

COR AD COR

Opus Mariæ Mediatrix

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Dear Friend of Our Lady,

We are now well into the Holy Season of Lent, with its emphasis on more intense prayer, penance and alms giving. We were fortunate this year that the First Friday and First Saturday of the month of March were followed immediately by Quinquagesima Sunday, on which we initiated our annual period of Solemn Eucharistic Adoration (the 40 hours devotion). So it is, that our immediate preparation for Lent saw us privileged to experience five days of Eucharistic Adoration. No doubt, abundant blessings were received by all who spent time in front of Our Eucharistic Lord. An additional blessing accrued to adorers, who, if they spent at least a half hour in adoration, received a plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions of prayer for Our Holy Father, the Pope, confession, reception of Holy Communion and detachment from sin. The Sovereign Pontiffs have recommended for centuries the last three days before Lent (Quinquagesima to Shrove Tuesday) as an ideal, though not obligatory, time for the annual celebration of Solemn Eucharistic Adoration. What better way could one find to decide on resolutions for participation in the Holy Season of Lent, than to converse intimately with Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

Our Forty-hours began with Solemn High Mass accompanied by the beautiful strains of Gregorian and Polyphonic masterpieces. The Mass ended with a procession and the chanting of the Litany of the Saints. The Solemn Adoration ends on Shrove Tuesday with Solemn High Mass of the Blessed Sacrament again followed by a Eucharistic procession.

The Sovereign Pontiffs recommended highly these days for Eucharistic Adoration as a means also of making reparation for the immoral abuses that take place on the days of the carnival (caro = meat / vale = farewell, or goodbye). Once upon a time, of course, these pre-Lenten days were spent in piety and virtuous festivity. Unfortunately in many areas, what should be an intense area for preparation for Lent has descended to the extremes of vulgarity.

During our celebration of the Septuagesima season, we were privileged to have a visit from the Ordinary of the Dio-

cese of Camden, Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio. He presided over the celebration of Solemn Mass on Sexagesima Sunday and preached the homily. Yours truly was the celebrant of the Mass, assisted by Father Robert Pasley, Vice-president of the Church Music Association of America, Vice-principal of Camden Catholic High School and priest in residence here in Berlin. Chaplain to the Bishop was Father Charles Kuhl, a retired priest of the diocese, who assists us every weekend.

We were grateful that His Excellency took time out of his hectic schedule to visit us here in Berlin. After Mass, he attended a reception in his honor, at which, we presented to him a copy of the McCaffrey Edition of the 1962 Missale Romanum. In addition, we gave him a bas-relief of Our Lady of the Way. Speaking of bishops, two other dioceses have expressed interest in the apostolate of Opus Mariæ Mediatrix. Details can not be given now, but suffice it to say, they will be provided at the first opportune moment.

Please do not forget, among many other important events during the Great Jubilee of the year 2000, the beatification of Francesco and Jacinta Marto, the two seers of Fatima to Rome on May 13, 2000. Also, given that ours is a Marian apostolate, we can not help but rejoice at the Sovereign Pontiff's decision to consecrate the Church and the world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary on October 8, 2000 at the Bishops' Jubilee. The statue of Our Lady will be brought from Fatima for this special occasion. Here in Berlin, ever since the announcement of these great events, as preparation, we have decided to offer up our devotions on the thirteenth of each month: (fifteen decades of the rosary, Holy Mass, blessing of religious articles, enrollment in the various scapulars and reception of the Sacrament of Penance).

For some time now, I have been poring over the pages of a book by Catherine Pickstock, entitled, *AFTER WRITING: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy*. I can not recommend it highly enough, but it will be for many, one of the most difficult books you will ever read. The author spoke at a conference on the

liturgy in New York City last year and sometime after that, was invited to visit Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. For many readers, perhaps most interesting would be chapter four entitled, "I Will Go unto the Altar of God: the Impossible Liturgy";. In it, she makes an analysis of the Medieval Roman Rite, the most recent edition of which was that of 1962 in the Pontificate of Pope John XXIII. There is no way I can do justice to this book in a short letter such as this. I can only recommend that you order it for yourself from: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, USA. A serious reading of this book will not go unrewarded in the deep insights into the nature of true liturgy you will receive. There is a fascinating presentation referred to in the preface of the book and delineated more fully in chapter six on the nature of Transubstantiation. As the author says in the preface, "But the essay builds to a conclusion which asserts that the event of Transubstantiation in the Eucharist is the condition of possibility for all human meaning."- (P. xv.) Once again, why not get a copy of the book and plough your way through it.

As always, our benefactors and friends and all our members are remembered in our daily prayers and in the monthly Mass on the First Saturday in honor of the Immaculate Heart of the Mother of God.

In the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

L. William C. Ashley

