

Fr. McManus Stunned By Vatican Moves

(Special to The Wanderer)

DETROIT — Fr. Frederick R. McManus, director of the secretariat of the Bishops Committee on the Liturgy, denounced steps taken by the Holy See in recent months to regulate intercommunion, sacramental absolution, and minor orders as "negative indications of retrenchment and misunderstanding." McManus made the remarks during a "State Of The Liturgy" address to the national meeting of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, held here October 9th through 13th.

Singling out recent developments which he characterized as "weak spots" in the liturgical situation, McManus bitterly criticized the Pastoral Norms On Granting General Sacramental

Absolution issued, June 16th, by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith (English text in the *Wanderer*, August 3rd, 1972), as "ignoring history." But what totally astounded him, McManus said, was the *motu proprio* "Ministeria Quaedam," which renews the minor orders of lector and acolyte, reaffirming the rule that these offices are open only to men and preparing the way to eliminate *ad hoc* and extraordinary ministers in liturgical celebration. McManus found this a "symptom which deepens incredulity" and called the exclusion of women "inexplicable."

"Negative indications" were also being given off, McManus declared, by the American Hierarchy. He referred specifically to the recent decision

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of the NCCB-USCC Administrative Board to drop the question of Communion in the hand for the foreseeable future.

According to well-informed sources, the Administrative Board's decision was reached when a sharp altercation between Cardinal Carberry of St. Louis and Bishop Malone of Youngstown on the question of polling the laity about Communion practices led to an overwhelming desire among the assembled Bishops to bury the whole question.

McManus, however, unlike the Bishops, pines to have the question resurface. He called Communion in the hand a "growing and reverent practice" in some places.

Turning at last to positive signs, McManus pointed to the arrangement made by the American Bishops in Atlanta last Spring whereby each Bishop could apply to the Holy See for permission to conduct certain liturgical experiments for a three-year period in his own diocese. He said this move was the result of an impasse at the National Conference level regarding liturgical adaptation on a blanket basis. The path of progress, therefore, as McManus saw it, was for liturgy "experts" to talk individual Bishops into applying to Rome for permission to try out their pet schemes. Some of these permissions, McManus said, "might" be granted.

The McManus speech was scheduled at the last minute, when Bishop Malone became too ill to attend the Detroit meeting.