

EXSURGE DOMINE

- *Defende Ecclesiam tuam* -

Our websites

The *Exsurge Domine* website grows with a new section dedicated to the speeches of H.E. Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, our Patron, on which his writings, interviews, homilies will be constantly posted.

www.exsurgedomine.org

For English-speaking friends, the U.S. office of Exsurge Domine has activated a new dedicated site:

www.exsurgedomineusa.org

How to help us

Exsurge Domine Association lives and operates thanks to the generosity of its supporters and the donations we receive. If you haven't yet had a chance to send a donation, or if you would like to renew it, you can do so in two ways:

- online, from the website
- by bank transfer

You can also arrange a testamentary bequest in favor of Exsurge Domine through your notary public.

We also invite you to let your friends and acquaintances know about our Association.

Thank you for your generosity!



Fulget Ecclesia

*Homily on the feast of Saint Ambrose Bishop,
Confessor and Doctor of the Church*

*Fulget Ecclesia non suo,
sed Christi lumine.*

S. Ambr., *Exameron*, 4, 8



THESE ARE THE WORDS of Saint Ambrose, whose anniversary of Episcopal Consecration we are celebrating today. On December 7, 374, in fact, after having been acclaimed Bishop of Milan a few days earlier by the people of the city, the noble and rich lawyer from Trier, Germany; the son of the Governor of Gaul; the official sent at the age of twenty-five as Praetorian Prefect to Sirmium, in Pannonia; the Governor first of the Province of Liguria and Emilia and then of Milan itself, the newly baptized



Mass intentions

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Priests - secular and religious - can also be helped by asking them to celebrate holy Masses according to specific intentions.

It is possible to ask for the celebration of Masses (**in the Tridentine rite only**) for particular intentions or of funeral masses:

- one Mass
- a triduum of Masses
- an octave of Masses
- Gregorian Masses

The offerings for the Holy Masses will be allocated by *Exsurge Domine* to the priests who, due to their loyalty to tradition, are persecuted by the Bergoglian church.

On the official website of the Association there is a special section to indicate the name of the offerer, the intention of the Mass and all the other details.

Prayer requests

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It is likewise possible to send a prayer request via e-mail:

info@exsurgedomine.org

Religious men and women connected with *Exsurge Domine* will be happy to pray for you, for your loved ones, for particular intentions close to your heart.

Ambrose received Sacred Ordination. We are therefore not celebrating his *dies natalis*, but the date of his lightning-quick ecclesiastical *cursus honorum*. The esteemed Roman official, whose eloquence and elegance of style everyone admired, belonged to the *Gens Aurelia*, a Roman family of plebeian origin that became prominent during the imperial era. His true name, Aurelius Ambrosius, makes his Roman character manifest.

Rich but detached from money: as soon as he was baptized, Ambrose donated his possessions to the poor and his lands to the Church. Honest and of an austere life: even before embracing the Faith, Ambrose was admired and respected by the nobility and the people for his virtues. Thirsting for Truth, he was a staunch defender of Catholic orthodoxy against heresies: first and foremost Arianism, from which the neomodernist heresy that is rampant today draws. Intolerant of paganism, which as a Christian and as a bishop he opposed and fought with courage, standing up to politicians, nobles, imperial officials and even the Emperors of East and West. He was the counselor and spiritual guide of Augustine of Hippo, who converted to the Faith thanks to the wise pedagogy of Saint Ambrose and the excellence of erudition that they both shared.

All this is the furthest thing we can imagine from the model of the modern, conciliar, synodal Bishop, who must be *fluid* – as the Prefect of the late Holy Office, Tucho Fernandez, recently recalled when he took possession of his Cardinal's Title – that is, he must know like water how to take the shape of the vessel that receives it: a pearl of Buddhist wisdom that hides behind a suggestive simile the shapeless and subservient nature of those who think only of pleasing their interlocutor and not of defending a Truth in which they do not believe in the first place.

Imagine what *fluidity*, what *inclusiveness* Saint Ambrose demonstrated when he wrote in a letter to the Emperor Valentinian: “*Just as all men who are under Roman jurisdiction are in your service, since you are princes and emperors of the world, so you yourselves are in the service of God and of the holy faith. For salvation cannot be certain unless each one sincerely worships the true God, that is, the God of the Christians, by whom all things are governed. He is the only true God who is to be worshipped in the interior of the mind; ‘The pagan gods,’ as Scripture says, ‘are demons’*” (*Epistula* 72:1). Ambrose wrote

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Simply send a text message with the text **502027** to **1-855-575-7888** and you will receive a reply with directions to make an occasional or recurring donation.

Registered office



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thus to contest the request of Marcus Aurelius Symmachus to restore the statue of Victory that had been removed by the Roman Senate in 382 on the orders of Emperor Gratian. But what was Symmachus asking for, which was not so different from what today's rulers and prelates propagandize for? Listen: *"Let us ask for peace for the gods of the fatherland. . . . We must recognize that all cults have a single foundation. Everyone contemplates the same stars, only one sky is common to us, only one universe surrounds us. What does it matter if everyone seeks the truth in his own way? There is no single path to reach such a great mystery."* In these words, inspired by that false concept of freedom which places the living and true God on the same level as the false and lying gods, we find the same plague of modern liberalism, which has penetrated the Church with the Conciliar Declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*, with the Pantheon of Assisi, and with the Declaration of Abu Dhabi. To Symmachus' requests, Ambrose replied: *"That truth which you do not know, we have learned directly from God!"*

A similar episode took place in 386, with the promulgation of the law that authorized heretics to possess and restore religious buildings and that imposed death on those who did not respect the law. Those were the years following the Emperor Julian's apostasy and his attempt to restore paganism, with the complicity of the Arians. Saint Ambrose did not hesitate to raise his authoritative voice, and as Bishop of the Diocese he refused to grant even a single church to the Arian heretics. When the imperial army besieged the basilica where Ambrose and the

Milanese Catholics had taken refuge, he courageously resisted the abuses, without abdicating his role and without haggling over principles. It was on that occasion that he was able to teach the faithful, during the long hours of the days of siege, the hymns he composed and which are still part of the Ambrosian and Roman Liturgy. Because Saint Ambrose, let us not forget, codified the Liturgy that takes its name from him.

Saint Ambrose arrived at the *Sacerdotii plenitudo* unprepared: only seven days earlier he had not even imagined that he would be called to lead the Diocese of Milan, an important political, economic and cultural crossroads of the Empire. But his lack of priestly formation was for him a spur to the study of Sacred Scripture and the Fathers of the Church, including Saint Athanasius and Saint Basil the Great.

In these times of confusion and persecution, many young people called by the Lord to serve Him in a vocation to the priesthood or religious life find themselves in a similar situation. They, too, are being called by the loud cry of the faithful, who have been deprived of the Sacraments and the Mass by sixty years of *conciliar revolution*, just as the faithful back then were deprived by decades of Arianism. Today's young vocations also do not have adequate formation, nor the time and means to achieve it in a canonically protected structure. And yet they respond to this call, with generosity and trust in the help of God who calls them. How can we remain inert in the face of this completely extraordinary and unique situation? What Pastor, I wonder, would use the norms of the Church, which are valid for ordinary times and designed for an institution that is healthy in all its governing bodies, as an excuse to exempt himself from the duty of evangelizing and

sanctifying souls?

Today, fifty years after the foundation of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre's Fraternity, we can recognize with serenity and fairness of judgment that his decision to establish a traditional seminary that would ensure good priests was not only legitimate, but necessary. Those who opposed it at the time with threats, retaliation, and canonical sanctions have shown that they are aligned with those who today make no secret of their aversion not only to the Tridentine Liturgy, but to all that is Catholic, Apostolic, and



Roman. But fifty years later, it seems that Italy still does not have a seminary that does not require its clerics to accept Vatican II and the “reformed liturgy.”



For this reason, as previously announced on December 2, the *Exsurge Domine* association has decided to allocate the structures of the Hermitage currently being restored and under construction for the purpose of founding the *Collegium Traditionis*, where traditional priestly formation can be imparted to young vocations.

The fire with which Saint Ambrose was inflamed 1,649 years ago on the seventh of December is the same fire that now burns in the hearts of so many young people. Let us give them the opportunity to become holy priests, and we will have the certainty that we have laid the foundations for the reconstruction of tomorrow’s Christian society.

Saint Ambrose, in spite of the fatuous dogmatism of the Council and the Synod, knew how to be violent: not violent against his neighbor, but rather against his own defects, inclinations to evil, and temptations. He was violent like the one who wins eternal glory is violent: “*The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take possession of it*” (Mt 11:12). A holy violence made up of discipline, mortification, fasting, prayer, tireless ministry, and total detachment from material goods in order to help the poor and needy. And in this we find in him the same temperament as other great Saints such as Hilary of Poitiers, Irenaeus of Lyons, Isidore of Seville, or Saint Charles Borromeo.

This evangelical violence translates into meekness with one’s neighbor, restoring that divine order which sin has broken. For this reason, we understand the character of a saint who cannot tolerate paganism and heresy and who does not spare homilies, speeches, letters, apologetic and theological works to eradicate them. Only those who are devoured by zeal for the house of the Lord, as Psalm 69 says, do not find peace until they have brought every last sheep back to the fold. Only those who are inflamed with God’s





love react with vigor and passion, with every fiber of their being, upon seeing so many souls destined for Heaven in danger of being damned forever. Only those who allow themselves to be enlightened by the bright Sun of Truth wish to call into the same Divine Light those who walk in darkness.

In 1339, during the famous battle of Parabiago that decreed the handing over of the power of that city to the Visconti, Saint Ambrose appeared on a white steed, with a stirrup in his hand, and terrorized the Swiss and German mercenaries who were about to defeat the Milanese. It was then that the Saint was proclaimed defender of the city.

In other circumstances, such as at Cortina in 1412, the Blessed Virgin intervened to help the besieged Catholic people, showing Herself on horseback, with a drawn sword in Her hand. These miraculous incursions of God's eternity into the daily lives of men disturb the present Hierarchy, which detests any manifestation of Christian manliness and prefers vile compromise, if not abject complicity with the wicked. But the Church cannot be in the image

of the world, because – in the words of Saint Ambrose – *Fulget Ecclesia non suo, sed Christi lumine*: the Church shines not with her own light, but with the light of Christ. If it does not shine with the light of Christ, it is not Church.

We have many enemies looming on multiple fronts. If we do not dare to hope to see Saint Ambrose appear on horseback, we can nevertheless pray to the Lord that, through Saint Ambrose's example and intercession, God will grant us holy shepherds to defend the Vineyard from the wild boar that devastates it (Ps 80:13). And so may it be.

+ Carlo Maria Viganò, *Archbishop*

December 7, 2023

*Ordinatio S.cti Ambrosii
Pontificis Mediolanensis
Doctoris et Patroni princip. Civitatis et Diocesis*

