripture at our September meeting. We are very fortunate to have someone of his knowledge willing to put in the time to prepare for a talk.

Barbara A. Schoeneberger

