THE ATHANASIAN

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God Will Provide

Fr. Francis E. Fenton

The Conciliar Church is not the Roman Catholic Church. Consequently, the recognized head of that Conciliar Church, John Paul II, cannot be a valid pope since it is quite ridiculous to suppose that a legitimate pontiff is the head of a non-Catholic religion. It follows too that all of those who are members of the Conciliar Church are not Roman Catholics, despite the good faith and intentions of so many of them. To be a Roman Catholic is to be a member of the one true Church. But the Conciliar Church is a false, heretical, "ecumenical" denomination. It is inconceivable, then, that a person, whether a clergyman or a layman, who belongs to it could be a Roman Catholic. It makes no more sense for a member of the Conciliar Church to consider himself or herself a Roman Catholic than, say, for a Methodist or a Baptist to do so.

But since the Son of God established a Church and gave His divine assurance that it would last forever, just where is that Church to be found today? Why, in traditional Catholicism, of course. Where else? If it isn't there, it isn't anywhere. And, if it isn't anywhere, then the promise of Christ concerning its perpetuity is false and there never was a one true Church which would last until the end of time. Because all this, however, flies in the face of truth, history and common sense, the obvious and sole alternative is that the Roman Catholic Church does exist today in traditional Catholicism. There and there alone is found the totality of divinely revealed truth—the same doctrine, the same moral law, the same Mass and Sacraments, the same Faith preserved and taught by the Church all down through the Christian centuries.

None of the above is new to the regular readers of this newsletter. It has been said in various issues over the past several years, although perhaps more and more bluntly as my own convictions on the subject became stronger. Nor does the observation come as any surprise to informed traditional Roman Catholics that the current state of traditional Roman Catholicism, viewed from a merely human perspective, leaves much to be desired—and that is definitely an understatement! While traditional Catholicism, in its pure and undefiled form, is indeed what I have described it to be, yet many of its various self-styled manifestations around the country and around the world are something else again—and often a sad and pathetic sight to behold. There are all sorts of alleged traditional leaders and movements and groups on the scene, to say nothing of visionaries and con artists and just plain fanatics. There were at least four "popes" at last count! Needless to say, confusion abounds and it takes some doing to retain one's mental and emotional stability through it all. 'Tis no wonder that some Conciliar Church "Catholics," well-disposed towards the traditional movement and proceeding to look into it, are "turned off" by what they unfortunately see first and wrongly judge to be the real thing.

And yet, despite all of the confusion and conflict and division that plague the traditional Catholic movement, there are a significant number of traditional Roman Catholics who have managed thus far to preserve their sanity and common sense. (Obviously, I consider myself one of these!) Such people are gravely concerned about many things relating to the state of the Church but they refrain from going off on all kinds of tangents. They remain firmly on course, avoiding involvement in any and all undertakings or movements about which there is some legitimate question as to their authenticity or soundness. So many people—and this is perhaps especially true in the area of religion—allow themselves to be guided in their decisions and conduct by emotion or feeling rather than by reason and common sense. They are easily swayed by appearances and externals; their judgments and actions are directed by their hearts rather than their heads; they rashly commit themselves to spurious causes and crusades primarily, if not solely, on the basis of sentiment or wishful thinking—and often with more or less disastrous consequences. Unless a person is known beyond a rea-

sonable doubt to be genuine, beware the smooth talker, the polished actor, the suave personality! I am familiar with more than one case over the years of sincere traditional Catholics being deeply impressed by the apparent holiness of a particular "traditional" priest. It just so happened that in due time it was discovered that he wasn't a priest at all! The devil is a master in the dubious art of deception.

But, granting that the Roman Catholic Church exists today solely in traditional Catholicism, what about apostolic succession? In other words, does not the continuity of that Church demand unquestionably valid, non-heretical, non-schismatic Roman Catholic bishops? Yes, it does. How, then, given the current state of affairs, is this to be accomplished? My simple and honest answer: I don't know. I do know that the one true Church will live until the end of time because Christ said so. And I do know that bishops of the kind mentioned above are essential for this. But how this apostolic continuity will become manifest in the present circumstances, I, for one, do not have the answer.

And this is where an indomitable faith in the wisdom and providence and power of God is indispensable on the part of traditional Roman Catholics. To become distraught, to lose heart, to despair because of the *seeming* hopelessness of the current Church situation—such a reaction is without justification. The unprecedented tragedy which today so gravely afflicts our beloved Church is, among other things, a test of our faith. It remains for us to confront that test with unbounded hope and unwavering trust in the infinite goodness and mercy of God. And, in that spirit of hope and trust, let us refrain from attempting to fathom the unfathomable. The problem, the situation briefly discussed in the previous paragraph is one which, in my opinion, is simply above and beyond our human capacity to resolve here and now. Perhaps the solution will be forthcoming soon; perhaps it may be years away.

And so, while conscientiously living our divine Faith ourselves—and striving to bring that precious treasure to our fellowmen—why not leave the matter of apostolic succession in the hands of God? Assuredly, I would not have spent 13 years in the seminary and 40 years to date as a traditional priest if I did not believe with all my heart and soul in the Roman Catholic Church as the one true Church founded by the Son of God as well as in His promise that it would last until the world is no more. Let us, then, have no fear. God will preserve His Church and provide whatever is necessary for its continuation forever. How, when, where He will provide, I do not know—but He *will* provide. †

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TRADITION—OUR CATHOLIC HEIRLOOM

John Kenneth Weiskittel

The custom of passing down heirlooms through generations in a family is time-honored and universal. What could be more natural than for parents to give their children as inheritance the same precious belongings that they had received years before from *their* parents? It is at once an expression of love and a sign of continuity.

As Americans, we can all be said to share in a national heritage given us by two centuries of freedom and, as members of a larger family, the human race, we possess many cultural heritages from around the world.

But it is as Catholics that we enjoy a treasure greater than any of these temporal gifts—the heirloom of tradition. The glories of the Church, from the soaring majesty of Chartres Cathedral to the brilliance of Saint Thomas Aquinas, from the sublimity of Gregorian Chant to the tenderness of a Raphael Madonna—all are dazzling reflections of Catholic tradition.

Tradition Defined

The term "tradition" comes from the Latin verb *tradere,* meaning to hand over or to hand down or to transmit. Monsignor J.D. Conway, in *What the Church Teaches,* explains: "A Roman might use this word (tradere) if he gave you money, gave his daughter in marriage, entrusted his family to you...The same verb might indicate that he devoted himself to a good cause, bequeathed his property to his heirs, delivered a message, or taught a science."

Some readers may be surprised to know that the Latin form may denote a betrayal or a surrender: in Sacred Scripture, Judas' betrayal of Christ and God's surrendering of obstinate sinners over to their lusts are examples of this usage. During the Diocletian persecution those Christians who aided the foes of the Church by the surrender of sacred books and vessels or by revealing the names of other Christians were called "traditores."

In its strict theological sense Tradition means "that part of revelation which is not contained in Scripture. It consists of the truths revealed and taught by word of mouth by Christ and the apostles; these have been transmitted through the ages by the teaching authority of the Church and in non-inspired writings. Catholics believe the revealed truths of Tradition as well as of Scripture." (*The National Catholic Almanac*—1961).

We find Tradition in the writings of the Fathers and the Councils, in papal directives and formulas of the Faith (such as the Nicene Creed), and in prayers and liturgies. Saint Basil the Great writes: "We have some articles of faith from the Holy Scriptures and others we have received BY THE TRADITION OF THE APOSTLES, which the Apostles preached and the Fathers believed, and the martyrs confirmed with their blood." Catholics are obliged to believe that what comes through this *Divine, Apostolic Tradition* is inspired by the Holy Ghost and passed on by the Apostles to their successors.[1] In *normal* times, the reigning pope, either alone or with the bishops throughout the world, interprets and sets the ultimate norm of Tradition for the Faithful. The most recent use of this heavenly gift was by Pope Pius XII in 1950 when he defined as dogma the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Of course, before that, the doctrine of the Assumption was widely accepted by the Faithful but it was not an infallible teaching. (It should be noted that Pope Benedict XIV had anticipated Pope Pius XII's pronouncement a century before, by declaring the Assumption a probable opinion which it would be impious and blasphemous to deny.)[2]

Refuting Protestant Denials

Martin Luther based his war against Catholicism on two essential points: salvation comes to us not by faith and works but by faith alone (*sola fides*), and our faith comes not from Scripture and Tradition but from Scripture alone (*sola Scriptura*). Some Protestants wisely have rejected the "faith alone" error, but *all* hold that "the Bible is the only Word of God"—hence, the meaning behind such familiar terms as "Bible Belt," "Full Gospel" and "Bible-believing Christian."

John B. Wilder, a Baptist, and Dr. Loraine Boettner, a Calvinist, are two virulently anti-Catholic writers who agree that Tradition is merely a tool by which the Church furthers its "real" aims—wealth and political power. Boettner, in *Roman Catholicism,* is correct when he calls Tradition "the basic difference between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism," as is Wilder, in *The Other Side of Rome,* when he writes that Catholics "place their traditions...on an equal plane with the Holy Bible." With these quotes we exhaust the authors' reserve of accuracy.

Wilder calls Tradition a "foundation of dust" comprised

of "folktales," of "fables and fancies," while Boettner sees it as "the Achilles heel of Roman Catholicism," adding: "if it (the Church) were to give up tradition the whole system would fall to the ground; so much of its doctrines and practices has no other foundation." (Consider this last quote in light of the Conciliar Church.)

Even Scripture itself often comes from Tradition. Moses lived thousands of years after the Creation; he didn't send an Eyewitness News team to cover the story and interview Adam and Eve for him. God Himself saw that it was preserved through the spoken word. The Evangelists Mark and Luke never met Christ in the flesh but they faithfully recorded the Gospel through the recollections of Saints Peter and Paul. Protestants cannot agree on how the Bible is to be understood. There are nearly 100 different ways they interpret Communion, from a non-Catholic version of the Real Presence (Lutheran) to a "spiritual" communion without, even, bread and wine (Christian Science). It is clear, as St. Alphonsus Liguori notes: "Traditions are necessary that the Church determine the true sense of the passages of Scripture."[3]

The New Church and Tradition

Much of the rhetoric in Vatican II's *Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation* echoes authentic Catholic teaching on Tradition. It even cites Trent, the Council that anathamatizes anyone who condemns Church traditions. But the substance of the document is another matter.

To begin with, ten pages of the text deal with only Scripture while barely *one* page is given to Tradition exclusively. Such a ratio finds its natural expression in the Conciliar Church's Protestant-style emphasis on the Bible. In line with Modernistic "democratization" of religion, it teaches that the "development of dogma" is accomplished by all believers, with study by the Faithful held to be the "first medium of this development." This obscures the Catholic concept of that part of the Church known as the *Teaching Church,* comprised of the pope and bishops in harmony with him, and it also approximates the error of the Eastern Orthodox. Monsignor Conway writes: "For them (Orthodox) tradition is a bit more diffuse than with us: it spreads quite evenly throughout the entire Church; every believer is a witness to it—with the orthodoxy of the whole Church correcting local errors." (op. cit.)

Frederick Grant, a professor emeritus at Union Theological Seminary and a Protestant "observer" at Vatican II, praises *On Divine Revelation,* saying "it goes a long way to meet the problems of today, though it could have gone farther." Had it taken its thinking to the logical conclusion, he reflects, "the tremendous work of the Council" could have begun a "dialogue" that would "open the whole question of the criteria of true tradition, and the tests by which extra-biblical teaching should be reevaluated, and if possible reinstated in the category of 'pious opinion'..., not in the category of dogma." Since Paul VI stated that Catholics "must break with the habitual attachment to what we used to designate as the unchangeable tradition of the Church," and John Paul II ridicules "outdated...secondary aspects" of Catholicism and instructs bishops to be "opposed to traditionalism and immobilism," it would appear that Grant's call for reevaluation is being heeded in earnest by the New Church.

Tradition According to the Conspiracy

Freemasonry is the enemy of all religion, Pope Leo XIII teaches, but especially is its hatred directed against Rome. It "attacks with impunity the very foundations of the Catholic religion," he writes, and "it rejects revealed doctrine, denounces practices of piety, the divine sacraments, and every sacred thing as superstition."[4]

Others, too, who detest Christ and his Church do not hesitate to speak their minds against tradition as well. Communism, which has always viewed the Church as a "reactionary" force ("progressive" Catholics it sees as allies or, at least, dupes), made its first target of attack Christian Europe. While tradition, as it is used in the following quotes, is in a general sense, it signifies a Europe based largely on *Catholic* principles of social order. The "Tradition," said Marx, when calling for *permanent revolution,* "of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living." His collaborator, Engels, called it "a great retarding force, the *vis inertiae* (power for inactivity) of history."

The nineteenth-century humanist philosopher and apostate, Auguste Comte, wrote that tradition is a way by which "the dead govern the living." He went on to call for a Religion of Humanity; like the Church he left, it would have a priesthood and sacraments, saints and holy days, but it would worship Man instead of God and would be guided by the Spirit of the Age instead of Tradition.

The Glory of Tradition

As Catholics, we should contemplate our radiant traditions with joyous hearts, knowing that our de-

fense of them is a cause of rejoicing in heaven. The plight of the Church in these dark hours saddens us all but we can find encouragement in realizing that the countless confessors and martyrs, who lived and died upholding *these same traditions,* now approach God's throne on our behalf.

At the beginning of this study tradition was likened to an heirloom. It may equally be called a parent since it teaches and nurtures us and gives us our identity and birthright. Like a father or mother, it calls for our love and honor, and we ought to look with horror on anyone who would lay hands upon it to harm it.

When asked of our Roman Catholic beliefs and practices, we must confidently reply with Saint John Chrysostom: "Is it Tradition? If so, ask nothing more." Let us, then, hold firmly to these priceless riches and never allow ourselves to compromise or abandon them. They are our security for eternal life. †

Footnotes

1. Other long-standing teachings and customs of the Church, called *ecclesiastical traditions,* though not infallible, still require our reverent acceptance by the very fact that they have been held in high esteem for centuries by the Church. (Strictly speaking, the Church, for example, doesn't say we *have* to recite the rosary—but it strongly encourages us—and we all know that only the impious would dare to ridicule such a meritorious devotion.)
2. Public revelation ceased with the death of the last Apostle. Since then, the Church can add nothing to the deposit of Faith but may only interpret, clarify and define it.
3. For some odd reason, all Protestants (with exception made for tiny sects like the Seventh Day Adventists) worship on Sunday, despite the fact that it is nowhere mandated in the New Testament; rather, it is based on Tradition!
4. Certain Masonic rituals involve deriding the Catholic priesthood, mocking Church teaching, parodying Calvary, and the breaking of a crucifix.

Pray The Rosary Daily

Weak and Timid Catholics

In our time more than ever before, the chief strength of the wicked lies in the cowardice and weakness of good men... All the strength of Satan's reign is due to the easygoing weakness of Catholics. Oh, if I might ask the divine Redeemer, as the prophet Zachary did in spirit: "What are the wounds in the midst of Thy hands?" The answer would not be doubtful: "With these was I wounded in the house of them that loved Me. I was wounded by My friends who did nothing to defend Me and who, on every occasion, made themselves the accomplices of My adversaries." And this reproach can be leveled at the weak and timid Catholics of all countries.

Pope Saint Pius X
(December 13, 1908
at the beatification of
Saint Joan of Arc)

In 1968 the Church in this country granted 448 marriage annulments. In 1981 the Conciliar Church in the USA granted some 48,000 marriage "annulments"! Surely these figures speak volumes regarding the position and attitude of the Conciliar Church in relation to the sacred contract of marriage and the Sacrament of Matrimony. It is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church that no power on earth can break the bond of a consummated marriage between two validly baptized persons. How many such marriages, one wonders, are "annulled" by the Conciliar Church?

Resignation to the Will of God

Not only was the Blessed Virgin Mary free from the common stain of original sin in which all the rest of humanity was conceived, but of no human being can it more truly be said that she was a living image of her divine Son. "Never was she guilty of the least fault, never did she offer the least resistance to grace; on the contrary, she carried out her words to the letter: 'Be it done unto me according to Thy word.'" (*The Spiritual Life,* Fr. Adolphe Tanquerey.) We are prone to look upon the saints as though they were beings from another world, not sufficiently realizing that their sanctity did not make them any the less human. As such, within certain limits, they are to be imitated as well as admired and venerated. Mary is the greatest of the saints, yes, but also a human being. Because she was human, she was one of us. Because she was a woman, she is particularly a model of womanhood. And because she was, and is, the greatest of the saints, next to Christ she presents the perfect example of ideal Christian living to all of us.

Now, of the many virtures exemplified in the life and person of Mary, one of the more outstanding of these was her spirit and practice of resignation to the will of God. Her life was an exemplary and uninterrupted living of the phrase of the *Our Father:* "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." Her words of acceptance of the angel's message on the day of the Annunciation, "Be it done unto me according to Thy word," signify her lifelong attitude of humble submission to the will of the Almighty. Whatever hardships and sacrifices she was called upon to make, she made them without hesitation as a loyal and true servant of God, even to the immolation of her divine Son on Calvary and the painful separation from Him that followed. Not once did she complain or rebel against the crosses that were hers or against the demands which her state in life made upon her. She was one with Christ and in this unity with Him she found the only true happiness.

And it is in this, her resignation to the will of God, that we can learn a powerful lesson from the Blessed Virgin Mary, the lesson of submission to the divine will. How ready most of us are to find fault when things are not going quite right! How easily many of us become discouraged or disgruntled at even a slight turn of events contrary to our plans or wishes! How dissatisfied some people become with their state in life and the daily, routine duties connected with it, not realizing that such is the will of God! Why Mary, the greatest of the saints, spent some 30 years of her life performing the humble, ordinary, everyday household duties of a wife and a mother! And how envious some people are of the possessions or talents of others, forgetting that they are only accountable to God for the use they make of what God has given them or allowed them to acquire, and not suspecting perhaps that the absence of such things may well be a blessing in disguise for them! And are not all of these examples of a lack of a sufficient resignation to the will of God? Why should anyone become dissatisfied or discouraged who is honestly trying to do the best he can? If, before God, we can truthfully say we're doing our best, then any difficulties or obstacles we encounter, or hardships we face, or setbacks we meet, are simply due to the fact that God wills or permits them for His own good reasons, and to think or judge or react otherwise shows a lack of resignation to God's will on our part. Much of man's unhappiness comes from his trying to impose his will on God. Because I want this or that is no reason why it should be so. Maybe God has other ideas and I'm not humble enough or discerning enough to recognize that probability.

To be resigned always to the will of God. A big order, to be sure, the fulfillment of which makes saints. "Not my will but Thine be done" was Christ's prayer to His heavenly Father in the Garden of Gethsemane. It was His Blessed Mother's lifelong norm of conduct. Let us daily strive to make it ours as well. There is no safer and surer road to Heaven. "Be it done unto me according to Thy word."

—*Fr. F. Fenton*

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

The date on the envelope address label indicates the month and year in which the recipient's subscription is due for renewal. At the proper time, a subscription envelope will be enclosed with the newsletter. One may enter a new subscription at any time, of course, and will then receive the eight following newsletter issues.†

"Vanity of vanities...and all is vanity" (Ecclesiastes 1:2)

We traditional Roman Catholics have the obligation to know our religion as well as we can because (1) it is God-given; (2) we cannot intelligently live a way of life or be dedicated to a cause which we do not adequately know; and (3) we cannot rectify the erroneous notions others may have about the Faith or effectively refute attacks upon it if we ourselves are not well informed on the subject. For such reasons, then, it is a duty incumbent upon every traditional Roman Catholic to know his religion, a duty particularly urgent today because of the widespread confusion regarding Catholic doctrinal and moral teachings occasioned, at least in large part, by the false teachers of the Conciliar Church.

Converts to the Roman Catholic Church down through the centuries are numbered in the tens of millions, among them some of the greatest minds and keenest intellects of their time (G.K. Chesterton, Evelyn Waugh, John Cardinal Newman, Ronald Knox, Robert Hugh Benson, Orestes Brownson and so many more). It was the famous author Robert Hugh Benson, the convert son of an Anglican archbishop, who wrote: "The Church promises a great deal, but my experience is that she gives ten times more. The Catholic Church is supremely what she promises to be. She is the priceless pearl for which the greatest sacrifice is not too great." To be sure, whether for lack of sufficient prayer or study or instruction or because they became Catholics for the wrong reasons, there has always been a percentage of converts who have turned out to be poor or mediocre Catholics, some of them sooner or later even abandoning the Faith. But it is safe to state that the vast majority of converts over the years have proved to be commendable Roman Catholics, some of them being today among the most active and dedicated in the ranks of traditional Catholicism. The reason for this is undoubtedly the fact that such people have an appreciation of the Faith which has often been found lacking in those who have been Catholics from birth. A number of so-called cradle Catholics, who have all along simply taken the Faith for granted, have only in recent years—due to the turmoil and chaos in the Church—come to a realization of the treasure which is theirs. On the other hand, so many of those who are today a part of the Conciliar Church are people who never had an adequate grasp of their religion in the first place and so have gradually become non-Catholics without even realizing it. Perhaps before God invincible ignorance may excuse a number of them.

On the matter of knowing the Faith, however, the point should be made that such knowledge is, in itself, no guarantee of virtue. In other words, however well versed one may be in the teachings of the Church, it does not follow that he or she will thereby automatically lead a good Catholic life. A person may be very well informed in the Faith and lose his immortal soul. If we are to be truly traditional Roman Catholics then, together with the grave obligation we have of knowing our religion there is the equally grave duty of living it through prayer, sacrifice, the reception of the Sacraments, good example, resignation to the will of God, the keeping of the Commandments of God and the precepts of the Church, the practice of the virtues, cooperation with divine grace, etc. "True faith consists in this, that we do not contradict by our actions what we profess in words." (Saint Gregory the Great)

"What doth it profit a man if he gain the world and suffer the loss of his soul"? What too does it profit a man if he be an expert on trivia, if he knows much about many things which don't amount to a hill of beans and is an illiterate on matters pertaining to the Faith and the intelligent living of that Faith? What kind of scale of values is that? What sense does that make? I'm not saying that all knowledge of secular or worldly matters is wrong. Of course not. But I am saying that when a knowledge of and a concern for trivialities so occupy and consume a person's thinking and living as to obscure or debase the very purpose of life, then that person ought to start getting his priorities straight.

To the catechism question, "Why did God make us?", the answer given is crystal clear: "God made us to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him in this life and thereby to be happy with Him forever in Heaven." And in that one simple catechism statement we have the foundation for the one and only sane and sound philosophy of life which means anything in the last analysis. But to know God as He wills to be known—and thereby truly to love and serve Him—we must know the Faith which He has revealed and which is taught in all its truth and beauty and fullness and purity in and by the Roman Catholic Church alone. Hence, again, the grave obligation of knowing our Faith that we may know God, compared to which all other knowledge is empty and hollow and futile. "Vanity of vanities and all is vanity" save in knowing, loving and serving God.

—Fr. F. Fenton

A Question-and-Answer Column

From time to time one or another of our newsletter subscribers has suggested that *The Athanasian* include a question-and-answer section in each issue. Since we never had any particular reason for not initiating such a column, it was just a matter of eventually getting around to it. So then, starting with the next issue (that of October 15, 1984) a question-and-answer column will be a regular feature of this newsletter. That being the case, a few ground rules are in order:

1. Although the questions asked may be on a variety of subjects, they should be related in some fashion to the Church, religion, morality, etc. The norms of prudence, justice and charity being observed, controversial questions are acceptable.
2. The questions should be practical, brief and to the point—and not requiring a book-length answer.
3. If a person desires that his or her question appear in *The Athanasian*, that should be clearly stated in the person's letter. It may not necessarily appear, of course, in the very next newsletter issue following the receipt of a particular letter. Nor may it appear at all for one or another reason. It is understood too that we reserve the right to edit the wording of any question providing its sense and substance are retained.
4. Those whose questions appear in the newsletter will be identified therein merely by their initials and the state in which they reside.
5. If questions presented specifically for inclusion in the question-and-answer column are not published, those who submit them should not expect a personal reply.

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Something's Missing

Beginning with the very first issue of this newsletter (January 15, 1980) we have regularly carried our national TCA circuit Mass schedule in *The Athanasian*. It is noticeable by its absence in this issue. For some time now we have wondered whether or not the appearance of the schedule in each issue was worthwhile, feeling that the space it occupied might be better utilized. So we have decided to omit it henceforth. If, however, we learn that our decision was an unwise one, then we will restore that circuit Mass schedule to these pages.

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A Continuing Problem

In many of the letters we receive, our subscribers tell us how much they like our TCA newsletter. All well and good—and we are understandably pleased to hear this because we work hard to make *The Athanasian* a publication which reflects favorably on *sound* traditional Catholicism. If there are individuals who are dissatisfied with the newsletter—or perhaps with a particular article—only very rarely do we hear from such people. In fact, we have received but two letters of criticism so far this year. It would be unrealistic, of course, to conclude that, of our many hundreds of subscribers, all the rest are solidly in our corner. Those who take strong exception to our position on one or more subjects merely refrain from renewing their subscriptions.

It is very likely that, among the scores of traditional and pseudo traditional publications printed in this country, *The Athanasian* has a relatively sizeable circulation. If so, this is at least mildly encouraging in view of the fact that we take a hard-line stand on various issues relating to the Church (and country). Individuals and organizations and publications which are middle-of-the road are far more apt to be accepted and popular than those whose positions are firm, uncompromising, radical (in the good sense of the term). So be it.

To get to the point of this article: Our continuing problem with *The Athanasian* is how to increase its circulation. We can advertise and we intend to do so. But our potential here is very limited. Those publications from which, were we to advertise in them, we would presumably get a good response will not carry ads for *The Athanasian* (for example, *The Wanderer* and *The Remnant*). So, how are we going to increase at all, much less substantially, our newsletter circulation unless more of our subscribers help us in one way or another? We publish a sane and sound traditional Roman Catholic newsletter. We are convinced that the stand we take in relation to the Church situation is an absolutely solid one—and many truly traditional Catholics agree with us. But, unless we can double or triple the circulation of *The Athanasian*, we cannot make so much as a dent upon the American scene. So many of those who read it are well impressed with its contents—and they even take the time and trouble to write and tell us so. Apart from those traditional Roman Catholics who agree with us though, what influence do we exert, what clout do we have?†