

# Tridentine Mass in Hagerstown speaks to ‘majesty of the church’

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HAGERSTOWN – A 13-year-old girl with pink hair, black fingernails, a shiny silver belt and a hip-hop cap sat two pews in front of an elderly woman with a black veil over her head during a special Tridentine Mass celebrated Sept. 11 at St. Mary in Hagerstown.

Both knelt reverently as they watched Father Marc Lanoue – his back to them – celebrate the solemn liturgy in Latin. An altar server meticulously rang bells during the consecration and worshipers quietly approached the altar rail to kneel and receive holy Communion on the tongue.

“It’s a Mass that just speaks to the majesty of the church,” said Gary Smith, a St. Mary parishioner who remembered being an altar server at Tridentine Masses when he was a child.

The Hagerstown Tridentine Mass attracted a diverse congregation of nearly 100 people. Large families, married couples and single people gathered for the inaugural 2 p.m. Sunday liturgy – many of them pledging to make it their permanent worship site.

Archbishop Edwin F. O’Brien established the Mass as a regional offering for those wishing to worship under what is known as the “extraordinary” form of the Mass. The “ordinary” form is the Mass from the Roman Missal in use since 1970, known as the “Novus Ordo” Mass.

“It’s beautiful,” Smith said. “It’s peaceful. It brought back a richness that you don’t sometimes sense – not that there’s anything wrong with the Novus Ordo Mass. It just seems to be richer.”

Pope Benedict XVI broadened the availability of the Tridentine Mass, celebrated according to the 1962 Roman Missal and commonly known as the Traditional Latin Mass, in a 2007 apostolic letter, "Summorum Pontificum."

St. Mary has become the second parish in the Archdiocese of Baltimore to offer the Tridentine Mass on a regular basis. St. Alphonsus in Baltimore, the first, has been celebrating the Tridentine Mass for at least 15 years. Several other parishes offer the Mass on special occasions.

"I'm happy with the turnout," said Father J. Collin Poston, St. Mary's pastor. "It's very inspiring to see so many people."

Father Poston said the Tridentine Mass "helps people to serve the Lord. It helps them be lifted up to him by prayer."

Father Lanoue, associate pastor of Sacred Heart, Glyndon, will join Monsignor Arthur Bastress, pastor of St. Alphonsus, and Father Lawrence P. Adamczyk, associate pastor of St. John, Westminster, in celebrating the Tridentine liturgies at St. Mary.

Father Poston is unsure whether he will learn the rite.

"We'll take it slow," he said. "It's a very difficult Mass to learn. I know how to speak Latin, but you really have to train. The rubrics are very intricate."

Monsignor Bastress has been instructing Father Lanoue and Father Adamczyk in the rite. Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg offers a training program for priests and there are also instructional DVDs.

"I trust them to do plenty of homework and familiarize themselves with the Latin," Monsignor Bastress said. "People know when you're trying to fool them. You don't fool them."

Diane Barr, chancellor of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, said the desire for Latin Masses among some Catholics has to be balanced with the availability of priests and other needs.

“In regionalizing it, we want places where it will be stable,” she said. “We’re trying to serve where there’s a need.”

Many of the Mass-goers at St. Mary said they welcomed the opportunity to worship at a Tridentine Mass in their area. Some had been traveling to Baltimore or Harrisburg to attend the extraordinary form of the Mass.

“I missed it,” said Gloria Pura-Morales, a St. Mary parishioner. “I think I’m going back to the Mass of the earlier fathers.”

*St. Mary is currently offering a “low” Tridentine Mass without chant. A “high” Mass with music will be offered Sept. 25.*