

IV

Finally, the question of the use of the vernacular in the liturgy must be judged by the canonists according to the will of the Second Vatican Council. Prof. Georg May says:

Article 36, #1 of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy formulates the principle: "Particular law remaining in force, the use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rites." This sentence has imposed a command to preserve the Latin language. In contrast to the translation produced under the auspices of the German bishops, it must be observed that the official text of the document employs the subjunctive servetur and therefore expresses a command, not merely a recommendation. The Latin language must be preserved. In the future the Latin rites will continue to be moulded by the Latin language. The word *usus* clearly commands the actual employment of the Latin language and not simply the possibility of its being used. . . .²⁸

²⁷ Dietrich von Hildebrand, *The Trojan Horse in the City of God* (Chicago, 1967), p. 197.

²⁸ On the contrary, the head of the secretariate of the American Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy has stated that "it may be that in some areas retention (of Latin) will simply mean employing the Latin texts as the basis for translations into the vernacular, at least in the case of those parts of the Roman rite which are themselves original, such as the

The principle imposed by Article 36, #1, of the Constitution, commanding the preservation of the use of Latin, is to be considered the ruling, fundamental principle in explaining the legislation of the Council pertaining to the vernacular. Every interpretation which violates this principle errs against the sense of the Constitution and the will of the Fathers of the Council. The use of the vernacular is allowed in the liturgy *in addition to* the Latin. The primacy of the Latin may not be assaulted in the process.

Article 36, #2, of the Constitution permits the use of the mother tongue in certain parts of the liturgy. The use of the vernacular is not prescribed nor is it urgently recommended. It is simply permitted. Therefore the command to preserve the use of Latin stands in clear contrast to the permission to use the vernacular. The priority of Latin is unequivocally maintained . . .

Article 36, #2, of the Constitution gives examples indicating in which section of the liturgy especially (and therefore not exclusively) the use of the vernacular is of value: lessons, admonitions (Cf. Article 35, #3), many, but not all orations, and chants. By giving these examples the Council has made clear that it is not its intention to allow an exclusive use of the vernacular in the liturgy . . .