

August 20, 2017

Dear Parishioners,

This week has been quite astounding at the Liturgical Institute. Among other things, I have had the chance to offer my first Solemn Masses in the Extraordinary Form (which means I was assisted by a deacon and subdeacon).

The first one was at the church of St. Rosaline, named after a medieval Cistercian abbess. Her body is in a glass casket, which we solemnly venerated with incense during the ritual.

The second Solemn Mass I offered was at the monastery I'm residing in, and this was perhaps the most moving liturgy I have ever celebrated. We were assisted by a choir from Oxford called "Floreat Cantus," and accompanied by an English organist. The majesty of the Solemn Mass liturgy, the Gregorian chant, the clouds of incense, the array of clergy, servers and cantors, was truly awe inspiring!

Then, for the past two days, we hosted Raymond Cardinal Burke at the Institute. And then ensued three astounding "pontifical" liturgies (meaning a prelate, not necessarily the pope, was present). The Mass was extremely rich in symbolism due to the presence of a Prince of the Church. And it was amazing to see how so many clerics and servers perfectly choreographed their service at the altar.

We were blessed to have time with Cardinal Burke, who is originally from Wisconsin, but of course now holds higher posts. He is a kindly man with an approachableness that warmed the hearts of all the attendees. That evening in the monastery refectory he shared a private meal with us, and was very willing to entertain our questions about the Faith and the state of the Church.

Also present at the Solemn Vespers the first night was Prince Jean d'Orléans, who is French nobility and is a claimant for the throne of the King of France (if events were to turn in that direction). It sounds strange to American ears, but there is still a Queen in England, and there are many Frenchmen holding the torch for the "return of the King." Prince Jean and I had a rather long conversation in the monastery garden. He is a firmly committed Catholic who attends the Latin Mass, and a family man with four children. How interesting to hear his views on many topics concerning the Church and the World. He even told me that he spent two months once visiting Front Royal and Christendom College.

I am heading off this weekend to visit the 1930s Marian apparition sites of Beauraing and Banneux in Belgium. With me I will have your intentions destined for the Grotto of Lourdes in September. Peace to you, and say a Hail Mary for me!

Father de Rosa



Each year the French villages of Provence celebrate their liberation by the USA in WWII. These photos were taken at the coastal village of LaLonde des Maures