



# Catenian Homily



## Mass for the 1000th Meeting of Glasgow Circle St Joseph's, Robroyston, October 24th 2004



### Homily by Archbishop Mario Conti

**M**y dear brothers and sisters in Christ, members of the Catenian Association. Bishop Casartelli had a serious purpose in launching the Catenian Association back in 1908. It was not simply to be a men's club. He saw the need - a vision shared by others - of providing for Catholic professionals and businessmen an instrument to help them remain faithful as Catholics and support one another in a climate often alien to the Church.

The words fidelity, integrity and solidarity come to mind.

Inevitably social contact became a sine qua non in progressing this cause - it was the favoured, because necessary, modus agendi.

In one sentence I realise I have used two Latin expressions! A sine qua non is something without which one could not achieve one's aim. The modus agendi is the way in which one operates. You operate by coming together, conferring, planning, reflecting, praying and socialising. Not to enjoy the company of your fellows, - not to celebrate your togetherness, would be contrary to the spirit of your Association.

The bonhomie is, however, the fruit of your good work and not its principal aim - a concomitant perhaps of the fraternity born of a common faith, the vision of a

shared hope, and the affection arising from the solidarity of motives and purpose.

But it is important for every association, and particularly for an association motivated by spiritual concerns, to revisit from time to time what in other contexts is called the charism of the order - what it was that first grasped the attention of good men; what it was that led them to commit something of their lives, their talents and their goods to the enterprise.

It is true that the support of good causes; the contribution of material goods to the needy; especially those of the Association; the fostering of a spirit of generosity, flow naturally from this enterprise. But neither are they the principal aims of the Association as I understand it.

The Catenians are not first and foremost a welfare association. If I am right in identifying the words fidelity, integrity and solidarity as motives for and characteristics of the Catenian Association, then these need to be writ large at the head of every programme and undertaking.

**Fidelity** - a keeping of a promise, come what may, to God, to the Church, to one's spouse and the company of friends, I mean the members of the association.

St Paul in today's beautiful extract from his letter to Timothy gives an example:

"I have fought the good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish; I have kept the faith."

**Integrity** - this word is close in meaning and impact to holiness. It implies personal virtue and honesty in one's dealings with others. It is an essential requirement for all engaged in the professions and in business.

The book of Ecclesiasticus, our first reading, describes the Lord as a just judge, who is no respecter of persons. This description must fit for all who are called to "be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect".

As the reading reminds us: "He shows no respect of personages to the detriment of a poor man ... he listens to the plea of the injured party - he does not ignore the orphan's supplication, nor the widow's."

**Solidarity** - a word more familiar to our ears in recent years - and greatly used by the Holy Father to express an essential characteristic of a healthy society - its sense of brotherly cohesion, of shared purpose and common action.

This involves personal sacrifice of time and interest. St Paul was denied it when he stood before the tribunal: "Every one of them deserted me - but the Lord stood by me and gave me power."

Let us not desert one another - nor the Association itself - in the hour of need.

I believe this is an hour of need. Never did the world need more the confident, but always humble, expression and example of faith.

Never did it have greater need of personal integrity and honesty in interpersonal and company dealings.

Never was there a time when solidarity in achieving such good purposes was not required - the Catenian Association exists for the purpose.

You may need to examine the place of women in your Association. You certainly need to recruit more vigorously and bring in the young. But above all you need to reflect on, draw on and plan on your original charism.

And so may "your light shine among men, that seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven."

**Amen**



Archbishop Conti is pictured with Grand President John Clarke and his wife Helen, Glasgow President Tony Pacitti and Mrs Irene Pacitti, and Director of Province 9 Gerry and Beryl Devine