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by NCR Staff

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Even if some Catholics are drawn to traditionalist parishes, others are leaving them, [writes Rebecca Bratten Weiss in a recent commentary](#). Bratten Weiss interviewed some of those Catholics who say it's not that they fell out of love with the liturgy. They withdrew due to the bigotry and toxicity in traditional parishes.

Rebecca Bratten Weiss offers an interesting perspective on the Latin Mass. Personally, I am weary of the time afforded this. Pope Francis has told us that we

only attend to the Latin Mass in specific or extraordinary circumstances. End of conversation.

It would be so wonderful if we could focus on the real purpose of the Mass and the real presence. Jesus loves us and hears our prayers in whatever language we speak — the language of love!

JANE FRANCISCO

Charlotte, North Carolina



I realize that people read NCR to have their own "take" on matters Catholic confirmed. The same reason people read Church Militant or The Remnant. I enjoy reading all of them and appreciate the diversity of American Catholic thought and opinion.

We can, if we chose to, learn from each other. There are, regrettably, rarely any surprises but some kind of dialogue is maintained.

However, I am not so sure how much articles like the recent one by Rebecca Bratten Weiss contribute to this. Her single-minded animus towards the traditional Latin Mass is about the only point she ever seems to make in her contributions. Finding less than a half dozen kindred souls to support her is as pointless as if Michael Voris did the same thing for the opposite view, which of course he very easily could.

Please, if more balanced articles are not editorially acceptable, then let's have some more tolerant ones. Obviously, the traditional Latin Mass has its followers and this will not change despite what Pope Francis says. But we can all work together over important social issues and other matters. Let's promote peace and cooperation: "See how these Christians love one another."

MÍCHEÁL THOMPSON

Miyazaki, Japan

It was a mistake to run the commentary "Contrary to traditionalist claims, many Catholics are fleeing Latin Mass parishes." There is no solid census that I'm aware of that compares attendance in Latin Mass parishes or masses to non-Latin Mass parishes. Furthermore, the story doesn't quote one. That kind of "evidence" is pretty elementary in journalism. This is an extremely weak opinion piece.

If the Holy Father is going to take steps to suppress the Latin Mass as he has, that's enough of a reason to demonstrate concern whatever his reasoning. Actions speak far louder than words.

Here's my humble advice: if you're going to write a hit piece that's going to convince anyone, I'd say make a run at the strongest argument. In my view, this is it: When the bishops agreed to close the churches during the pandemic in many dioceses, they abandoned their flocks. The only group with enough guts to resist was the conservatives. Many tried the Latin Mass and found that they liked it.

But will this growth stay after the pandemic? Who knows? As for me and my family, we'll keep seeking out the Latin Mass whenever we can because it's far deeper and richer with symbolism. It's the right choice for us (and for my daughter's boyfriend who seems to be converting because of the Latin Mass). I can get how some people would be resistant to it in the same way some wouldn't want to try to communicate with someone who speaks a foreign language as a mother tongue, for example. That's just the way some people are. Just as the way you can develop a rich relationship/friendship if you do, so can you develop a richer relationship with God when you make that extra effort.

JAMES COBB

Phoenix, Arizona

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I experienced the same in attending traditional Latin Mass in our area. In addition to the small number who attend, I am curious if there has also been any study of how much trads give in alms. My observance is that these folks give little to the church. The majority of them drop no money in the basket. Do they mail or give online?

As a regular money counter at my church, I have noticed in general, the trads do not give much proportionately to the other half who attend the novus ordo Masses. The trads speak a lot about sacrifices of the Mass and how they love the Eucharist, but it does not show up in their giving. Hypocrites! They also will not lift a finger to help others in need. They are too busy praying and pretend to be holier than thou. I would love to see some investigating into these matters by your reporters.

NELL ALTMAN-BOYCE

Jacksonville, North Carolina

I'm a Lutheran pastor who has served military chapels as a Navy chaplain, as well as civilian parishes, both as a visitor, or short term "interim" assignments, and as a called pastor serving for multiple years at a time. I read Latin and can chant.

Given my background, I wonder if what draws people to the Latin Masses is the perceived reverence of such worship, and the sense of "holiness" in the service. But reverence in worship is not limited to the Latin Mass. Reverence in worship ought to be a given. The pastors of the parishes which achieve a truly reverent worship will draw people to Mass. When a church achieves a sense of reverence; the choir is well practiced, the other participants carefully trained so that folks aren't waiting for the server to drop something, or be half asleep standing in their places — or in today's environment, not having cell phones go off during the Eucharistic liturgy, etc.

Reverence is hard to achieve, especially with families with young kids, and just given the pace of life in this time of American history. And it is not the sole responsibility of

the priest/pastor. Creating a reverent worship atmosphere is the duty of all of us. Worship is a single hour; can all of us contribute to that reverence that will draw others to worship, and will deepen our own worship? Helping a congregation understand that reverence during worship is a blessing to those who worship there.

I think virtually every parish can be a reverent experience for its congregation, but it does require teaching by the pastor on the need for a reverent attitude and how and how not to demonstrate it, and a willingness by the congregation to contribute to this blessing

(Rev.) CHRIS MILLER

Camarillo, California

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