

25. Juli 2007, 11:21

A Lutheran in favor of the 'Tridentine' Mass
<http://www.kath.net/detail.php?id=17371>

Early in 2007, a number of prominent German intellectuals, novelists and playwrights signed a manifesto in support of the liberalization of the "Tridentine" Mass. Among them were Botho Strauss, Ulla Hahn, Martin Mosebach ("The heresy of formlessness") and also a Protestant philosophy professor by the name of Edith Duesing. She had the following to say about the classical rite:

1. The old Latin Mass is characterized by its high aesthetical quality and belongs to Europe's world cultural heritage which, just like the music of Monteverdi, must not be tossed on the ash heap of history. To preserve tradition is more important than ever, because we are in danger to forget the best in a haze of consumerism: the awe of God and the respect for the infinite worth of each human being.

2. As an evangelical (Lutheran) philosopher I welcome similar efforts of evangelical high church circles aiming for an "upgrade" of liturgical forms against the "heresy of formlessness". Even Goethe, long ago, missed sacramental consequence and fullness in the Lutheran service. To turn liturgy into an area for experimentation trivializes its symbolic content and contradicts the dignity of Christian worship which needs a firm, grown form which cannot be manipulated ad libitum. The lack of Biblical and Reformation substance in many Lutheran homilies with its embarrassing pseudo-contemporary allusions is even more painful when the liturgy has been "emptied" as well.

3. To me, true church is where a sacred room is able to inspire awe in a person entering it, by means of symbols, words and spiritually inspiring music.

4. Friendship and empathy with Christ believing Catholics is something I proclaimed by this signature for the now reinstated Latin Mass. Pious preservation does not mean a fixation on and restoration of an archaic heritage but faithfulness to that which has been entrusted to us as the most precious and a demand for pluralism against a forced uniformity. This, the Lutheran church lacks time and again, when it, in a sort of "obedience in advance" to the zeitgeist, moves from adapting to submission and from submission to intolerance against its own faithful. A liberalism that in the end undoes itself, in which anything goes but no one is allowed to say a "Dominus dixit", leads the church into the chasm of societal and world historical untrustworthiness which it prepared itself.

5. May the bravery of faith of the Lutherans catch the fire of the Catholic siblings in the Lord and may both churches, in the fight against alienation from God of the European (and other) peoples which takes on ever more cruel forms, radiate the most humane warmth and give to the world the one healing light of the Triune God.