



THE PASTOR'S DESK

February 14, 2010 - Mass in the Extraordinary Form

Dear Parishioners,

Beginning next Sunday, February 21st, at 5:00 pm we will have Mass in the Extraordinary Form. This is also known as the "Latin Mass" or the "Tridentine Mass". But, now, its correct title is the "Extraordinary Form". This comes from Pope Benedict the 16th *Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum*. This decree was issued on July 7, 2007 and came into effect on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross of that year (September 14, 2007). Here are some excerpts from *Summorum Pontificum* that give an idea of why the Holy Father issued this decree:

Up to our own times, it has been the constant concern of supreme pontiffs to ensure that the Church of Christ offers a worthy ritual to the Divine Majesty, 'to the praise and glory of His name,' and 'to the benefit of all His Holy Church.'

Since time immemorial it has been necessary - as it is also for the future - to maintain the principle according to which 'each particular Church must concur with the universal Church, not only as regards the doctrine of the faith and the sacramental signs, but also as regards the usages universally accepted by uninterrupted apostolic tradition, which must be observed not only to avoid errors but also to transmit the integrity of the faith, because the Church's law of prayer corresponds to her law of faith.'

Many other Roman pontiffs, in the course of the centuries, showed particular solicitude in ensuring that the sacred liturgy accomplished this task more effectively. Outstanding among them is St. Pius V who, sustained by great pastoral zeal and following the exhortations of the Council of Trent, renewed the entire liturgy of the Church, oversaw the publication of liturgical books amended and 'renewed in accordance with the norms of the Fathers,' and provided them for the use of the Latin Church.

In more recent times, Vatican Council II expressed a desire that the respectful reverence due to divine worship should be renewed and adapted to the needs of our time. Moved by this desire our predecessor, the Supreme Pontiff Paul VI, approved, in 1970, reformed and partly renewed liturgical books for the Latin Church. These, translated into the various languages of the world, were willingly accepted by bishops, priests and faithful. John Paul II amended the third typical edition of the Roman Missal. Thus Roman pontiffs have operated to ensure that 'this kind of liturgical edifice ... should again appear resplendent for its dignity and harmony.' But in some regions, no small numbers of faithful adhered and continue to adhere with great love and affection to the earlier liturgical forms. These had so deeply marked their culture and their spirit that in 1984 the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II, moved by a concern for the pastoral care of these faithful, with the special indult 'Quattuor abhinc anno,' issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship, granted permission to use the Roman Missal published by Blessed John XXIII in the

*1962. Later, in the year 1988, John Paul II with the Apostolic Letter given as *Motu Proprio*, 'Ecclesia Dei,' exhorted bishops to make generous use of this power in favor of all the faithful who so desired. Following the insistent prayers of these faithful, long deliberated upon by our predecessor John Paul II, and after having listened to the views of the Cardinal Fathers of the Consistory of 22 March 2006, having reflected deeply upon all aspects of the question, invoked the Holy Spirit and trusting in the help of God, with these Apostolic Letters we establish the following: Art 1. The Roman Missal promulgated by Paul VI is the ordinary expression of the 'Lex orandi' (Law of prayer) of the Catholic Church of the Latin rite. Nonetheless, the Roman Missal promulgated by St. Pius V and reissued by Bl. John XXIII is to be considered as an extraordinary expression of that same 'Lex orandi,' and must be given due honour for its venerable and ancient usage. These two expressions of the Church's *Lex orandi* will in no any way lead to a division in the Church's 'Lex credendi' (Law of belief). They are, in fact two usages of the one Roman rite. It is, therefore, permissible to celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass following the typical edition of the Roman Missal promulgated by Bl. John XXIII in 1962 and never abrogated, as an extraordinary form of the Liturgy of the Church.*

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I have decided to offer Mass in this form of the Mass. At least during Lent, this will be offered as a Low Mass. I hope that by the time Easter comes, we may be up to offering a High Mass or, at least, a "Missa Cantata" (Sung Mass). Some will come to this Mass because, as the Holy Father said, they are attached to this form of the Mass. Some may come because they remember it from times past. Some may come out of curiosity. Still others because it may be the last chance they have to come to Mass on Sunday. If you have never been to Mass in this form, or if it has been a long time, you will be struck by the long periods of silence, the hidden actions and words of the priest, and, of course, everything being said in Latin. The readings will be re-read in English and, of course, the homily will be in English. A pamphlet-missal will be provided or you can dig through your old books and perhaps find an old missal from 1962 or before. Prior to the Mass, at 4:30 pm, I will give a brief explanation of the Mass in order to help you know what is going on. If you have never been to this form of the Mass, don't let your first impression be your last. Many people find that the silence and the ceremony are very conducive to prayer and devotion.

All of us need to be mindful of the fact that this was the form of the Mass used for centuries. All of us need to refrain from disparaging any of the forms of the Mass and the people who attend them. This concerns both the Ordinary and the Extraordinary Form.

Have a blessed Lent.

**God bless,
Fr. LaHood**