



LAY WITNESS

April 9, 2023

Easter Sunday

Vol. 41, No. 2

*to unite the faithful from all walks of life in order to
support, defend and advance the efforts of the teaching Church*

A Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

“Grace to you, and peace from Him Who is, Who was, and Who is to come” (Rev. 1:4).

As I prepare for the solemn Easter Triduum and the great Easter Solemnity, I took time to reflect on the words Saint Thomas More. He is one of the patrons of Catholics United for the Faith. During his confinement in the Tower of London, while he awaited his death, he wrote a book titled, “The Sadness of Christ.” He also wrote what is known as his “Final Prayers and Instructions.” Scepter Press published the works in a single volume, and it has become a favorite of mine. As I meditate on one of Jesus’ last words, “*Father forgive them, they know not what they do*,” I also recalled St. Thomas’ instruction on forgiving those who wrong us. At this time, I defer to his words.

How to Treat Those Who Wrong Us

A Godly Instruction, Written by Sir Thomas More, Knight, While He Was Prisoner in the Tower of London in 1534.

Bear no malice or evil will to any man living. For either the man is good or wicked. If he is good and I hate him, then I am wicked.

If he is wicked, either he will amend and die good and go to God, or live wickedly and die wickedly and go to the devil. And then let me remember that if he be saved, he will not fail (if I am saved too, as I trust to be) to love me very heartily, and I shall then in like manner love him.

And why should I now, then, hate one for this while who shall hereafter love me forevermore, and why should I be now, then, an enemy to him with whom I shall in time be coupled in eternal friendship? And on the other side, if he will continue to be wicked and be damned, then is there such outrageous eternal sorrow before him that I may well think myself a deadly cruel wretch if I would not now rather pity his pain than malign his person. If one would say that we may with good conscience wish an evil man harm lest he should do harm to other folk who are innocent and good, I will not now dispute upon that point, for that root has more branches to be well weighed and considered that I can now conveniently write (having no other pen than a coal). But truly

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Prayer of Catholics United for the Faith

O God our Father, who sent Your only-begotten Son to suffer and to give His life for the life of His Church, rule, protect, and nourish her continually, we beseech You. Teach us of Catholics United for the Faith to direct our zeal first of all to the renewal of our own hearts. Then, if it be Your holy will to allow us to be in any way Your instruments in the wider renewal of Your Church, give us the grace to know what services, small or great, You ask of us, and let the Holy Spirit teach us to perform them in obedience, patience, and charity, leaving entirely to You what fruits they may bear. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **AMEN.**

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,
have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Mother of the Church,
intercede for us.

St. Joseph, Head of the Holy Family
and Patron of the Universal Church,
pray for us.

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will I give counsel to every good friend of mine that unless he be put in such a position as to punish an evil man in his charge by reason of his office, he should leave the desire of punishing to God and to such other folk who are so grounded in charity and so fast cleaved to God that no secretly malicious or cruel affection can creep in and undermine them under the cloak of a just and a virtuous zeal. But let us that are no better than men of a mean sort ever pray for such merciful amendment in other folk as our own conscience shows us that we have need of in ourselves.

I pray this simple instruction will bless you as it has me. I pray it will help you forgive and so obtain forgiveness. And I pray that this grace of Eastertide will heal you of any bitterness against those who have hurt you and replace it with God's Mercy.

God bless you; St. Joseph keep you.

Peace,
Philip C. L. Gray
President

Notes

The Sadness of Christ and Final Prayers and Instructions, Thomas More, Trans. Clarence Miller, Ed. Gerard Wegemer, Scepter Publishers, 1993, pg. 142-143.

The Rite Time for the First Mass: How the First Mass is Connected with the Death of Christ

By Dermott J. Mullan

When Eucharistic Prayer I is used at Mass (aka: the Roman Canon; it is used in the 1970 and 1962 Missals), the priest speaks the following words leading up to the consecration: "On *the day before* He was to suffer, He took bread into His holy and venerable hands..." I have added italics to the words "*the day before*" in order to highlight an important difference between the culture in which we moderns live and the culture in which the Hebrews of Jesus' time lived.

In this article, I would like to suggest that our modern culture's understanding of the words "day before" does not express the realities of time understood by those who participated in the Last Supper with Jesus. Further, the modern understanding confuses the liturgical traditions of the Church and what is actually meant by them.

The Promise of Eucharist and the "Right" Moment for Its Fulfillment

In St. John's Gospel, the sixth chapter contains an extended discourse on the Bread of Life. In that discourse, Jesus taught his disciples that if they wished to have eternal life, they would need to eat His body and drink His blood. This was Jesus' first (recorded) teaching on what we would later come to call the Mass or the Eucharist. Jesus made no bones about how important it was going to be for His followers to consume the Eucharist: even though the Gospel records that "*many of his disciples*" (John 6:60, RSVCE) decided to leave Him as a result of this "hard saying", Jesus made no attempt to soften the teaching in order to retain those followers.

However, I would like to emphasize here what appears to me as a curious aspect of Jesus' approach: no matter how clearly He stated His promise to establish the Eucharist, Jesus made a definite choice NOT to establish the Eucharist on the day of the discourse which He delivered in John Chapter 6.

This naturally raises the following question: If eating the Eucharist was to become such an essential aspect of a Christian's life on Earth, why then did Jesus choose *not* to celebrate the First Mass right then and there, on the very day when He made His tremendous verbal promise? I can only assume that, evidently, the time was not yet right for the celebration of the First Mass.

The teaching found in John 6 occurred on a day which preceded the Last Supper by a certain interval of time. Here, I would specifically like to ask the following question: *How long* before the Last Supper was the promise in John 6 made? It is often not easy to extract with quantitative confidence from the Gospel what exactly was the chronology of the events in the public life of Jesus. Since there are mentions of several Passovers occurring during Christ's public life, it is likely that the time between the promise of John 6 and the Last Supper could have been as long as one year, but no longer than (roughly) three years. This suggests that the time would not be right for celebrating the First Mass until perhaps as many as three more years would elapse after Jesus' Bread of Life Discourse. This seems like a long time to wait for establishing a ceremony which (in the words of Jesus) is a necessary aspect of the life of a Christian.

The “Right” Time Is Here

This raises a natural question: When *would* the time be right to celebrate the First Mass?

It seems to me that the answer to this question depends on what the essence of the Mass was meant to be. Jesus wanted to make sure that the Mass would be in a real sense the *bona fide* re-presentation of one very specific event in His life. That specific event would not be His birth, His childhood, His hidden life, His miracles, or His teaching. No. Jesus decided that the primary event in His life which would be re-presented at every Mass would be His *death* on Calvary. As St. Paul says so explicitly in his first letter to the Corinthians, “*For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s DEATH until he comes*” (I Cor 11:26, RSVCE, *emphasis added*).

In order to emphasize this point, and in order to help us better grasp the astounding fact that God the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, actually died on the Cross, Jesus would establish the Eucharist under two separate and

distinct species, one solid (bread), the other liquid (wine). The fact that Jesus chose to separate these two species on the altar of the Mass at the time of Consecration would be a vivid way to re-present the separation of His Body and Blood which had actually occurred in a physical sense on one particular day in history on Calvary. And why would it be important to present the Body and the Blood as being separated at Mass? The answer is clear: because when His Body and Blood were physically separated on a particular day in history on Calvary, Jesus, a truly divine Person, did actually go through the process that every human being faces: that is, dying. The Roman soldiers who pierced the side of Christ on the Cross took it as a sure sign of death when they saw that all of Jesus’ blood had departed from His body.

Of course, the dying of a Divine Person is close to being a contradiction in terms: How can God, whose name for Himself is “*I am Who am*” (that is, I am someone who

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Fra Angelico: Communion of the Apostles
by Fra Angelico, circa 1437-1446

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MUST exist, I am someone who cannot NOT exist) ever experience the process of truly dying? Such a near-contradiction in terms is close in spirit to what St. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:20 about Jesus' act of redemption: "*He who knew no sin was made to be sin*". How can the sinless one ever "*be sin*"? St. Paul suggests a possible explanation in terms of a sort of "exchange of goods" by adding the words: "*so that we might become the very holiness of God*".

Now it is well known that the teaching of the Church is that Jesus is fully present even if a person receives the Eucharist under only *one* species (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1390). Therefore, the use of two species at the Consecration is certainly not necessary from the perspective of the Church's teaching on *receiving* the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Jesus is really, truly, and substantially present in either species of the Eucharist. Instead, the use of two species is meant specifically to be an outward sign which re-presents the *sacrificial* aspect of the Mass, i.e. the DEATH of the Lord.

This is not to say that His death is the *only* event in Jesus' life which is re-presented at Mass. It is true that, before Holy Communion, the priest breaks off a fragment of the consecrated Host and drops it into the consecrated wine, re-presenting the re-union of Jesus' Body and Blood in the resurrection. That particular action of the priest during Mass is typically not as vividly noticed by the congregation as the Consecration, when bells may be rung and the consecrated species may be incensed (Cf. GIRM, 150). As a result, it seems more natural that the members of the congregation will pay more attention to the re-presentation of Jesus' death.

Bishop Barron's Book and the Need for a Cultural Shift

In a recently published book called "Eucharist", Bishop Robert Barron presents in readable and very thoughtful terms the Church's teaching on the Eucharist using three distinct headings: meal, sacrifice, and Real Presence. Bishop Barron notes that, prior to Vatican II, the sacrificial aspect of the Mass used to be emphasized more: but after Vatican II, the pendulum swung over to an emphasis on the Eucharist as "meal". It is noteworthy that the Bishop considers that "*this pendular swing did not help the Church*". If people at Mass are not instructed as regards the specifically *sacrificial* aspect of the Eucharist, Bishop Barron states that "*the Mass can devolve into something less than fully serious*". In fact, when the emphasis at Mass is on the aspect of "meal", one may very easily slip into the error of thinking that the presence of two species on the altar after consecration is no more significant than the fact that at any ordinary meal, we expect to have both food (solid)

and drink (liquid). The Corinthians suffered from a similar confusion, provoking a strong rebuke from St. Paul (c.f. I Cor. 11:17-22).

In view of Bishop Barron's emphasis on the *sacrificial* aspect of the Mass, let us now return to the question raised above: when would the time be right for Jesus to celebrate the First Mass? As Jesus looked forward from the time of giving the discourse on the Bread of Life, He knew that He would be living an "ordinary" human life for a period of time which, as we said earlier, might be as long as another three years. It would not be more than three years. In view of this maximum three-year time period, Jesus knew that He had, at most, another 1100 days (or so) to look forward to, and at some point during that span of three years, the time would be right for the First Mass.

It seems to me that since the Mass was intended to proclaim the *death* of the Lord (c.f. I Cor. 11), then it would be most appropriate if Jesus could arrange for the First Mass to occur *on the very day of His death*.

At first glance, the Roman Canon and our cultural understanding of time suggest that things did not work out that way. As we hear in Eucharistic Prayer I, the First Mass is described as happening *not* on the day of His death, but "*on the day BEFORE He was to suffer*". With 1100 (or so) days to choose from, this might lead us to conclude that Jesus somehow missed the "best" day by one day.

In Bishop Barron's book, we are reminded of the words used by Jesus at the Last Supper: "*This is My body... This cup... is the new covenant in My blood*" (Lk 22:19-20). The Bishop then goes on to stress an important point: "In order to appreciate these perhaps overly familiar words, *we have to put ourselves in the thought world of Jesus' first audience*". The Bishop suggests that, in order to understand properly what Jesus is doing, we need to make a cultural shift away from modern culture (where the concept of covenant is almost entirely foreign to modern minds) and we must re-create for ourselves what it meant to live in the Hebrew culture.

When Does the "Day" Begin?

I would like to suggest that this confusion between "today" and "tomorrow" comes about as a consequence of a failure to make precisely the cultural shift recommended by Bishop Barron. The failure consists specifically in not recognizing that for the Hebrew people, each day begins at sunset and ends at the next sunset. In our modern culture, we are more familiar with the convention that the day begins at midnight. Also in our modern culture, in my "day-job" as an astronomer, I am well aware that my fellow astronomers who are going to be observing all night have long used a convention called the Julian day, by which the day is defined to begin at noon: as a result, there is no need

for the astronomer to change the “date of observation” in the middle of his observing session during the night. One theory for the modern convention of the day beginning at midnight is that it is a relic of the times when people relied on sundials to tell time, such as in ancient Egypt. Midnight was the middle point between when the sundial could be used. Whether or not the Hebrews picked up on this Egyptian convention during the 400 (or so) years when they lived in Egypt, they certainly changed their convention as a result of the Exodus. On that occasion, Moses instructed them to start the Passover meal “in the evening twilight”, i.e. specifically at a time which occurs *after* the Sun had set.

Once the Exodus set the pattern for future Passovers, the Hebrew culture would adopt the convention that a new day *begins at sunset*: to this day, devout Jews celebrate their “Shabbat supper” after sunset on the day that we Gentiles call Friday, and the Shabbat lasts until sunset on the day we Gentiles call Saturday. Devout Jews consider that their Shabbat supper (even though it occurs on the day that we call Friday) actually occurs on the day of Shabbat itself.

Although the Passover meal which Jesus celebrated with His followers may have occurred at the *end* of the day that we call Holy Thursday, it is essential to note that for Jesus and His apostles, that meal would have occurred at the *start* of the day that they referred to as Friday. And *on that very same day* (“Good” Friday), some twenty (or so) hours after the meal, Jesus would die on Calvary.

When we adjust our thinking to align with this mindset, we see that the First Mass, although it did occur on what we call Holy Thursday (i.e. the *day before* Jesus died) actually occurred (in the minds of observant Jews, such as the Apostles and also Jesus Himself) on the *very same day* that Jesus died (Good Friday). From this perspective, Jesus, after waiting possibly as many as 1100 days since his Bread of Life discourse,

established the First Mass on a very particular day; namely, on the day He died.

I believe that awareness of this fact could help to strengthen people’s awareness that when we go to Mass, a major emphasis of the celebration is truly on the *death* of the Lord. Remembering this particular aspect of the Mass could (I believe) help to remedy the situation mentioned by Bishop Barron concerning some modern Masses which “can devolve into something less than fully serious”.¹

Conundrum of the Roman Canon

The connection may not at first be clear in the words of the Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer [EP] I in the 1970 Missal). However, if we take into account the other Eucharistic Prayers, we see that “the night before He suffered” (EP I) is also “on the night” (EP III) and “at the time” (EP II) and “when the hour had come” (EP IV). While the Roman Canon describes the day as we measure it, the other Eucharistic prayers specify that the “night before” is at the same time part of the great “day” of the Passion, even the great “hour” of the Sacrifice.

In summary, while the words “On the day *before* He

was to suffer” in the Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer I) describe the Last Supper as the day prior to the Death of Jesus, the other Eucharistic Prayers and the larger liturgical tradition interpret this “day before” as participating in that same “night,” that same “hour,” as the Passion of Jesus, and that same “liturgical day” as the entire Paschal Triduum. It is this same “liturgical day” that the Jews of Jesus’ time, including Himself, would have understood as encompassing both the Last Supper and the Sacrifice on Calvary.

Once we recognize the cultural shift associated with when the day begins, we can also solve a long-standing conundrum, namely, the word “Triduum”.



The Crucifixion by Fra Angelico, ca. 1420–23

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Solving the Triduum Conundrum

As we prepare for Lent, our hearts are ultimately set on celebrating the highlight of the Church's year in the great events which are remembered on the days that we traditionally refer to as Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday. This period in the Church's year is often referred to as "the Triduum", and can be considered to be, as noted above, one long liturgy. I personally first heard the word "Triduum" during Pope Pius XII's reform of the liturgy which became permanent in 1956. In that year, I was an altar boy, and the sacristan in our parish church had to provide us with extensive training in order to handle the great liturgical changes which were introduced at that time.

It was only much later that I became puzzled about the choice of the word Triduum. The conundrum (as it appeared to me) is that, on the one hand, the word "triduum" implies that *three* days are involved. On the other hand, in my everyday experience, the days listed above from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday are clearly *four* in number. How was I to reconcile this apparent conundrum?

I had no trouble with the "three days" that Jesus mentioned He would be in the tomb: He was indeed in the tomb on (part of) Friday, all day Saturday, and (part of) Sunday. But this did not help to resolve the conundrum surrounding the "Triduum".

It was only when I started to consider the definition of the word "day", and how the definition varies between one culture and another, that I began to see a possibility of resolving the puzzle.

Provided that we re-calibrate our cultural mind-set, we see that the Last Supper actually occurred on the day that Jesus and His apostles would have called Friday, the day *before* the Sabbath. The Last Supper occurred during the very earliest hours of Friday, during hours that in "Gentile" common language we refer to as Thursday. The Jewish mindset, which is now the Catholic liturgical mindset, allows us to return profitably to the word "Triduum". The Last Supper, taking place on Thursday, is actually one and the same with the liturgical day of Our Lord's Passion, Good Friday. One sign of this is that there is no new Mass on Friday; rather, we consume hosts consecrated during the Mass of the Last Supper (aka: Holy Thursday's Mass). Holy Saturday is completely a day of waiting, wherein the Lord lies in the tomb awaiting the new Sabbath. There is actually no Mass on this liturgical "Saturday," for the Easter Vigil takes place on Saturday *night*, and the liturgical day of Easter Sunday has already begun. The "Paschal Triduum" therefore actually refers on the one hand to the "modern" or historical three days of Thursday, Friday and Saturday, while on the other hand counts the events on those days as

part of the three "Jewish" or liturgical days, which overlap with the next historical day. The Triduum spans the time Jesus offered the First Mass to the time when, lying in the tomb on the "third day" (Saturday evening, liturgically *Sunday*), he rose suddenly from the dead to open the gates of Heaven to us as the fruit of His great Sacrifice. I can now recognize that there are indeed *three* most important days in the Church's year: Good Friday (which actually includes the post-sunset part of what we Gentiles refer to as Holy Thursday), Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday. The word "Triduum" is no longer a puzzle.

Going a step further, the Church's "liturgical day" is best seen as both a fulfillment *and* a *change* to the pre-existing Jewish mindset. Although the Sabbath was moved from Saturday (starting Friday evening) to Sunday, since the Resurrection had taken place on Sunday, the notion of a "liturgical day" that began at sun-down the previous day *was* in fact adopted by the Church in Her liturgy. On every Sunday and Solemnity, First Vespers (evening prayer) marks the start of the feast day, the evening before. This is also why weekend "Vigil Masses" for Sunday can be said starting at 4pm ("liturgical sun-down") on Saturday. It is also why – and here we come to our central theme once more – the liturgies of the Paschal Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil) are celebrated in the evening, particularly on Thursday (The Mass of the Lord's Supper) and Saturday (The Easter Vigil). Liturgically, the Triduum spans from the beginning of Good Friday (Thursday night) until Easter Sunday. Additionally, because it is a single liturgy, the Triduum represents one long liturgical "day".

As stated in 1 Corinthians 11, the right time for Jesus to celebrate the Last Supper was on the day of His death. Today, this event is celebrated as the rite time for the great Easter Triduum liturgy.

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Notes

- 1 In my opinion, it is unfortunate that Bishop Barron ignores his own suggestion about making a cultural shift by stating "*Jesus was using the Passover supper to give a definitive interpretation to the actions that he would take the NEXT day, Good Friday*". And the Bishop further emphasizes this point by imaginatively putting the following words into the mouth of Jesus: "*as this bread is broken and shared, so my body TOMORROW will be broken and offered; as this cup is poured out, so my blood TOMORROW will be poured out in sacrifice*." If "tomorrow" is indeed an accurate description of when Jesus would die, as proposed by Bishop Barron, then the clearest possible connection between the Mass and the death of Jesus becomes substantially weaker.
2. Sacred Congregation for Rites, *Eucharisticum Mysterium* (Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery), no. 28. Local Ordinary generally refers to the diocesan bishop or his vicar general.

The explanations provided in this issue's lead article help to bolster our understanding and appreciation of, not only the events of our Lord's Passion, Death, and Resurrection, and how they are commemorated in the Triduum Liturgies, but of the tradition of Vigil Masses celebrated throughout the year. Below is an excerpt of CUF's FAITH FACT on vigil Masses:

According to the tradition of ancient Judaism, a day began at sunset and ended the following sunset. This understanding has root in the first account of creation (Gen. 1). When Moses gave the Israelites the Law and proscribed the days of worship, those days began at sunset (Lev. 23:5, 23:32). Because most of the early Christians were Jews, the early Christian communities celebrated the mysteries of the Faith within this ancient practice. The Easter Vigil Mass, which is celebrated on the Saturday evening immediately preceding Easter Sunday, has long been a tradition in the Church.

This practice continues today in the celebration of vigil

Masses. The Church allows Catholics to fulfill their Sunday or Holy Day obligation by participating in a vigil Mass prescribed for the particular Holy Day. "This Mass may be celebrated only in the evening, at times determined by the local ordinary."¹ When prescribing the times acceptable in their territory for vigil Masses, local ordinaries should consider the time of sunset in their locale as well as the liturgical cycle itself.

Depending on the season and place, the sun begins to set between 4 and 5 p.m. in many parts of the world. Because of this, local ordinaries have allowed the vigil Mass as early as 4 p.m. Any earlier scheduling would seem to violate liturgical guidelines for two reasons. First, the concept of a day beginning at sunset loses significance when the sun has not set. Secondly, the midafternoon prayer of the Liturgy of Hours may take place as late as 3 p.m. To celebrate a vigil Mass at such an early time diminishes the liturgical cycle.



Women at the Empty Tomb by Fra Angelico, circa 1439 – 1443

CUF LINKS

Chapter News

The members of CUF's St. Gregory VII Chapter of Milwaukee had a great start to Lent after hosting an "Afternoon of Recollection" on February 19th in the church hall of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Greenfield, Wisconsin. The chapter's spiritual advisor, Fr.

James Kubicki, SJ, delivered a talk on "Active Participation at Mass." Fr. Kubicki had just returned from the St. Francis Mission on South Dakota's Rosebud Reservation, where he has served as president for the past five or six years (of the Mission, not the Reservation!).

Information Services

Since my last update, IS output has been fairly standard. We issued a variety of Research Letters and FAITH FACTS, with only a few topics showing up repeatedly. The SSPX is still a big concern, with several dozen requests for information.

The SSPX problem spurs deeper questions about the nature of the Church Herself. This is a current "main theme" for IS output. People requested FAITH FACTS on the Communion of Saints, Mary and the Saints, the Four Marks of the Church, the Infallibility of the Church,

Returning to the Church, and more. People also ask about Catholic funerals and burial rites, such as who can receive a Catholic funeral, etc. One research inquiry asked this essential question: are the Sacraments necessary for Salvation? These are important ecclesiological questions. Call 1-800-MY-FAITH to request info of FAITH FACTS on this theme.

Peace in Christ and Mary – Gregory J. Downs, Director of Information Services

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Saint Joseph Foundation Update

The Foundation often receives inquiries about diocesan reconfiguration plans. Many American Bishops have opted to hire consultation firms or develop programs to introduce the oft-dreaded “pastoral planning process.” It is code-word for a plan of parish mergers and church relocations. Many of the Faithful wonder what they can do to save their parishes (and churches) or even stop the plan itself. By the time a Bishop has decided to introduce a pastoral planning process to the general public, much work, study, and decision-making has already taken place. The Faithful, both priests and laity, are typically given two options, accept it or reject it. There is a third option: *engage the pastoral planning process*—however pre-determined the opportunities are or contrived the outcome seems. The purpose is two-fold:

First, it is the Gospel manner of resolving a controversy (Matt 15:18 ff). *If your brother offends you, confront him.* Allow the Bishop to explain himself. Learn his motivation to introduce the plan, e.g. a clergy shortage, decline in active participation; and the procedure he will follow to enact his decisions. Document everything (meetings, announcements, general publications on the matter)! The program creates an opportunity for you to build a case for the future. You can use the occasion to conduct an independent study of your parish and develop alternatives to the suppression of your

parish and/or relegation of your church that will need to address the Bishop’s concerns. For example: If the Bishop cites a clergy shortage, does the Diocese have a vocational program to address it? What can your parish do to assist him and increase priestly vocations?

Second, it is the Gospel manner of resolving a controversy. *If your brother refuses to listen to you* [and issues a Decree against the Parish and/or Church], *tell it to the Church.* The issuance of a formal decree initiates the opportunity to pursue canonical recourse. You tried to resolve the matter outside of a contentious process. Moreover the documents and data collected on your parish, by engaging the process, become the documentary proof to support your case to save the Parish and/or Church.

There are many resources to consider: In 2020, the then ‘Congregation’ for Clergy issued the Instruction *Pastoral Conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelizing mission of the Church.* It explains the canonical concept of the parish. And, as the title suggests, the Instruction also offers principles of evangelism which should be considered by a Parish in a self-study. Does your parish serve the evangelical mission of the Diocese? If not, how can it begin to do so? CUF also offers the Lay Witness Protocol Sheet, which outlines the administrative process for recourse against parish suppressions and/or church relocations.

Yakin’ About

We’d like to share just a small sample of the feedback CUF’s Information Services receives on any given week. Our staff are grateful for each donation that is sent, and every word of encouragement that is written:

“I received your handouts on Effective Lay Witness Protocol. They are excellent. I had no idea these guidelines were in place for conflict resolution within the Church in matters where lay people must speak up for the good of the Church. The Catholic Church is so cool :) Thank you.”

“Thank you so much for all the information that you have sent to me. I can see that I have a great deal to learn, and much reading to do before I am likely to be persuasive to anyone (and particularly a family member!) None the less, this is a path forward...as time permits, I hope to educate myself so that I may be of help to others, and especially to my own family.”

CUF’s Administrative Assistant/Office Manager position remains open for applicants. If you, or someone you know is interested in a fulltime position at CUF’s International Office in Hopedale, Ohio, please send an email to administrativeassistant@cuf.org to learn more about the position. An ideal candidate will have excellent verbal and written communication skills, have a knack for problem solving, and be comfortable coordinating a large number of tasks and deadlines. If you’re not looking for a career change, please remember to offer a prayer that that right applicant throws their hat in the ring!

CUF is always looking for an opportunity to showcase the spiritual life of our members in *Lay Witness!* Submit your original prayers, meditations, and articles with your reply card or email administrativeassistant@cuf.org. Thank you for sharing!

Got an announcement? If your event is CUF friendly, and we have space to spare, we will gladly post it here!