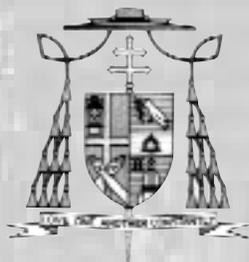


Bishop Michael J. Sheehan.

St. Francis Cathedral, Santa Fe, NM (below), the sanctuary of which is shown on p.31.

Bishop Calls C



Archdiocese of Santa Fe

THE CATHOLIC CENTER
4000 SAINT JOSEPH'S PLACE, N.W.
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87120-1709

AREA CODE: 505-831-8100

May 4, 1999

Reverend Joel Garner, O.Praem.
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary
5415 Fortuna Road N.W.
Albuquerque, NM 87105

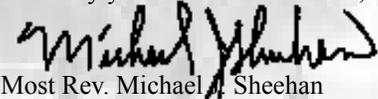
Dear Father Garner:

You have brought to my attention again the difficulty of the church nearby that some people are confusing with the Catholic Church. It is Our Lady of the Rosary, 333 58th Street. It is clear that this church is not a Catholic Church but belongs to the Lefebvre movement. No church is considered to be truly a Catholic Church unless it recognizes the Holy Father as the head of the Church and the local bishop appointed by him. Clearly the small church mentioned above does not fulfill the requirement to be considered a Catholic Church. Catholics may not go there to fulfill their Sunday obligation for Mass.

There are several other schismatic churches in the area as well. If they don't recognize the Pope and Bishop, they are not Catholic and good Catholics should clearly not be involved with them in any way.

I hope that this additional clarification helps and that you can inform your parishioners so that there will be no misunderstanding.

Sincerely yours in the Risen Lord,

+ 
Most Rev. Michael J. Sheehan
Archbishop of Santa Fe

Chapel “not Catholic”

An exchange of letters between the Bishop of Santa Fe, NM, and Fr. Peter Scott, US District Superior of the Society of Saint Pius X.

Society of Saint Pius X
District of the United States of America
REGINA COELI HOUSE

Father Peter R. Scott
District Superior

2918 Tracy Avenue
 Kansas City, MO 64109
 (816) 753 0073
 FAX (816) 753 3560

Most Reverend Michael J. Sheehan
 Bishop of Santa Fe
 The Catholic Center
 4000 Saint Joseph's Place, NW
 Albuquerque, NM 87120-1709

Re: Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Chapel
 333 58th Street NW, Albuquerque, NM

J.M.J.
 June 2, 1999

Your Excellency,

I was shocked and astonished to receive a copy of your letter of May 4, 1999 to Father Joel Garner, for it entirely misrepresents Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic chapel.

Our Lady of the Rosary does not belong to the “Lefebvre movement”, for there is no such thing. Our Lady of the Rosary is a Roman Catholic chapel where the traditional Latin Mass of all time is celebrated, and in which the unchanging doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church are taught. It belongs to the Society of Saint Pius X, a congregation of priests of Common Life without Vows founded by Archbishop Lefebvre, approved by Bishop Charrière of the diocese of Fribourg on November 1, 1970, and praised by Cardinal Wright of the Congregation of the Clergy on February 18, 1971.

It was founded in and by the Roman Catholic Church, and has never changed since. It is true that an illegal and invalid suppression was attempted in 1976, on account of Archbishop Lefebvre's refusal to celebrate the heterodox, protestantized and modernized rite approved by Pope Paul VI in 1969. However, this does not mean that the priest members who refuse the New Mass are not Catholic. It is in fact precisely because they are Catholic that they refuse. The question is rather expressed in this way: Is the New Mass of Archbishop Bugnini and Pope Paul VI Catholic? Given the alternative between the unchanging Tradition of the Church and the reformers' liturgical revolution, is it any wonder that we choose that which is Catholic to its core, tried and true, solid and supernatural, firm and fervent?

Does this make us into a movement that adheres to one person? Does this make us cease to be Catholic? Much to the contrary, it is a Catholic church as they all were before Vatican II, and if Catholics were Catholic before Vatican II, then we are Catholic now, and if you pretend that we are not Catholics now, then you fall into the preposterous hypothesis of saying that the Catholic Church was an invention of the New Pentecost of Vatican II.

You state that Our Lady of the Rosary does not fulfill that two requirements to be considered a Catholic Church. We agree that these are amongst the requirements to be Catholic, namely the acceptance of the authority of the Holy Father and of the local Ordinary. It is precisely upon this authority that we are founded, and not upon the abuse of this authority. This is precisely how Vatican I defines the Pope's supreme authority to teach and govern the universal Church: “*For the Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter that by His revelation they might disclose new doctrine, but that by His help they might guard sacredly the revelation transmitted through the Apostles and the deposit of Faith, and might*

Letter continued on p.30

faithfully set it forth." (*Pastor aeternus* Db 1836, in Sources of Catholic Dogma, p. 456).

It is precisely our fidelity to the Popes in their declaration of revealed doctrine, and in their condemnation of the modern, liberal, indifferentist errors which obliges us to stand up against the New Mass, and the ecumenical errors of Vatican II. We accept the Pope's authority when he defines and declares in matters of Faith and morals, but we are obliged to refuse the abuse of this authority to replace these traditional dogmas with modern philosophical and naturalistic ideas, such as freedom of religion, the dignity of the human person, and human solidarity. The Pope has no mission to teach such matters, and we have the duty to stand up against this abuse of authority.

The same applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to your authority as Ordinary of the diocese of Santa Fe. We accept this authority and we consequently pray for you at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, as we pray for the Holy Father, the Pope. Consequently, we will be your most obedient subjects in everything that you teach and order which is Catholic, and in continuity with the traditional Magisterium, Faith and morals of the Roman Catholic Church. We cannot, however, accept the post-conciliar novelties from any authority whatsoever. For we can see that they are destroying the Church from within, eating away at the true Faith, undermining all sense of prayer and of what is sacred, and prostituting the true holy spouse of Our Lord Jesus Christ, diminishing her to the level of one protestant church among so many.

I suggest that you seriously re-consider your out-of-hand and uninformed rejection of your most valuable allies in the defense of the Faith: the faithful of Our Lady of the Rosary.

It seems to me that the problem is not one of the priests and faithful of Our Lady of the Rosary recognizing the Pope and you, the Ordinary. They most assuredly do. It is rather of your recognizing them, and or acknowledging that, as faithful Catholics, it is their right and heritage through baptism to live, pray, and practice the Catholic Faith as their forefathers did for nearly 2,000 years. This is the recognition that I am asking you to grant: that we priests might be faithful to the anti-modernist oath that we pronounced solemnly before the Blessed Sacrament, in accordance with the directive of St. Pius X, and that the faithful might have a Mass, sacraments, catechism and sermons, which are in whole and in every part in complete accord with the solemn definitions of the Council of Trent.

Given that the priests and faithful of Our Lady of the Rosary do accept the authority of the Pope and your authority as the Ordinary of the diocese, I request of your charity that you correct your letter of May 4, and especially your erroneous statement that Catholics do not fulfill their Sunday obligation by attending Mass there. I remind you of the text of Canon 1248, §1, which states: "*The obligation of assisting at Mass is satisfied wherever Mass is celebrated in a Catholic rite either on the day of obligation or in the evening of the previous day*". I am sure that you are in full agreement that the traditional Latin Mass is a Catholic rite, and that you will correct the consciences of those whom you may have led astray by this remark. May God bless you for it.

Please be assured of our prayers for you, that you have the fortitude to consistently and perseveringly defend your flock from the charismatic, liberal and ecumenical wolves in sheep's clothing who have split it in every direction, and that you might give your full support for the pious and fervent Catholics of Our Lady of the Rosary in their battle to maintain their traditional Mass, devotions and catechism, to restore all things in Christ, and to bring about the consecration of Russia to Our Lady's Immaculate Heart requested at Fatima, followed by the victory of the Catholic Faith over heresy and the Social Kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

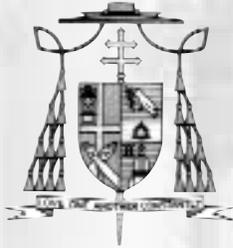
Yours faithfully in the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts of Jesus and Mary,



Father Peter R. Scott

CC: Fr. Joel Garner, O. Praem.

BISHOP SHEEHAN'S RESPONSE



Archdiocese of Santa Fe

THE CATHOLIC CENTER
4000 SAINT JOSEPH'S PLACE, N.W.
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87120-1709

AREA CODE: 505-831-8100

June 11, 1999

Father Peter R. Scott
District Superior, Society of St. Pius X
Regina Coeli House
2918 Tracy Avenue
Kansas City, Missouri 64109

Dear Father Scott:

This is in reply to your June 2 letter regarding my concerns about the schismatic group here in Albuquerque at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic chapel. My main point again is that for a church to be called Catholic it must recognize the Pope and the bishop appointed by him. The Holy Father is clearly the head of the Catholic Church and our Lord promised to be present with her forever. You say surprising things in your June 2 letter. You say that you accept the authority of the Holy Father, but then you reject his direction and the direction of Vatican Council II. By "being more Catholic than the Pope" you show that you really don't accept his authority at all. Your group here in Albuquerque was established within blocks of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary and your church is called Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic chapel. It seems as though there is an effort to fool devout Catholic people into thinking you are legitimate.

No Father Scott, to accept the authority of the Holy Father means that you would be in communion with the Holy Father and that you would submit to the jurisdiction of him and his appointed bishop.

I shall continue to forbid the good Catholic people of the Archdiocese to go to your church since it is indeed not Catholic. I am quite correct in telling them that they are unable to fulfill their Sunday Mass obligation by going to your church. I am enclosing a copy of the canonical study that I directed my canonist to prepare in order to help you understand the position of the Catholic Church.

You lose so much by being separated from the Apostolic tradition of the Successor of Peter. I would hope that these words will be accepted in the spirit in which they are given. This archdiocese is in union with the Holy Father not only in the faith and morals but in the jurisdiction that his Petrine office provides.

Sincerely yours in the Risen Lord,

Most Rev. Michael J. Sheehan
Archbishop of Santa Fe

cc: Very Rev. Msgr. Joseph Pepe, Rev. Joel Garner, O.Praem., Rev. Frank Prieto

Enclosure

**The canonical study
mentioned in paragraph 3
above, appears on
the next page.**

UNSIGNED CANONICAL STUDY

by a canonist of the Santa Fe Diocese

which accompanied the letter on the previous page

Pertinent Canons:

Canon 1247—On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass.

Canon 1248, §1.—The precept of participating in the Mass is satisfied by assistance at a Mass which is celebrated anywhere in a Catholic rite.

Canon 209—§1. The Christian faithful are bound by an obligation, even in their own patterns of activity, always to maintain *communio* with the Church.

§2. They are to fulfill with great diligence the duties which they owe to the universal Church and to the particular church to which they belong according to the prescriptions of law.

I came across two opinions in *Roman Replies*, a rather convoluted interpretation by J. James Cuneo in 1991, and a very clear opinion by James H. Provost in 1993. The Cuneo opinion concludes that the obligation would be fulfilled, but that “the person is violating his or her obligation to act within ecclesial and hierarchical communion, which is a separately stated obligation.”

The Provost opinion is clearer. For one thing, when the canon speaks of “Catholic rite”. It means that “Latin rite Catholics may satisfy the obligation to participate in Mass by assisting at Mass in the Latin rite, or at Mass in one of the Eastern Catholic rites. This is the fundamental meaning of being in communion as Catholics.” The only exception foreseen in the canon was in conjunction with the 1967 *Ecumenical Directory* in reference to attendance at an Orthodox Church, and the tenor there was that if a Catholic could not go to Mass in his or her own church, it would be a good thing to attend an Orthodox Liturgy, if this were possible. There are no other exceptions “mentioned in the law for Catholics who attend Mass elsewhere.”

Further, “participation at Mass is an external expression of communion with the community represented there. It is in the context of that communion that Catholics exercise their rights and fulfill their obligations. Catholics have the obligation to preserve their communion with the Church (canon 209), something which always binds...It does not make sense to speak of Catholics fulfilling an obligation they have within the Catholic communion by participating at Mass outside that communion.”

Conclusion: Catholic rite means Latin rite or Eastern Catholic rite in communion with the Holy Father (see canon 751 on schism). The only exceptions would be under very certain circumstances participation in an Orthodox Liturgy, or if there is physical or moral impossibility as well as other conditions (canon 844 on *communicatio in sacris*). These exceptions do not apply here in any form. Therefore attendance at a Mass in a church not in full communion with the Holy Father *does not* fulfill the obligation of Church law, except in the rare cases just mentioned.

Society of Saint Pius X
District of the United States of America
REGINA COELI HOUSE

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Most Reverend Michael J. Sheehan
 Archbishop of Santa Fe
 The Catholic Center
 4000 Saint Joseph's Place, NW
 Albuquerque, NM 87120-1709

Re: Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic chapel
 333 58th Street NW, Albuquerque, NM

J.M.J.
 June 24, 1999

Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist

Your Excellency,

I thank you for your prompt response of June 11 to my letter of June 2, for your concern for the "*Apostolic tradition of the Successor of Peter*", for the effort that your canonist put into preparing his study of the pertinent canons, and for your openness to dialogue.

It is, however, unfortunate, that we seem to have some difficult communicating. I explained that, as Catholics, we fully accept the Pope's authority as the Vicar of Christ and your authority as the Ordinary of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, and you replied that it is because we do not accept the authority of the Pope and the bishops he appoints that we are schismatic; we are not Catholic because we do not accept the Pope and the bishops. There seems to be a contradiction here. There clearly is a profound reason that makes you question my integrity, and makes you think that I am not telling the truth when I say that I accept the Pope's authority and your authority. It seems to me that the following reflections might explain this strange enigma, and allow us to communicate as becomes priests of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The real difference between us concerns our differing conceptions of the nature of the Church. Your practice of ecumenism, and here I refer to recent ceremonies together with Lutherans and Episcopalians, indicates that you accept the definition of the Church given by the Second Vatican Council, namely: "*a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all men*" (*Lumen gentium* §1).

This is why you accept that the church of Christ simply "*subsists in the Catholic Church*" (*Ibid.* §8), as is taught by Vatican II and the 1983 Code of Canon Law (Canon 204, §2), and that is it consequently not identical to, that is one and the same thing as the Roman Catholic Church.

As a consequence of this you believe that non-Catholics can have imperfect or partial communion with the true Church, and that their false religions can be "*means of salvation*" for them, as Vatican II teaches in its decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, §3. It is for this reason that you consider all manner of non-Catholics, or even non-Christians, as being sincere, good, God-fearing people, and yet you reject those of us who still believe in the dogma, "*Outside the Church, no salvation*", as schismatic and outside even the partial communion of your extended, vague, unlimited super-church of all men. Deep down, it is because we oppose your modernist conception of the Church that you consider us as insincere, liars, judgmental and self-righteous.

However, it is in the name of the Pope that we reject this novel and liberal conception of the Church. It was condemned by Pope Pius XI on January 6, 1928 in his encyclical *Mortalium animos*, "On Fostering True Religious Unity", under the name of panchristianism, "*a most grave error, subversive of the foundations of the Catholic Faith*" (§3).

Letter continued on p.34

Fr. Peter Scott's Reply

Our conception of the Church as the mystical Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ is that taught in a complete and magnificent way by Pope Pius XII in his encyclical *Mystici corporis Christi* of June 29, 1943. There he explains how the juridical structure of the Church is inseparable from Her power of sanctifying through the true Faith and the sacraments. It really is an elaboration of the traditional definition of St. Robert Bellarmine, found in the Baltimore catechism: "*The Church is the congregation of all baptized persons united in the same true Faith, the same sacrifice, and the same sacraments, under the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff and the bishops in communion with him.*"

It seems to us that, with all due respect, it is on account of your modernist conception of the Church, unifying all men in God, that you have emptied it of the supernatural reality by which the life of Christ is lived in each of the members through the profession of the True Catholic Faith in its entirety, and through the reception of the sacraments in the unity of the Catholic Church, and through assistance at the same Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. That is why the humanism of mutual acceptance and understanding, and of the new eucharistic meal, has replaced the true unity of the Catholic sacraments and the true sacrifice of the Tridentine Mass of all time.

This is why the only element of the traditional definition that you have retained is the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff and the bishops. The other elements are directly opposed to the Vatican II definition of the Church. Through ecumenism, you seem to have lost the sense of what this authority is really for, namely the preservation of the Faith, the sacraments and the Mass. This is abject legalism, and not obedience at all.

In the name of authority, you are pursuing a campaign against the very reason for that authority – the true, unchanging, un-ecumenical Catholic Mass and sacraments. In the name of a definition of the Church as not having visible boundaries, you attempt to exclude from its visible boundaries the few of us who still believe in them. I think that you can see the contradiction here also.

There is nothing more important to us, as true Catholics attached to Tradition, than authority and obedience. It is the basis of everything that we stand for. This is why there is nothing more painful than to be rejected by those in authority, in the name of authority. We have to remind ourselves of the following passage of Pope Pius XII from *Mystici corporis Christi*: "*And if at times there appears in the Church something that indicates the weakness of our human nature, it should not be attributed to her juridical constitution, but rather to that regrettable inclination to evil found in each individual, which its Divine Founder permits even at times in the most exalted members of His Mystical Body...that is no reason why we should lessen our love for the Church.*" (§66)

Your Excellency, you seemed surprised that we could accept the authority of the Pope and yet refuse the new orientations of the Second Vatican Council. This is not our choice. It is our duty, in view of the solemn definitions and declarations against liberalism of the many Popes prior to Vatican II. We all know that Vatican II was a pastoral council, and that consequently, as is stated in the acts of the Council, it did not engage the infallible authority of the Church's Magisterium, except inasmuch as it taught those things which had already been infallibly taught previously. (Cf. Explanatory note of November 16, 1964, attached to the Vatican II document *Lumen gentium*). We are consequently entirely within our right to question and refuse novelties, and nobody has the right to accuse us of schism or disobedience for so doing.

I do hope, Your Excellency, that you understand the logic of this position, and how it does not take away from our complete submission to any infallible teachings of the Church's Magisterium, or any acts of government which promote the true teachings and supernatural life of the Catholic Church.

Yet at the same time we are obliged to refuse, as faithful Catholics, any acts of government which encourage the abominable practice of ecumenism, or which promote the new Mass, for it destroys the one true Faith.

The Church is indefectible, but the Pope is not impeccable. This is why we have the duty of resisting him when he promotes the liberal errors and practices condemned by his predecessors, just as St. Paul resisted St. Peter, (Cf. Gal 2:11 – "*I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed*") knowing that "*weakness of our human nature*" can be found in the Church's "*most exalted members*",

that is in the Pope himself.

I appreciate the efforts of your canonist to demonstrate that the attendance at Masses celebrated by non-Catholics does not satisfy the Sunday obligation. I agree entirely, with the exception that we who believe in the visible unity of the Church, cannot possibly accept the new regulations which admit that a Catholic can assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass outside the visible unity of the Church, that is in a schismatic or orthodox church, under any conditions at all.

Nevertheless it remains that, since our faithful are true Catholics, and our priests are true Catholics, and neither priests nor faithful are in schism from the Roman Catholic Church, then his conclusion does not apply to the chapels of the Society of Saint Pius X.

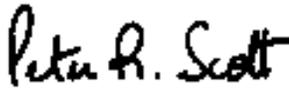
I do regret the fact that the Society's chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary is so close to the parish of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary. This has caused confusion on both sides, and was certainly not deliberate. I presume that the reason is that the Society's chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary had that name before it moved to its present location.

I do hope, Your Excellency, that this exchange will lead to a greater understanding of the work of the Society of Saint Pius X as a work of the Church, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. Please be entirely assured of our desire and willingness to not only accept your jurisdiction, but submit to it, as soon as you stop all ecumenical activities, both involving yourself as Archbishop, and involving the priests of the diocese, as soon as you ban the Novus Ordo Mass of Pope Paul VI, and reinstate the traditional Latin Mass and traditional rites, and as soon as you restore the Baltimore catechism through the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

We are hoping against hope for these things to happen. In the meantime, if we have to agree to disagree, let us at least keep contact so that we can discuss in more detail and understand the liberal errors contained in, and promoted in the name of, the Second Vatican Council.

May the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul protect and guide us in the time of great crisis of authority in the Roman Catholic Church. Please be assured of my poor prayers for this intention.

Yours faithfully in Christ Our Lord,



Father Peter R. Scott

CC: Fr. Joel Garner, O. Praem.

Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Chapel, Albuquerque, NM.

This is the small chapel of the Society of Saint Pius X which has caused Archbishop Sheehan so much concern.



As of publication, no response has been received.