



Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem ©
* *Knights of Malta* *

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Chancellor's Update

If We Live So Long...

As we receive and respond to the many phone calls and emails about our April and May Updates from members and friends, the impression is that there is something in the air or about to happen that warrants our attention. So we went back to a lecture given in New York City in 1976 by the then Cardinal of Cracow, Karol Wojtyla, later known as Pope John Paul II. It seems that the Polish bishops were more attuned to world affairs and how they would affect the world in the future than our bishops here in the USA. A few select remarks by Cardinal Wojtyla in 1976 at The Kosciuszko Foundation follow.

“If the American Polonia expect us to cooperate in matters pertaining to the Polish American community, then we would expect Polonia to cooperate in taking the great responsibility of the Polish nation for Christianity. We have put it this way because we are now standing in the face of the greatest historical confrontation humanity has gone through. I do not think that wide circles of the American society or wide circles of the Christian community realize this fully. **We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-Church, of the Gospel versus the anti-Gospel. This confrontation lies within the plans of Divine Providence; it is a trial which the whole Church, and the Polish Church in particular, must take up.** (Editor’s emphasis) We all realize it is not an easy matter, and a great deal of it depends upon the outcome on the Vistula. I think that Polonia is perhaps the most aware of it, and it seems to me that other layers of American society are less enlightened in this respect and simply eliminate this problem from their sphere of interests. Polonia, which shares Poland’s sentiments, feels the significance of the confrontation going on at the banks of the Vistula. It is a trial of not only our nation and Church, but in a sense a test of two thousand years culture and Christian civilization with all of its consequences for human dignity, individual rights, human rights and the rights of nations. All these are affected by the confrontation. As the number of people who understand the importance of this confrontation increase in Poland and America, we can look with greater trust towards the outcome of this confrontation. The Church has gone through many trials, as has the Polish nation, and has emerged victorious even though at a cost of great sacrifice.”

As we look back to the seventies, eighties and nineties, we see our non-catholic friends, evangelicals, talking about the Great Rapture, the end times, etc. One wonders what everyone is seeing, talking about or is expecting to happen.

Then, Pope Benedict XVI announced on July 7, 2007, a Motu Proprio allowing the old Tridentine Mass again to reenter Church life. Now on Tuesday, July 5, 2016, in the

Catholic Herald, Cardinal Robert Sarah, the Vatican's liturgy chief, announced at the Sacra Liturgia conference in London the following main points of his address:

“It is very important that we return as soon as possible to a common orientation, of priests and the faithful turned together in the same direction - eastwards or at least towards the apse - to the Lord who comes. I ask you to implement this practice wherever possible.”

“Your own pastoral judgment will determine how and when this is possible, but perhaps beginning this on the first Sunday of Advent this year, (editor's note, this is the same day the Door of Mercy closes), when we attend ‘the Lord who will come’ and ‘who will not delay’”.

Cardinal Sarah said that much liturgical study had suggested that some post-conciliar reforms “may have been put together according to the spirit of the times” and “gone beyond” what the Fathers of Vatican II wanted in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the constitution on the liturgy.

He continued that some “very serious misinterpretations of the liturgy” had crept in, thanks to an attitude to the liturgy, which placed man rather than God at the center.

“The liturgy is not about you and I. It is not where we celebrate our own identity or achievements or exalt or promote our own culture and local religious customs. The liturgy is first and foremost about God and what He has done for us.”

Cardinal Sarah quoted Cardinal Ratzinger: “Forgetting about God is the most imminent danger of our age.”

In conclusion he emphasized a “hermeneutic of continuity”, saying that it was necessary to implement *Sacrosanctum Concilium* fully: “The Fathers did not intend a revolution, but an evolution.”

Dan Hitchens of the *Catholic Herald*, reported the following: “In remarks which he did not have time to deliver, but which were later published on Sacra Liturgia's [Facebook page](#), the cardinal also encouraged kneeling at the consecration and for the reception of Communion... Where kneeling and genuflection have disappeared from the liturgy, they need to be restored, in particular for our reception of our Blessed Lord in Holy Communion.”

This is the closest the Vatican will ever come to admitting that its enemies had infiltrated the Church at the Council. The Church can never lose because it can never die. It simply waits out its enemies, always giving them sufficient time to repent and with the help of Divine Providence for its members to rise up in defense of dogma and doctrine.

As expected, a number of Bishops, some from Scotland, Germany and the United States with their corresponding priests, have protested or rejected these suggestions. As witnesses to these current events, the faithful will have to wait for the next episode.

Until then, If We Live So Long...

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