

Preface

THREE “ARGUMENTS” AGAINST LATIN

Before launching into this booklet’s three main topics . . . why learn Latin, how to learn it, and how to retain it . . . let’s first deal directly (like in a head-on collision!) with three totally illogical arguments with which today’s dominant Liberal “Catholics” and even many Conservative Catholics discourage those who express an interest in learning Latin. Those arguments are: first, the general put-down, “Latin is a dead language”; second, the priestly lamentation, “I’d never have made it through the seminary if I’d had to take all that Latin”; and third, the cry of the uninformed laity, “Back when the Mass was in Latin, no one understood what was going on.”

Although these three dissuaders lack substance, they have become widely accepted within the Church simply because so many non-Traditional Catholics have repeated them so many times for so many years. (I’ve never read *Mein Kampf*, but I’ve heard that Hitler therein advocated the centuries-old tactic of turning lies into truth by sheer dint of repetition. While in power, he certainly practiced it.) Thus, although I’d prefer to ignore these anti-Latin rantings, I must address them simply because repetition *ad nauseam* for the past forty years has turned them into something approaching articles of faith for so many sincere but gullible Catholics.

1.) “*Latin is a dead language!*”

Every time I think this one has died, I hear it again. It may well live as long as Latin itself, primarily because it contains a subtle equivocation. To unveil that equivocation, I’ll repeat a little ditty that was scribbled on many Latin textbooks back in my high school days. [Admittedly, those days were B.C. (Before the Council). However, I must vehemently deny the rumor that I learned Latin while helping Hannibal sack Rome. I’m not that old! That was my father.]

“Latin, the dead language, is as dead as it can be;
First it killed the Romans and now it’s killing me.”