

# Disappointed over statement

I was disappointed to read Cardinal Carlo Martini's public statements about his unwillingness to celebrate the Mass according to the 1962 Roman Missal (often referred to as the Latin Mass) which Pope Benedict XVI approved for wider use in his recent Motu Proprio. (CR, Aug. 9).

The basis for Cardinal Martini's refusal, according to the story, is that "his experience as a bishop convinced him of the importance of a common liturgical prayer to express Catholics' unity of belief;" a rather peculiar line of reasoning given the globally unifying character of a common liturgical language.

In a letter to bishops explaining the Motu Proprio, the Holy Father stated that one of the reasons Catholics are still drawn to the Latin Mass is that "in many places celebrations were not faithful to the prescriptions of the new Missal (because) it was understood as authorizing or even requiring creativity, which frequently led to deformations of the liturgy, (causing) deep pain to individuals totally rooted in the faith of the church."

With all due respect to Cardinal Martini, it would seem prudent to expend a little more energy ensuring that the "new Missal" is faithfully celebrated, and a little less issuing public statements that border on insolence. The former could go a long way toward fostering the unity we all desire, while the latter can only further divides us.