

## RITUS SERVANDUS

(Translated for the *New Zealand Tablet*.)

A new '*Ritus Servandus in Solemni Expositione et Benedictione SSi. Sacramenti*' has just come to hand from Burns and Oates, London. It contains the prayers, litanies, etc., for Benediction, the 'Te Deum,' the prayers, etc., for the Forty Hours' Adoration, prayers for the Feast of the Sacred Heart, and many other prayers in Latin and English. The observance of the *Ritus* is obligatory in England.

The ceremonial for Benediction is given in full. This ceremonial is interesting to us in these countries, because, though drawn up for England and Wales, it has been formally approved and sanctioned by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and may be taken therefore as being in strict conformity with the rite in use at Rome. For that reason we offer our readers a translation of the *Ritus*.

For the purpose of exposing the remonstrance there should be over the altar a throne with an overhanging baldachino. But where a large hanging canopy or baldachino already exists, another throne or small baldachino should not be erected. It is not lawful to build a permanent throne or a fixed small canopy over the tabernacle; but the throne should be used only for Exposition and should be removed afterwards. Nor is it lawful so to erect the throne of Exposition that it is too far away from the altar, with which it should make one whole; for the Most Holy Sacrament must never be placed outside the consecrated altar representing Christ Himself.

2. The use or the abuse of placing the altar cross in the throne of Exposition or in the structure designed for Exposition can never be tolerated; for the same honor which is due to the Most Holy Sacrament would inconsiderately be given to the cross.

3. Twelve wax candles at least should be burning on the altar. It is not lawful, however, to light the Paschal candle. The cross should be removed from the altar. While the remonstrance is on the altar before and after Exposition, it should be covered with a white veil. A cushion should not be put on the lowest step of the altar except for an officiating bishop or prelate.

4. In the sacristy there should be ready surplices for the priests and clerics; the thurible with the fire and the boat with incense; likewise torches, at least two in number, and for more solemn Exposition six or eight.

5. When he exposes the Blessed Sacrament, the priest or deacon must be vested in surplice and stole at least. The priest who gives the blessing with the Most Holy Sacrament to the people, should be vested in surplice, stole, and cope, or, at least if there are sacred ministers, in amice, alb, cincture, stole, and cope also. The vestments must be white; unless Benediction immediately follows a liturgical office, when the celebrant, wearing a cope of the color corresponding to the Office of the day, does not leave the altar. The humeral veil, however, must always be white.

6. When they reach the altar, all genuflect, each in his own place. After a short prayer made by all, the assistant priest or deacon, or if such be wanting, the celebrant himself goes up to the altar, and, having spread out the corporal, opens the tabernacle, genuflects, takes out the lunette with the Sacred Host, and this he puts reverently in the remonstrance; then, when the steps have been brought up by a cleric, if that be necessary, he genuflects on one knee\* and places the remonstrance on the corporal in the throne; lastly, having again made a genuflection, he descends *in plano*. After a slight inclination, the principal priest rises with the two assistants, put in incense as usual with a blessing, and, having taken the thurible without any kissing, and made a slight inclination, immediately incenses the Most Blessed Sacrament three times with a double swing (and these words do not mean the same as 'thrice with two swings'), and again bows slightly.

\* No reverence, however, is to be made by the others who are present on bended knees.

The custom prevailing in our midst of singing the hymn 'O Salutaris Hostia' at the moment of solemnly exposing the Blessed Sacrament is to be strictly observed.

7. Then if one chooses to add any prayers approved by the bishop—a psalm, an antiphon, or approved litanies,—this is the place where they are to be sung or read, and so, too, are the dedications or prayers ordered by the bishop. But it is not lawful to sing in the vulgar tongue litanies or any other liturgical prayers whatsoever. In connection with the Forty Hours' Devotion the Clementine Decrees and Instruction are to be observed. Both on the Feast of Corpus Christi and during the octave no prayer can be said before the Blessed Sacrament except the prayer for It.

8. When the prayers are finished and the prayers [imperatae] if there are any to be said, a part of the hymn 'Tantum ergo Sacramentum' is to be intoned. Whilst the words 'veneremur cernui' are being sung, all must bow down with a moderate inclination. At the beginning of the following strophe 'Genitori Genitoque' another censuring takes place as before. After the hymn has been sung the versicle 'Panem de cœlo' is intoned, to which alone and to its response 'Alleluia' is added during Paschal time and during the octave of Corpus Christi. When this verse has been recited, the priest without making any inclination, rises and with hands joined says 'Oremus, Deus qui nobis,' etc., in an even tone with only one inflection of the voice at the end of the prayer, ministers on bended knees holding the book. It is not lawful to recite other prayers after the hymn 'Tantum ergo.'

9. After this the assistant deacon or priest, if there is one, without any inclination of the head ascends to the predella, genuflects, and places the remonstrance taken down from the throne on the altar, and again genuflects on one knee. In the meantime the principal priest having genuflected on the lowest step of the altar receives the so-called humeral veil over his shoulders, and without making any reverence ascends to the altar, where, on the predella, he genuflects on one knee along with the deacon. Then, either the assistant priest or deacon, standing, hands the remonstrance to the celebrant, also standing; or the celebrant himself takes the remonstrance placed on the altar.

In giving the blessing, the priest, his hands covered with the veil, takes in his right hand the knob, and in his left the foot of the remonstrance, and, turning round to the people by the right, makes the sign of the cross most reverently with the remonstrance (without lifting the Sacred Host above his eyes) and completing the circle turns round by the right to the altar. Finally, in the same way as the remonstrance was taken for the giving of the blessing, either the assistant priest or deacon receives the remonstrance from the celebrant, both standing; or the celebrant himself places it on the altar. If the bishop wishes to perform this rite, he imparts a triple blessing; namely, first towards the epistle side, then in the middle of the altar, finally towards the gospel side, where he completes the circle. Whilst this blessing is being given the ministers, kneeling on the edge of the predella and bowing moderately, hold the ends of the cope; and at least where there is no playing of the organ, the sign for the blessing is given by the ringing of the little bell or even of the church bell. The priest himself should not say anything, nor is it lawful to sing anything in the meantime; the organ, however, may be played in a soft and slow manner, adapted to the fostering of devotion and reverence towards the Most Holy Sacrament.

10. When the blessing is over and the remonstrance has been put on the altar, the priest genuflects on one knee and with the two assistants descends *in plano*, where on bended knees without making any reverence he puts off the humeral veil. It is then lawful to say, even in the vulgar tongue, the indulgenced prayers, 'Blessed be God,' etc. After these prayers, the assistant deacon or priest without any inclination ascends to the predella and puts back the Blessed Sacrament into the tabernacle, genuflecting on one knee before and after. Those present, however,