



# *A Bouquet of Testimonies*

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<b>Bouquet of Testimonies</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Testimonies</b>	<b>6</b>
Married couple, born in 1991 and 1993 respectively and both converts	6
Woman, born in 1987 and converted in 2015	6
Man, born in 2002 and converted in 2017	7
Young man	7
Man, born in 1991 and converted in 2017	8
Man, born in 1991	8
man, born in 1986, converted in 2011	8
Man, born in 1977 and converted in 2005	9
Married man, born in 1960 and converted in 1980	9
Woman, born in 1948 and converted in 2006	10
Married man, born in 1986	10
Woman, born in 1983	11
Woman, born in 1965	11
Man, born in 1957	12
Married couple born in 1953 and 1971 respectively.	13
Added by our daughter (born 1986)	14
Married man, born in 1947 and converted in 1970	14
Married couple, born in 1989 and 1991 respectively and both converted in 2014	15
Man, born in 1996, Catechumen 2021	15
Married man, born in 1990	17
Married couple, born in 1976 and converted in 2003 both	17
Woman, born in 1957	17
Woman, born in 1974 and converted in 2002	18
Married couple, born in 1966 and 1965 respectively and converted in 2011 both	18
Woman, born in 1983	19
Man, born in 1952	19
Man, born in 1932	19



## Bouquet of Testimonies

### Introduction

Please find below a number of personal testimonies from individual lay faithful describing their discovery, experience and understanding the spiritual attractiveness of the Roman Rite in the Extraordinary Form. This forms altogether an attractive anthology or a “*Bouquet of Testimonies*” showing the “*Fruits of the Holy Spirit*”. We may find among them representatives of all age groups, young people, and families with children as well as converts in all kinds of social and cultural circumstances.

Each of these individual testimonies provides a powerful witness to and validates the truth of the prophetic words spoken by Pope John XXIII, when he both announced and opened the Second Vatican Council. Indeed the problems of our modern times, the actual ‘*epoch of renewal*’, can only be solved by ‘*doctrinal affirmation and of wise provision of ecclesiastical discipline through clarity of thought, through the solidarity of religious unity and through the living flame of Christian fervour*’ [1] and to persevere ‘*in unity and in accord with the teachings of the Church Fathers*’ by ‘*never depart[ing] from the sacred heritage of truth received from the Church Fathers*’ [2] as confirmed by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 2007 [3].

These moving testimonies show how the openness to the traditional way of Worshipping received from our Fathers (the ‘*Lex Orandi*’ as expressed by the Extraordinary Form), has opened the eyes of faithful to discover the ‘*doctrinal affirmation*’ and ‘*ecclesiastical discipline through clarity of thought*’ from the traditional expression of the ‘*Lex Credendi*’ through the Traditional Latin Mass. This has inspired all of them to deepen their Faith. The relatively large number of converts among these witnesses, whether of the Reformation, of indifference or of another religion, but also of those who had left the Church years ago, themselves or through their parents, and have now returned to the Church, show how the Holy Spirit is working by sanctifying them through this liturgical form to a ‘*solidarity of religious unity*’ with the Church of all time.

Therefore, these powerful testimonies confirm the inherent meaning and value of this timeless liturgical form as a still splendid “*painting*” that has not been made invisible or obscured by a historical deposition of “*varnishes*”. This confirms the profound value and splendor that flows directly from the Lord's sacrifice and is protected and preserved by the

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- 1 ‘*Announcement of the Second Vatican Council*’, Saint Pope John XXIII (1959), [<http://vatican2voice.org/91docs/announcement.htm>]
  - 2 ‘*Opening Address of the Second Vatican Council* (October 11th)’, Pope St. John XXIII (1962); [because the Vatican website does not provide an English translation of this Opening Address, the translation by <http://www.ourladywarriors.org/teach/v2open.htm> has been used here and verified with the official [Dutch translation](#)]
  - 3 ‘*Responsa ad Questiones de Aliquinus Sententiis ad Doctrinam de Ecclesia Pertinentibus*’ (Question 1), from the Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, June 29, 2007

Holy Spirit for those who are open to it. It is therefore very clear that it is impossible that someone can make the exquisite splendor of this Liturgical Form invisible.

It also confirms the surprising and miraculous manner in which the Holy Spirit has worked through the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum*: *‘What earlier generations held as sacred, remains sacred and great for us too, and it cannot be all of a sudden entirely forbidden or even considered harmful’* [4], does it not?



Recently, the Bishop of Haarlem-Amsterdam, Mgr. Hendriks, assisted at H. Mass in the FSSP Personal Parish of St. Joseph in the St. Agnes Church in Amsterdam after confirming 16 young faithful among them 9 converts. One week earlier the Emeritus Auxiliary Bishop of Haarlem-Amsterdam had confirmed another 14 youngsters.

4 Letter of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the bishops on the occasion of the publication of the apostolic letter *‘Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum’*





## Testimonies

### Married couple, born in 1991 and 1993 respectively and both converts

The reason, why we as a young family choose very deliberately to attend Holy Mass in the Extraordinary Form every Sunday (travelling about 2,5 hr by public traffic and v.v.), is because of the beauty and the prayers of this form of the H. Mass. It is so clear that here truly an Offering takes place, the true Offering of our Redeemer on Mount Calvary. All prayers in the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass that lead to this Holy Offering are so beautiful and make you feel so small. You realise more and more what grace it is to be allowed to attend and for Our Lord to come to you. Your awareness deepens that this Offering also had to take place for your own sins.

This brings God's great mercy very clearly to the fore. It is much easier to enter into prayer in the leading up to the consecration because there is a holy silence. Everyone who regularly and faithfully attends the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass will experience through God's grace that God increases and we decrease. In the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass all honour really belongs to God and this we find especially important for our up growing children. Young baptised children have an innocent soul and easily understand that what happens here is very holy.

We find much connection with others in our parish at St. Agnes Church because many of them are parents with very young children who guard the innocent souls of their children and for that reason attend the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass.

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### Woman, born in 1987 and converted in 2015

I am a woman of Turkish descent. This means that I was raised Islamic. At a young age I started to doubt the truth of this religion. I certainly believed that there was a God and I tried to find Him by studying other religions. When I started studying Christianity God intervened in my life in such a way that I could no longer deny His existence and His truth. The first year of my conversion I went to Protestant churches but after about a year I began to question certain doctrines of Calvinism. I was frustrated with the disunity, chaos and obscurity of its teachings.

I came into contact with a couple of Catholics and I gradually discovered that Catholicism might have the answers to all my questions. It turned out that it definitely did! I discovered that Catholic teaching was consistent with the Bible and Church history. I found that the Catholic Church was built on a foundation that could be traced back to Christ Himself. I discovered councils, Church fathers and Saints who unanimously proclaimed Catholic doctrine. Unity, order, clarity and truth could be found here!

It is an indescribable feeling to realize that Christ's Church is so visible and present on earth, that for two thousand years this Church has been allowed to proclaim His teachings and dispense His graces through the Sacraments.... and it was the Most Blessed



Sacrament that truly convinced me of Catholicism. I remember vividly the first time I ever attended a Holy Mass, the Tridentine Mass. Never in my life had I attended such a holy and venerable service to God. It was undeniable that God was present here in the Most Blessed Sacrament, His holiness and His love were palpable. I knew in that moment that I had come home.

By the graces that I received in abundance through the Tridentine Mass I wanted nothing more than to be part of Christ's Church. To receive His graces in this way and to be conformed to Him more and more through Holy Communion. Through the Tridentine Mass these words of Saint Paul have become a reality for the faithful:

*'For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened by his Spirit with might unto the inward man, That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts; that being rooted and founded in charity, You may be able to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth: To know also the charity of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do all things more abundantly than we desire or understand, according to the power that worketh in us; To him be glory in the Church, and in Christ Jesus unto all generations, world without end. Amen.'*

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### **Man, born in 2002 and converted in 2017**

4 years ago I converted from Protestantism to the Catholic Church and since my conversion I have had a special interest for the Liturgy according to the Extraordinary Form. Because I lived with my parents in the countryside of the Netherlands I was not able to go to the Tridentine Mass. But since January I live on my own near Amsterdam and now I am so fortunate to be able to attend the Latin Masses and even to sing in the Men's Schola. The Extraordinary Form really deepened my spiritual life and there I find the Truth, Goodness and Beauty of our Good God much more than in the Ordinary Form.

Through the Tridentine Mass I found my vocation and upcoming October I start as a candidate for the Institute of Christ the King, Sovereign Priest. I doubt if I would have found my vocation to the Sacred Priesthood without the Tridentine Mass.

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### **Young man**

I am so grateful that I can attend the Old Mass in full communion with the Church. In trying to be a good faithful Catholic, this Mass has been a tremendous support. I feel the unity with the worldwide Church and the Catholic Tradition particularly strongly in this Rite. We can all pray the same prayers in the same direction as the priest no matter our linguistic or cultural background. The parishioners who come to this Mass are very varied and that kind of community is very interesting to me. Of course I have to mention the



wealth of symbolism and ritual in the traditional Roman rite that to me is the most beautiful thing this side of heaven. It is so awe-inspiring to me that I just want to share it with others. I always notice that people who see this Mass for the first time are wonderfully surprised that something so holy and 'otherworldly' is still available in this city. I think the Mass is a balm for our society that struggles to relate to God. The Old Mass to me seems more relevant than ever and I am delighted to meet so many fellow young people that are inspired by this Mass.

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### **Man, born in 1991 and converted in 2017**

The first time I attended Holy Mass in the Saint Agnes Church it was like entering the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. As a protestant I didn't understand that the eternal offering of Jesus Christ was still taking place on earth in a mystical way. Our churches are more like the synagogues, houses of learning, but it was here in the old temples of Christianity, now spread over the whole world as prophesied, that one is purified and sanctified through the Holy Sacraments. And I began to understand that these altars are the altars on which the Lamb of God still appears each day, bloodied, crucified, and now resurrected.

-o-o-

### **Man, born in 1991**

I am exceptionally grateful that I do not have to travel far (ca 20 km) to attend a Tridentine Mass. The mystical experience in this H. Mass is unparalleled compared to all the other churches in the whole diocese. When I invite catholic friends over to experience their first traditional Latin Rite, they have the same sensation of belonging. We, young Catholics, see many differences between all the Novus Ordo parish churches, and sometimes even strife in the local parishes. While the TLM is reflecting the order of the holy liturgy and it conveys the unity which we find lacking in society. The TLM, when done correctly according to the rubrics, is able to draw the attention of young Catholics because of its undefinable beauty in a world of division rather than real diversity. If we should respect the diversity in the catholic church of the different spiritualities of lay people, we should also allow a free celebration of the TLM where many young devout Catholics can rediscover the mystical divine liturgy

-o-o-

### **man, born in 1986, converted in 2011**

Over ten years ago, I became Catholic through my discovery of the Traditional Latin Mass and the inspiration I received while attending it. In particular, I was struck by the sense of peace and tranquillity emanating from this liturgy, as opposed to the sense of unrest and unease I got from the Novus Ordo Masses I had attended previously, in which the priests were often garrulous, trying to be funny, or sometimes there were no priests at all, but, for example, female laypersons conducting a 'liturgy' that seemed to centre on





gospel songs and the shaking of hands. I, in all likelihood, would not have come home to the Church if I had not discovered the Traditional Liturgy in all its seriousness and serenity.

If I were to lose the Traditional Liturgy, this would be greatly confusing to me and a grave danger to my faith.

-O-O-

### **Man, born in 1977 and converted in 2005**

After becoming a Christian at the age of 28 in a Calvinist community, it took me a few years to start realizing, that there's something profoundly wrong with all the doctrinal confusion within Christianity. When I started to study catholic theology, I was blown away by the strong Biblical proof for the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist. After that it didn't take long for me to realize that the Bible in itself isn't enough an authority to lead and unify the church from its words, as is taught in many protestant communities.

Catholic theology led me to the realization that the Bible actually tells us that Christ founded a visible church with a visible leadership and visible sacraments. A church with a living authority to set sound doctrine in times of confusion, under guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is the Apostolic Church, the Catholic Church.

Unfortunately, for me the confusion didn't stop there. I was actually reluctant to join the Catholic Church, because I saw many parishes where people just didn't seem to know much about their faith, or take it very seriously at all compared to my Calvinist friends.

At a certain point I found a parish with a beautiful, dignified Latin mass where I met Catholics who were very well founded in their faith. To my relief I found the place where I could join the visible body of Christ on earth and enjoy fellowship in a parish with people of strong faith. I thank Jesus for leading me to his timeless mass of ages and bringing me home in his Catholic Church.

-O-O-

### **Married man, born in 1960 and converted in 1980**

I was baptized after birth, but not raised in a Christian way. This was in the 1960's in Hungary under communism and my parents stopped going to church. My grandmother taught me to pray.

In high school I became a member of a literary circle, which at one point discussed a famous Hungarian poet who was a Christian. Because of this, I started reading the Bible and became interested in the faith. I then went to the church where the Novus Ordo Missae had meanwhile been introduced. In the meantime my parents had also returned to the Catholic Church.

In 1987 I ended up in Amsterdam (the Netherlands) for my work as an artist and I became acquainted with the Holy Mass according to the Novus Ordo Missae in Latin in a



church, where I was also an acolyte for a while. The High Masses with beautiful Gregorian Chant gave the feeling of hundreds of years of depth and continuity. But, sometimes it became a kind of theatrical performance complete with applause, which I felt did not fit well in church and with the Holy Mass. After a while, I also became annoyed by the sermons, which increasingly showed a liberal relativism.

After someone pointed out to me that the Church of St. Agnes celebrates the Traditional Latin Mass, I found out that the liturgy had previously been very different. After I went there, I never go back to the former church.

In this way as an artist, I became increasingly convinced that the Traditional Latin Liturgy is the form that best preserves the Christian essence and communicates it to the outside world. And, because the correct form is so important, one cannot easily deny or escape that truth. After all, through her (The Traditional Latin Liturgy) the real content of '*Lex Credendi*' is transmitted, i.e. the unchanging Christian Faith.

If the form does not change, only its underlying meaning can fall into oblivion or be forgotten. The solution is not a new unknown form, but it is to keep alive the original meaning by maintaining the practice and celebration of the old traditional form.

-o-o-

### **Woman, born in 1948 and converted in 2006**

I have been baptized and confirmed when I was 58 years old. This happened in a church in the centre of Amsterdam after a year of preparation.

By chance, after 11 years, I was looking for a church in a more quiet area of the city: the St. Agnes Church in Amsterdam

When I entered this Church for the first time, I was astonished and moved to tears by the sacredness and solemn atmosphere in this Church. I was experiencing something I never knew it existed: Latin, Gregorian Chant, Altar ( no table), nobody chatting to each other, communion kneeling and on the tongue, large families, lots of children, silence, etc.

I bought a Missal and started to learn. My Faith has been deepened a lot since then. This was the real Worship!

I never went back to the former church.

-o-o-

### **Married man, born in 1986**

I learned of the Traditional Latin Mass from my elder sister. While I had heard of the differences between the ordinary and extraordinary form, I'd never actually seen them until she invited me to a Traditional Latin Mass.

I come from a catholic background, but due to circumstances we were never baptized until we were adults. Even though we never went to church, our mother raised us as Catholics. I didn't think much of it when I was little, but as I grew older I knew I had to



know more about the faith. For me, my faith comes from knowledge, as opposed to my sisters. Each deepening our faith in our own way lead to us getting baptized together.

We kept deepening our faith and years after our baptism, my elder sister started visiting the Traditional Latin Mass. She invited us to the mass and while I was hesitant at first, I immediately was blown away.

The Traditional Latin Mass feels so much more reverent than the Novus Ordo. It is much more beautiful, the community is stronger, the faith is deeper and there are no compromises. It is truly heavenly.

I haven't gone very often so far. I have a wife and three children and the one hour commute is sometimes a bit much with little children. However, it is my intention to go to the Traditional Latin Mass as often as possible. I feel that we're truly blessed with the opportunity to go to the Traditional Latin Mass. Not just me, but my family and as well.

-O-O-

### **Woman, born in 1983**

Years ago I discovered Traditional Latin Mass while coincidentally trying to learn more about the Catholic faith.

I come from a catholic background, but like many millennials my age, I was not baptized yet. Looking back, unconsciously, from a young age I admired the beauty of our faith and specifically our Mother, Holy Virgin Mary. It was not coincidentally that through my own mother watching Our Lady of Fatima feast day on television May 2001, that I first encountered our faith on a deeper level.

From this time, it took me about fifteen years to experience my first TLM for a short period of time while working abroad in 2016. In the meantime I was praying the Rosary occasionally and in 2020, I found TLM again in the Netherlands.

Weekly I have to travel about 1.5 hours to get to mass, but it is very much worth it. TLM is the mass of my ancestors, my grand-parents and my parents for a period of time. Above all, TLM is the mass of the early Church Fathers, the Church Doctors and the Saints. For me it is a priceless tradition which I never want to lose again. Experiencing TLM finally feels like coming home, to truly be in communion with God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. To have the privilege of discovering or re-discovering the faith does not feel like a personal experience; it's God's Grace working through years of wanting to find Him, wanting to be with Him and finally wanting to experience Him in the most true way: the holy mass that Our Father Jesus Christ left us to always be with Him.

-O-O-

### **Woman, born in 1965**

It was around 2008/9 in Colmar, France, on a holiday, that I attended -by accident- for the first time in my life a H. Mass in Extraordinary Form (EF). We were looking for a



Catholic Church but we got lost, so we decided just to follow a girl with a prayer book in her hands... And so we entered a small chapel full of people, amongst them many young families.

I didn't understand a word of the Latin Mass but I was overwhelmed by the purity, the sincerity, the solemnity and the authenticity of the H. Mass. It was so beautiful, it touched my heart and my soul immediately and I couldn't hold my tears. I still get tears in my eyes when I think or tell about that moment.

Born and raised as a Roman Catholic and brought up in the in the 70's and 80's, I always went to church to the Ordinary Form (OF). Sometimes there was a sung Latin Mass, which was beautiful, but always in the OF. I didn't know that there was still an old tradition, vividly alive, hidden away, like a true treasure! Let alone that I had been in contact with it. But having experienced the depths of that H. Mass in EF in France, there was no turning back anymore for us. And so, finally, we came to the Agnes parish in Amsterdam.

The character of the Holy sacrifice in the Mass in EF is so much more solemnly and vividly alive than in an H. Mass of OF. The literal and spiritual focus on God (the priest's permanent focus on God towards the East instead of his focus directed to the people) and the solemnity and the humility of the priest towards God during the ceremony, is so beautiful.

By that, the exaltation of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is really celebrated! And we are part of it, together with the Priest who is leading us. This is what matters. This is a truly a solemn event, that feeds our soul. Together with the beautiful Gregorian chants that take you to higher spheres, the H. Mass in EF is a truly a Holy Mass that feeds the soul. The age-old tradition and the solemnity of the H. Mass in EF has truly strengthened my Belief. The fixed old rites during the H. Mass and during the year gave me strength, support and hope.

Through the years I've seen the Agnes Church in Amsterdam grow. It's full of people now: young families with small children but also elderly who 'have returned' to the Catholic Mass tradition, inspired -just like me- by this beautifully tradition of the Holy Mass. It is so beautiful to see, that I take part in a very vivid and growing church.

And, I can take my own Latin-Dutch prayer book around the world and I can follow/participate the Holy Mass in EF everywhere whatever language they speak. Isn't that what a World church is about....?

-o-o-

### **Man, born in 1957**

I grew up in a very traditional Irish Catholic family, and made my first Holy Communion in the EF Latin Tridentine rite just before the reforms of Vatican II were implemented. I'm living and working in the Netherlands for 29 years. I am an amateur



singer and am a member of my local parish's Gregorian Schola. I have followed closely, and accompanied or facilitated, my parents eager journey of return to practice of and regular attendance at the Vetus Ordo (EF) celebration of Holy Mass in Dublin, Ireland. While remaining a loyal and faithful parishioner in my home parish of Noordwijk, the slow and steady decline of the congregation has always been a matter of distress and concern for me to witness.

Following the growing fusion of local parishes in the region into larger entities with fewer priests and irregular and less availability of even Sunday masses, I've become increasingly reliant on the FSSP St Josef Parish at St. Agnes in Amsterdam to enable me to fulfil my Sunday obligation. The contrast in reverence, devotion and atmosphere in general remains striking and profound between EF and OF liturgies and practice. One thing which has distressed me ever more and more is the "multifunctional" use of the regular parish churches, with an increasing total lack of respect for the real presence. This is particular striking with the serving of coffee and tea at the back of the church directly after Sunday mass.

In contrast, I therefore find it very comforting and fulfilling to attend the EF Holy Mass in Amsterdam, and am extremely grateful for its continuing availability. As a Gregorian Chant devotee, the ability to participate in this way in the liturgy is also definitely uplifting and comforting. In addition to singing regularly during the liturgy in Noordwijk, I have sung a number of times with the Schola in Amsterdam, intermittently on request at the SSPX Holy Mass in Utrecht, and also at both EF and OF masses and vespers for the Dutch Latin Mass society on occasion of their Annual General Meetings..

-o-o-

**Married couple born in 1953 and 1971 respectively.**

I've been a regular Mass goer of the Novus Ordo Missae (OF) on Sundays and since 2008, attending the Tridentine Rite (EF) once a month on Saturday morning in The Hague. However since the start of the Corona crisis, myself and my wife have attended the Tridentine Holy Mass weekly in Amsterdam. With a translation of the liturgy available it makes no difference and is not really important to understand or to follow literally every word in Latin. In the meantime both our children and grandchildren also now attend the Traditional Latin Mass in Amsterdam. Their experience is much more intense via this Liturgical form of the Holy Mass. Despite the fact that on average the duration of these Tridentine Masses is longer, their impression is actually otherwise.

We experience the Traditional Holy Mass as completely intertwined with our nature. Being there is like being in heaven. The celebrant leads us to God as participants in the Divine offering, in a mysterious way that is beyond our comprehension. We can merely humbly confirm this by adding our prayers and petitions through our '*participatio actiosa*'. Sanctification overcomes us as it were.





We are very happy after attending this Mass. These Masses bring us such great joy and happiness, we cannot imagine existing or being without it any longer. The Traditional Latin Mass is clearly valid in and of itself. God is truly present and adored in this form of the Mass. The priest literally brings God to us. It is a warm and welcoming meeting.

**Added by our daughter (born 1986)**

I fully confirm my parents testimony above, and will supplement it by stating that since I have become familiar with the Tridentine Mass, I experience much difficulty attending the Ordinary Form of the Mass. What disturbs me most is the lack of respect and irreverence for the Holy Eucharist exhibited through distribution of the Host on the hand. Distribution of the Body of Christ in such a manner is for me the greatest problem, as it seems a really harmful consequence of the introduction of the Novus Ordo Missae.

I am now living in Guatemala since 2021, and unfortunately have not yet found a celebration of the Traditional Latin Mass.

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**Married man, born in 1947 and converted in 1970**

I converted to the Catholic and Apostolic Faith from the Dutch Reformed Church in 1970 when so many faithful left the practice of the Church and a lot of priest left their priesthood. This was also after a few years period at which I had lost my faith in God at all. However reading some books on Metaphysics I realised that if no God exists, nothing can exist. But our daily experiences show us the existence of our world, material but also spiritual. Then, one night I could not sleep and as restless as I was in over-viewing all the several religions potentially to search for their truth, I prayed "*Oh, God if thou art, let me think as I must think, let me believe as I must believe*". About one year later I received my First Communion. It was in the mood of Vatican II with no place for converts, because the gap with the Reformation would be closed soon .....

It was a difficult time in the Church of the Netherlands with the rebellious Dutch Pastoral Council, which is certainly comparable with the todays German Synodal Path, the same purposes but different names. It was also the period that the Novus Ordo Missae (Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite) was introduced and all priests were forced to celebrate in accordance to this new Form of the Liturgy. Only the elder emeriti priest were allowed to continue celebrating the Traditional Latin Mass but in private only.

It was the confrontation with the Traditional Latin Mass, celebrated by retired priests that opened my heart to its Sacredness and Beauty and also opened my eyes for the fullness of its expression of the '*Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi*'. The '*Lex Orandi*' with its sacred silence allowing faithful to worship Christ present in the Tabernacle or otherwise through His Holy Mother. An adoration not only confirming the sacred Act of Consecration by the priest, but that is also culminating in that sacred Act. The '*Lex Credendi*' through prayers from '*doctrinal confirmation*' to '*clarity\_of\_thought*'. This liturgical form is indeed



extraordinary in all its aspects, is it not? That is why it was worthwhile to have been able to participate in its preservation and finally, 14 years ago, receiving the *Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum* from hands of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI.

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**Married couple, born in 1989 and 1991 respectively and both converted in 2014**

I grew up in a secular family with a Catholic heritage. Though my parents raised us atheistic, I always drew to the faith. As a student I heavily rebelled against this believe, which in the end, only made my believe stronger. During my studies I met my wife. She was not yet baptized either, but was raised in the faith by her mother. In 2014 my wife and I together with our son, then one year of age, got baptized in our local parish. Afterwards I soon got involved in our church, which is a very lively and active community.

From my family stories I knew that my great-grandmother resisted heavily against the reform within the Catholic church after the Second Vatican Council. She even had her own chapel made in her house and she arranged for a priest to celebrate the H. Latin Mass there every Sunday. I first heard these stories and did not think too much about it, but was still intrigued by this form of H. Mass. I always was a bit more traditional than most people in my parish, and so at a certain moment I felt the need to have an experience with the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass.

By that time my sister-in-law already attended the Traditional Latin Mass and she invited us to come along. My wife and I attended the Mass, now with our four children. Afterwards we both felt a great urge to get back more frequently and I totally understood my great-grandmother for having the Latin Mass celebrated at her personal chapel.

Even though it hurts to leave our local parish, we are now attending the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass on a weekly basis. The fact that we have to travel more than 4 hours back and forth does not form any barrier to attend the Extraordinary Form of H. Mass. Here we meet many young families attending Mass with so much dedication and it is only growing. I do believe that the Extraordinary form of H. Mass is more appealing to young people due to its holiness, which, eventually, will lead to more vocations in priesthood. Therefore I do believe that this form of H. Mass needs to be maintained and should be promoted as well. It has always been, is and will be the future of the Holy Catholic Church.

-o-o-

**Man, born in 1996, Catechumen 2021**

Being raised in a secular home with a Catholic heritage, religion was for us more a cultural activity than a spiritual one. As soon as I hit puberty, I became completely indifferent regarding religion. However, Jesus never left my heart. During my time in High School I further drifted away from religion developed a strong contempt for Catholicism.



The content of our history and philosophy classes made this only worse. I became a staunch Atheist, but I always maintained sympathy for Jesus.

During my life I drew a lot of inspiration from Jesus, but I did not know him, since I did not possess the faith yet, as we read in the gospel of Mark. I saw in him the best moral example man could ever be. The essential question is all about who Jesus is and to recognize him, the answer is gradually revealed throughout the Gospel.

It was in May 2021 that things really started to change. I started to ask the hard questions, why are we in this world and why do humans behave the way they do? Why is the world in this state? I went out on a quest in searching for meaning and purpose, and out of 1000 I only saw 1 Truth, Existence and Love. That truth is Christ, the Son of the living God.

During a dream in the night of 19<sup>th</sup> of May I saw a man in white, I couldn't see his face, he told me; *'Search and you will find me and what I fulfilled'*. The next day (May 20<sup>th</sup>) I saw flashes of nails, a hammer, a crown of thorns and a cross covered in blood. I was overwhelmed by the experience. In the following night the same man in White appeared, he asked me; *'who do you say that I am? I said: 'You are my Lord and my God, you delivered me from eternal death', 'You are with me, since you were never against me, but you know who I am, because you know the Truth'*. at that point I realized what the Logos (Word) was, the word goes beyond what is written.

I recognized the trinity and how it encompasses reality and realized that the Catholic Mass captures the fullness of the Gospel, like the fullness of God was captured in Christ. As we read in the Gospel of John, he gave his body and blood to restore our humanity and save our souls. It was in August that I first visited a Traditional Mass, during this mass the knowledge of the faith penetrated deeply into my soul. The mission to reveal the Gospel (Missa est) to me, was successfully accomplished, just as Christ accomplished our redemption and atonement on the Cross.

From here my journey has just begun as a Catechumen, but I'm very grateful for all the help I received along the way. This Easter I will be baptized and confirmed in the Church. To be a Christian, is to be a life-long disciple of Christ and to pick up the Cross daily. Never we should fear, nor grieve or get desperate. In the moments of pain, we have to realize that we are not alone and God will not abandon us, if we remain in him. The H. Mass and the Eucharist are the heart of the visible body of Christ on earth, his Holy Catholic Church. Like salvation of the soul is a process of cooperation with Christ (partaking in the sacraments), which can be summarized by the Holy Traditional Mass and the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.



**Married man, born in 1990**

I have been attending the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass for 3 years and it has transformed my spiritual life and that of my family. Before I discovered the Extraordinary Form my family attended a nice local parish that had a relatively large number of families. We felt at home there and the parishioners and the pastors were lovely. Still I found a strong disconnect between the words and the praxis. I was explaining to my eldest son that we were going to meet God in Church, the One who created us and the world. Yet everything he saw looked like a formal meal with songs and prayers.

The Extraordinary Form is great catechesis for my children where they can learn through what they see and this is also true for me and my wife. In the Extraordinary Mass our faith is greatly assisted that we are in the presence of our Lord and we are truly experiencing Heaven on Earth.

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**Married couple, born in 1976 and converted in 2003 both**

18 years ago, we converted from Protestantism to Catholicism. The reason for this was (and is) the realisation that the Second Person of the Holy Trinity became human in Jesus Christ and that He established a Church, the Roman Catholic Church. After His Resurrection and Ascension, Our Lord did not disappear, He didn't leave us, He stayed with us in His Church, through the priesthood, and through the Sacraments in which we meet Him. Through baptism He adopts us into God's family. In Holy Mass we take part in the redemption and become part of Christ's body. Through confession it is He who forgives us. This is all still true in the Catholic Church in the third millennium. This realisation led us to Confirmation and acceptance in the Mother Church in 2001.

In recent years, after Pope Benedict XVI had given permission for the celebration of the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass, we ourselves discovered this form of the H. Mass. We had to get used to it, had to learn to appreciate it like a good wine. But once it took hold of us it conformed exactly with the reasons why we became Catholics in the first place. The meeting with God, honouring Him with our thoughts, our senses, our body posture, with everything. In the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass we also participate more as a family. It is not important that you don't hear or understand all words because it is about the Offering, the worship and adoration of God's majesty which goes beyond all understanding. As an adult, an older person of 80 and also as a 4-year old child, you are at home with God.

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**Woman, born in 1957**

I was born in 1957 and brought up in a Dutch Catholic family and neighbourhood. During my youth the mass changed to the Novus Ordo Missae (OF). It was a time when many left the church, myself included in my late teens. I often tried attending mass again



but always found something missing and would not attend regularly. My husband and I moved to New Zealand in 1994. In 2003 I came across a small church in Auckland where I met the priest and learned that they use the Extraordinary Form of the mass. I decided to attend and it immediately felt like a home coming. I felt through the rituals a deeper reverence for God and over time through the texts a sense of connection right through the ages with all followers of Christ. I even started attending mass every morning as it felt the most holy and beautiful way to start the day. I was able to do this for the next 10 years till our priest had to retire due to ill health. I still miss this morning mass till this day.

Two years ago, we moved back to the Netherlands and I was worried whether I would be able to continue attending the H. Mass in the EF. I live in the South of the Netherlands and now happily drive the one hour to Amsterdam to be able to attend the EF of the H. Mass. The EF has inspired and enhanced my prayer life, strengthened my faith and made me proud again to be a Catholic and to belong to the Catholic Church

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### **Woman, born in 1974 and converted in 2002**

I am a 47 year old woman and after a year of preparation and almost 10 years of searching I became a Roman Catholic in 2002. At that time I was 28 years old. I started going on pilgrimages and by chance in Lourdes I met a young volunteer from Utrecht (the Netherlands) who one day took me to the old form of Holy Mass. I have an autism related syndrome and in the old form I found tranquility. An escape from a world filled with all kind of distraction and noise. And I found a deeper relation with Christ. Even though I have to travel across the country, I make the time to go to Amsterdam every once in a while. It's my way to feed my faith. Without that possibility, my mental condition would be a lot worse and my faith diminished. And my spiritual life has improved since I discovered this possibility. I am so grateful for it! And I know there are more people like me for whom the classic Rite would be a major blessing, if only they had an opportunity to discover it!

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### **Married couple, born in 1966 and 1965 respectively and converted in 2011 both**

My wife and I belonged to the Protestant Church till 2011. In that year we converted to the Roman Catholic Church. Ten of our 11 children decided to do so too. We joined the local parish. Here divorced people were allowed to receive communion and there were no confessionals. Lay people took part in giving out Holy Communion no matter how few people were attending mass. Lay people also presided over the so called "*Word and Communion*" celebrations. Only later did we realise that these practices are not in agreement with the Tradition of the Church.

When after a few years, in 2013, we discovered the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass, we immediately felt at home with this Liturgy. The way in which the Blessed





Sacrament is celebrated gave us a strong realisation that we were connected with the Church from all ages, something we never previously experienced in the Ordinary Form of the H. Mass. The Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass became so valuable to us that we now drive 2½ hours each Sunday to attend the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass in the St Agnes Church in Amsterdam. Our children too feel very inspired by this Holy Liturgy. Two of our daughters have since entered the order of the Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles in the USA, and one of our sons is currently studying at the Seminary of the Fraternity of Saint Peter in Wigratzbad, Germany.

We are convinced that the Extraordinary Form of the H. Mass will attract more people to the faith, especially young families.

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### **Woman, born in 1983**

Attending the Tridentine Mass has made my Faith live, deepen and take root. Growing up as a Catholic in the 80's and 90's I was like so many Catholics today, seeing the 10 Commandments more as 10 suggestions, out of date. Thanks to the Tridentine Mass, my eyes have been opened, I am proudly Catholic and my first goal in life is to serve Our Lord. The Mass is Holy, devout, mystical, heaven and earth come together on the Altar. My Faith in the true Presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist has deepened so much, I pray each Mass that I may have the grace to receive Him with greater reverence and dignity. Thanks to the Trinity Mass, by God's grace, I will never again receive the Holy Host in my hand. Words cannot describe the richness that the Tridentine Mass offers. She saves souls.

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### **Man, born in 1952**

The devotion and mysticism of the Tridentine Mass appeals to me enormously. Because the Priest presides in the sacrifice and focuses on Our Lord, we as lay people are part of the non-bloody sacrifice that is offered on the altars every day. It is about God, about Jesus, about His sacrifice, on His Altar. Not because of the priest who performs the sacrifice on a table, facing the people and with his back to Our Lord.

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### **Man, born in 1932**

The Tridentine Mass does full justice to the Divine Mystery. As a Catholic of nearly 90, I have seen the fruits of the Second Vatican Council with sorrow; much apostasy, empty churches and a new, almost unbelieving generation. The parishes where the Catholic faith is celebrated and lived in all its beauty, with the Tridentine Mass and the Tradition bear different fruit. Full churches, many vocations, large families, young people.

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Recently, the Bishop of Haarlem-Amsterdam, Mgr. Hendriks, confirming 16 young faithful among them 9 converted young adults at the FSSP Personal Parish of St. Joseph in the St. Agnes Church in Amsterdam.

One week earlier the Emeritus Auxiliary Bishop of Haarlem-Amsterdam had confirmed another 14 youngsters.



## *Bouquet of Testimonies*

21