



Priests from across the U.S. and Canada study the fine points and rubrics of the traditional Latin Mass at a recent Priest Training Program sponsored by Una Voce America together with the Fraternity of St. Peter. Here, Fr. Justin Nolan, FSSP teaches the correct liturgical posture and demeanor for offering Mass in the traditional Latin form.

Survey Shows Interest in the Traditional Latin Mass Continues to Grow

In August of this year, Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) published the results of a poll they conducted to determine attitudes of Catholics towards the traditional Latin Mass. Prompted by Una Voce Carmel's president, Scott Arbuckle, this survey offered an important view on the public's perception and interest in the Mass. The question posed in the survey was: "Do you favor as an alternative to the newer Mass, bringing back the older Latin Tridentine Mass for those who would prefer this option?"

Results showed that 25% favor the option, 12% oppose it, and 63% have no opinion.

Course in the Latin Language Now Offered Online

Within the past year a new option for the study of the Latin language has become available to those in America and around the world, and it comes by means of a platform that might seem strange for an ancient language—the internet. The Carmenta Online Latin Classroom, founded and run by Andrew Kuhry-Haeuser, who also serves as instructor for all levels of its Latin classes, has begun offering a course in the Latin language that is taught completely over the internet and uses the latest web conferencing technology. This technology allows for a live online class meeting through live group audio and video, permitting a whole group of students to meet together with the instructor in a single “online classroom,” even though each individual student is in reality sitting before his own home computer. The instructor and students are able to converse with each other through each student’s individual computer speakers and microphone and to see each other by way of web cams. In addition, the blackboard of the traditional classroom is replaced by a whiteboard visible to each student on his own computer screen. At this point in time, the online classroom setting provided by Carmenta is as close to the experience of a real in-person class as can be achieved through the internet.

The course runs for eight possible semesters, with three semesters being offered per year, in the fall, spring, and summer. Mr. Kuhry-Haeuser, who has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Latin from Gonzaga University, a prominent Jesuit Catholic institution, teaches all units of the course. And while this Latin course is taught over the internet, one shouldn’t get the idea that it is not serious or that it is aimed at the mere dabbler. In fact, it is quite thorough and comprehensive, and meant for serious students, equivalent to a good college or high-school level course.

It is an in-depth and ambitious course, one that wouldn’t be at all out of place in

any top-flight institution of learning, but since it happens to be located online, it comes with certain additional advantages. Since the Carmenta course is taught over the internet, it provides for the student an inherent flexibility and makes the integration of Latin study into his own particular lifestyle far smoother, eliminating the extra travel time and stress that would be involved in a course taken at a local university, college, or homeschool co-op or collective. The student may participate in class from home or wherever he has access to the internet, allowing him much more easily to fit the course into what may be a very busy schedule.

The Carmenta course also affords the opportunity of learning Latin for those who may not otherwise have been able, perhaps because there has been no Latin course offered where they live or in the school that they attend. Unfortunately, in many places across the country, especially in many small towns, there is not enough “demand” to warrant the offering of Latin classes in the local schools. For the people who find themselves in this situation, their educations limited by their personal geography, the online route may be an excellent option. There are many people who may have thought for years of taking Latin but were never presented with an opportunity to do so. These people may want to think seriously about learning online.

The Carmenta Online Latin Classroom’s course is built around two separate textbooks: John F. Collins’ *Primer of Ecclesiastical Latin*, which is used during the first four semesters, and Hans Orberg’s *Lingua Latina*, used for the fifth through eighth semesters. “My choice of these two markedly different texts,” says Mr. Kuhry-Haeuser, “is indicative of my personal ideas concerning the effective teaching of Latin. Collins’ *Primer* presents a more traditional, grammar-focused approach to

the language, one that is more suited to a beginning student. By means of this thorough and well-organized text, the student learns about the rules and structure of Latin and of language in general, which in time he is able to apply to his own native language. Collins presents translation both from Latin and into Latin as an analytical and step-by-step process, allowing the student a clear view of the basic, subtle workings of the language.

“I also keep, while teaching from this text, a special focus on the connections between the vocabularies of Latin and of English. I address individually each Latin word presented in the text and prompt the students to come up with the English words that were derived from it. It is interesting to the student and also allows him to learn Latin vocabulary far more quickly. At the same time students are now able to achieve a far greater knowledge of English vocabulary since they learn to relate modern English words to these earlier Latin forms. Analysis of the original Latin words, which in general were constructed in a way far more logical to the student’s mind than those of modern English, makes the student able to piece together the meanings of English words by dissecting their Latin precursors. For instance, if in class we saw the word *absolvo* for the first time, I would ask the students whether they knew any English words that seemed to have been derived from this word. They might say “absolve” or “absolution.” Then I would break the word down into basic verb and prefix, pointing out that *solvo* means ‘set free’ or ‘release’ and that the prefix *ab-* means “from” or “away from,” and therefore when basic verb and prefix are combined, they logically mean ‘set free from’ or ‘release from,’ which is exactly what the English word ‘absolve’ means.”

Next, with Collins as a base, the class moves on to Orberg’s *Lingua Latina*. This text, only a few years old, has already revolutionized the teaching of Latin. Orberg has chosen to take the bold step of writing his textbook completely in Latin, omitting all of the usual guides and explanations in the student’s native

language. Thus, with this crutch removed, the student is now forced to understand the rules and intricacies of the Latin language from context, leading for the student to a far more intuitive understanding of the language and allowing him far more easily to learn to write and speak it quickly and fluidly. In addition, Orberg's method is particularly helpful for the learning and retention of Latin vocabulary and idiom. "With *Lingua Latina*," says Kuhry-Haeuser, "the student is able to take the next step, from a language he has understood structurally and formally to Latin as a living, breathing language, one that he is now able to use conversationally."

And this is the third pillar of the course—conversation. Beginning in the second semester, students in the course begin speaking and writing in Latin both in and out of class. In class the instructor leads group conversations (starting very simply, but moving in time to the more complex), while at the same time, outside of class, pairs of students are assigned each week a certain amount of Latin conversation time, chatting with each other by means of the text chat room on the Carmenta Online Latin Classroom web site. This conversational element, integrated fully into nearly every level of the course, is, Mr. Kuhry-Haeuser believes, "key to the students' long-term success with the Latin language. Only through the frequent practice in forming sentences and recalling vocabulary that conversation in the language provides are the students able, in time, to truly master it. The non-conversational approach that has dominated most Latin education over the past century, which focusses on translation from Latin to the student's native language along with tedious memorization of long lists of vocabulary words, is generally painful for the student and, in the end, usually not terribly effective. Only conversation, which forces the student to obtain and then *retain* a high level of logical *and* intuitive understanding of the language, can serve to take the student from a rudimentary understanding of Latin to a deep understanding of the structure and beauty



Catholic Architectural Beauty: St. Joseph's Church, Winsted, CT

of the language and its literature, and connectedly, language in general."

Mr. Kuhry-Haeuser feels quite strongly concerning the essential nature of the Latin language in the context of a broad liberal-classical education and believes that Latin should be a basic course for all students, no matter which particular discipline they may later choose to focus on. Still, the reality is that, in this particular time in history, the majority of teachers and students do not understand the language's great value and even necessity for anyone who wishes to be truly educated, especially in the context of the Western tradition. Still, there does remain a core group of students, teachers, and educated citizens that keeps Latin alive and allows it to remain, Kuhry-Haeuser asserts, "a *living* language."

The publishers and readers of this magazine, as devotees of the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite as well as the historical music of the Roman Rite, should certainly have a keener interest than most in the Latin language, and so for them this course might be an especially good choice. Anyone who wishes to understand the Latin Mass, as well as the history and traditions of the Catholic Church, must not only study and become

familiar with the Latin language, but must also strive to attain a high level of facility in reading, understanding, and even speaking it. The Church and the Latin language are inextricably intertwined (it has been the official language of the Church for millennia and remains so still), and any Catholic who wishes to approach the Church in its entirety, in the context of both past and present, must understand the language of Rome. Clergy members, in particular, who wish to offer the Roman Rite Mass to their parishioners must be able to understand and use Latin with uncommon facility. They should be able to utter the words of the Mass with the depth and subtlety that only comes with a profound and fluent knowledge of the language in which it was written. And this course, with its built-in flexibility in regard to geography and time constraints, may be just what a busy priest or seminarian may be looking for. At the same time an interested layperson, busy with his job or the time-consuming tasks of childcare and homeschooling, may find that this course fits in well with his hectic lifestyle, whether he is interested in learning the language himself or in having his children do so.

The Carmenta course is designed to

be a good fit for children as young as junior-high age all the way up to adults. It moves at a reasonable pace and meets frequently enough (three times per week in the first two semesters and two times per week after that) that retention of the material as well as a smoothly increasing improvement in the use of the language over time are, for a devoted student, easy to obtain. Homework, assigned at every class period, is an important component of the course as well, and admittedly, a student who fails to complete his homework on a regular basis will likely have a very hard time excelling. On the other hand, though, any student who completes his homework and shows up regularly for class can expect to do well, regardless of what his natural aptitude may be in the acquisition of language. The primary goal of the course is lofty—the acquisition of a complete and fluent knowledge of the Latin tongue—but at the same time it is quite achievable if a student maintains his focus and is sufficiently devoted to the completion of the small amount of work assigned to him at any point in the progression of the course.

It is a solid course, one that might be utilized quite effectively in a traditional classroom setting. Yet Mr. Kuhry-Haeuser has chosen to offer it online instead. We asked him why he had chosen to take such an, as yet, fairly unusual step. “I wanted to bring together a sufficient number of students so that I could teach a course of my own,” he told us, “something that would have been impossible if I had been restricted to those few who had an interest in Latin in the small town where I live. And so, when I learned that technology had advanced sufficiently so that it was now possible to conduct classes online with live audio and video, I decided to give it a go. I feel that the live audio and video component is key to the course’s efficacy. The immediate interaction between teacher and student is essential for establishing in the mind of the student the subtle patterns and idioms of the Latin language and for helping him to finally relate to and employ it as a spoken, *living* language. Short of this direct teaching

method, I felt that any course would be unsatisfactory and ineffective. But since I have been able to utilize the newest web conferencing technology, I am quite happy with the feel of the online class, and I am now working to grow it into a lively course with a diverse and interesting group of students.”

In the process of writing this article, we also spoke to a couple of students who are presently enrolled in the Carmenta course. The first, Jimmy, a college student and part-time video game enthusiast, had this to say: “The Carmenta Online Latin course has been awesome. I’ve completed the Latin I coursework and I have to say that I can already see the results in my everyday life: I have a better grasp of the English language now and my vocabulary is broader. Andrew is a great instructor, very competent and helpful. And on top of that he has a great sense of humor! I think my favorite part of the course has been the vocabulary. Andrew makes learning the vocabulary fun and easy by showing us the connection between the words and their English derivatives. I would recommend this course to anyone who is interested in learning Latin.”

We also asked Hilary, a junior-high-school teacher and Carmenta student who is presently in Latin I, what her experience of the course was: “I took Latin because I hoped it would help me to understand the English language better and so that in the future it will be a good springboard for my learning Spanish. I also was fascinated by the oldness of it and its relationship with all the modern Romance languages. Before I began the course I was a little concerned that learning Latin might be too difficult and that I wouldn’t be able to handle it, but it has turned out to be far easier than I thought. Andrew is an exceptional teacher and always very patient, and while he knows the text well, he is never afraid to veer from it when he feels he needs to.”

These students and others, under the guidance of the instructor, and with persistence and a reasonable amount of labor, are led semester after semester gradually in the direction of the single goal of the course—the understanding of the

Latin language. And in time they can expect to understand it at a high enough level that its many fruits may become available to them. For with a good understanding of Latin a person is able to accomplish much: a deeper understanding of the Latin Mass, an awareness and appreciation of two and a half millennia of Latin literature, and the attainment of a myriad insights into the structure and workings of his own native language and of language in general. But no matter what the student’s specific goals may be, this course is a good choice. It is designed to give the student all the varied tools of the language as well as the breadth of related intellectual and spiritual avenues to which the Latin language provides access. By leading the student to a fluid facility with and an in-depth understanding of Latin, a variety of doors are opened for him, directly and indirectly, that previously were not only closed but perhaps even invisible. And in opening and walking through these doors, he is able in time to fashion himself anew, as minister or worshipper, scholar or gentleman, literary enthusiast or rhetorician, linguist or intellectual light. The language, while certainly a joy on its own, is in fact merely a beginning. It is the start of something quite new, the entrance to a universe of learning.

The cost of the Carmenta Online Latin course is \$400.00 (US) per semester. Interested parties can sign up at the course’s web site, www.CarmentaLatin.com. The web site also contains further information on the details of the course, including sections on the instructor, scheduling, and policies, as well as Latin-related movie clips, newspaper and magazine articles, and book recommendations, and an extensive list of links to other Latin-themed web sites. Also, if you have any questions at all, Mr. Kuhry-Haeuser invites you to contact him by email at instructor@CarmentaLatin.com. He is always happy to respond to queries or concerns.

