

A BISHOP'S LAST WILL

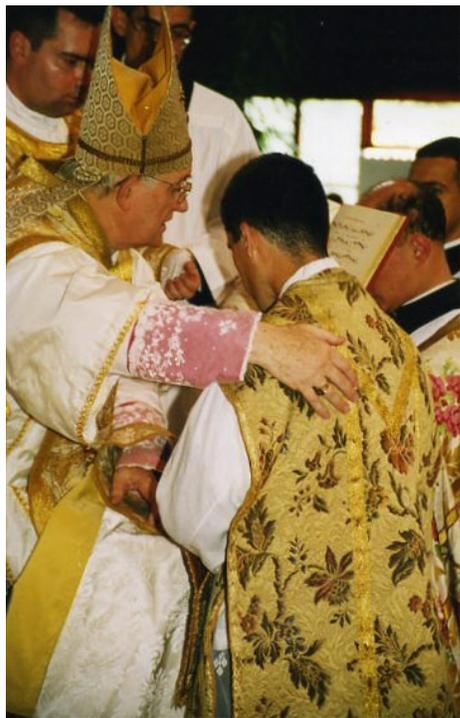
After an absence of many years the traditional or classical Roman Liturgy will finally return to Saint Agnes Church at Amstelveenseweg in Amsterdam. We are very grateful to Msgr. Punt, the bishop of the diocese of Haarlem, who granted permission to celebrate the traditional Mass on a regular basis. Priests of the Fraternity of St. Peter (FSSP) will celebrate the liturgy. As from 17th September 2006 onwards there will be a solemn Mass celebrated each Sunday at 12 noon according to the 1962 *Missale Romanum*, for the time being *ad experimentum*.

The first Holy Mass will be celebrated in memory of Msgr. Bomers† in remembrance of the eighth anniversary of his sudden death on September 12th, 1998. With this celebration we also wish to express our gratitude for the miraculous intervention of the bishop, eight years after his death, to have his last will acknowledged.

We are grateful indeed to Msgr. Punt who accepted the kind offices of *Ecclesia Dei* Foundation Delft.

After a long process of searching for possibilities in this matter we finally will be in a position to have our first Mass celebrated according to the Classical Roman Liturgy in Amsterdam, this, after an absence of many years.

A process that lasted for years on end and commenced at a time when Msgr. Bomers was bishop of Haarlem. Ever since our first meetings with him through *Una Voce* Netherlands he had always been favourable with regard to a place of worship for us in the environs of Amsterdam where we could celebrate the Holy Mass according to the Classical Roman



rite. However as a result of the attitude of a lot of parish priests and parish councils he had been unable to do so. Thereupon he advised us to deal directly with the parishes ourselves. Unfortunately many parishes refused cooperation. During this time we had made quite advanced arrangements with the Syrian Orthodox Community in Amsterdam for the regular use of the former Redemptorist church of Our Lady at Keizersgracht but a veto from one of the Roman Catholic joint users made it impossible for us to continue.

As an example of his good-will towards the Classical Liturgy Msgr. Bomers accepted the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter's invitation to ordain six seminarians in Witgratzbad in June 1998. Unfortunately parishes in his diocese did not adopt this signal.

We are now in September 1998. On Wednesday, September 9th, Bishop Bomers happened to be in Brussels to give a lecture. In the rush after he had a brief encounter



with Father Duroism, FSSP. During this meeting the bishop informs him that he is now in a position to offer the Fraternity a church building in Amsterdam. The time left after the lecture not being adequate to go into the matter greatly, the bishop promises the father to confirm one thing and another afterwards to the Fraternity.

Worse luck....! The following Saturday, September 12 Bishop Bomers passes away unexpectedly as a result of a heart attack while posting his “last letter” at the post office. Nobody apart from him knew which church building was to be destined for the Fraternity of St. Peter’s.



Meanwhile there is Saint Agnes parish church in the south of Amsterdam that is fighting for its preservation ever since the beginning of the nineties of last century. Msgr. Bomers had already signed the decree in order to withdraw the church building from public worship. At the time the parish council took over the administration of the said church and took notice of appeal against the decision in Rome so that execution of the decree should be postponed. Moreover they managed to schedule the church building for preservation. On August 15th 1998 the parish organised traditional Benediction in honour of the Virgin Mary for which solemnity Bishop Bomers also had been invited. Some hundreds of worshippers from all over Amsterdam

attended this Benediction. Bishop Bomers showed himself to be visibly moved by this occasion.

Then on September 14th following, i.e. the Monday after Msgr. Bomers' passing, the parish council's chairman receives the belated letter from the bishop. The letter being dated September 10th, it could have been his "last letter" in view of the day of receipt. One could guess so. In this letter to the parish council the bishop wrote that he had a destination for the church building in store. The council should therefore contact the dean of Amsterdam.

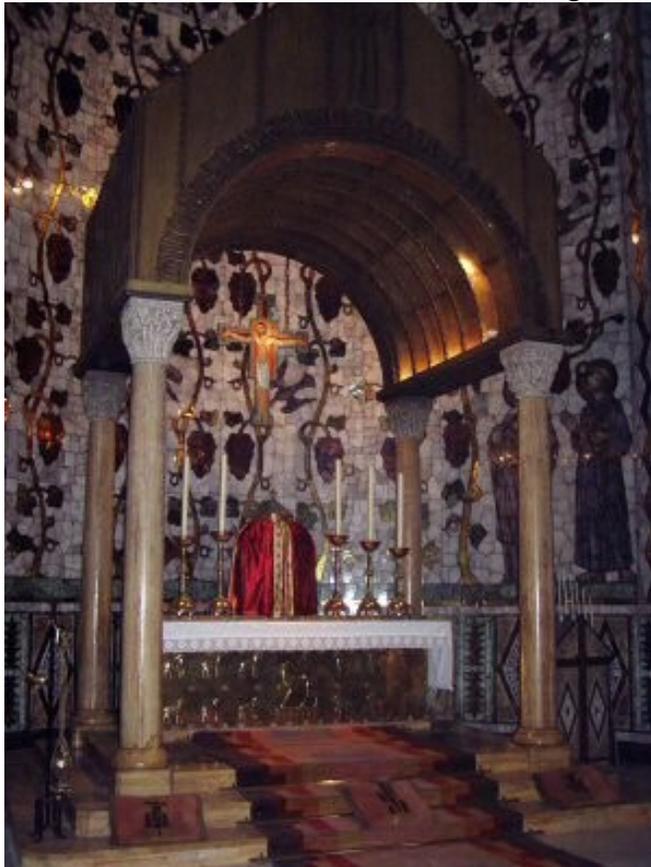
Alas, on Saturday September 12th Bishop Bomers was suddenly called away from life and had obviously not had the opportunity to inform the dean of Amsterdam as to the destination of the church building. Nobody knew which destination the bishop had in mind for this church building.

In this way Msgr. Bomers took with him two promising desires into his grave with nobody else having any knowledge of its existence.

Meanwhile Bishop Punt made it known to the Fraternity of St. Peter that he wished to precede in the same way as his predecessor, Msgr. Bomers. As soon as the Priestly Fraternity could find a parish that would be suitable to accommodate them - liturgically speaking — he would give his permission. However this turned out to be looking for a needle in a haystack in which the very needle was missing.

However, Msgr. Punt has never activated the decree with which St. Agnes church would have been withdrawn from worship.

In December 2005 our foundation was approached directly by the Fraternity of St. Peter from their head office in Fryeburg (Switzerland). There they happened to receive e-mail from a person living in Amsterdam in which the e-mail writer suggested that St. Agnes church could be an appropriate location for celebrating the Tridentine Liturgy. Through the kind offices of this person the *Ecclesia Dei* Foundation contacted the parish council of this church at Amstelveenseweg in the south of Amsterdam.



Without any assumption the two lines being left behind as a mystery by Bishop Bomers were coming together here. Thus in September next, and some eight years after Msgr. Bomers' death, his final wishes will at long last be materialized.

Apparently Holy Providence now judges the time to be ripe. This has been confirmed by some of the members of the parish council. They do not only react in an enthusiastic way but are even engaging in further initiative to realize these plans.

Therefore with Msgr. Punt's authorization of a FSSP priest, Holy Mass will be celebrated according to the classical Roman Liturgy as per the missal of 1962 each Sunday at 12 noon from September 17 onwards.

Furthermore it is interesting to note that St. Agnes church; due for withdrawal from worship has so far has never been renovated. Because of this, the church has been preserved inviolate in fact for the classical rite.

At the intercession of Saint Agnes and Msgr. Bomers, let us pray for the success of the activities of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter in Amsterdam and in the Netherlands

Delft, 26th July 2006
Foundation Ecclesia Dei (Delft)
J.P. Oostveen, Chairman