

REFLECTION

Holy Union

by Guillermo de Carndonagh

The overcast sky cast a diffuse light through the stained glass. The hues caused by its passage through the Icon of St. Nicolas colored the center of the aisle by the hall door and the side of the adjacent pew. Candles illuminated the sanctuary and the scent of incense wafted in from the hall.

At the sound of the entrance bell a wonderfully sonorous sound arose and the procession started through the door. As they entered, the window's colors accented the white robes of the schola, almost as if St. Nicholas, patron of priests, children and mariners, was casting a special blessing upon them. They were followed by the sub-deacon, deacon and celebrant. Garbed as deacon, was the regional superior of this house, the celebrant was a monsignor sent from Rome.

Accompanied by the beautiful and complex singing, the Mass of the Epiphany unfolded. Its normal form was interrupted by a special dedication ceremony, during which the Schola knelt as a body and dedicated themselves individually. At communion time the clerics of the Schola donned the symbols of their ordination, priest and deacon, and knelt with their seminarian conferees to accept communion from the monsignor from Rome.

During the sermon the monsignor pointed out that even the Kings whose visitation was being commemorated could, because of their humility and their obedience to the Lord coupled with the distance from their own place, be counted among Christ's poor. This message, though it applies to all true Christians, applied in a special way to the men of the Schola. A few months ago, they broke long standing associations to come to this place. Drawn as many have been before them, they came to submit themselves more perfectly to Christ by joining in un-ambiguous union with his Vicar on earth.

Modernists, neo-Jansenists and others of this time put little stock in the graces and strengths that flow from conformance to Christ's desire for the unity of His flock in conjunction with His Vicar. In this chapel with its Byzantine windows one thinks of course of St. Josaphat the martyr for Holy Union. Human nature being what it is we can sadly expect that the men of the new Society of St. John will experience, as did St. Josaphat, calumny and other attacks from their former colleagues. Even worse they will experience rejection from many who claim to be faithfully in union with the Vicar of Christ. Hopefully the special graces that flow from their decision for Holy Union will strengthen them in the coming trials and most importantly bring them closer to Christ.

True Catholics, I solicit your prayers for the clerics and seminarians of the Society of St. John who on this Feast of the Epiphany 1998 have entered publicly and un-ambiguously into communion with the Vicar of Christ.