

INSTRUCTION #1 – A BRIEF HISTORY

First, I want to welcome you to our first Sunday in the New Year. And I want to also welcome you to something very old but also very new, at least at St. Barnabas. That is, our first public Traditional Latin Mass. A fair number of you asked for this last January, and, after no small effort on the part of many, we are now in a position to satisfy this request. This is the first of what I trust will be many Masses in this form. Its official title is “The Extraordinary Form of the Mass of the Latin Rite.” But most people call it the Traditional Latin Mass.

At St. Barnabas we have been offering only the so-called *Novus Ordo Missae*, or New Order of Mass that came into being on the First Sunday in Advent in 1969 at the command of Pope Paul VI. By his command, the New replaced the Old. He forbade the celebration of the Old Mass, except by certain isolated groups and older priests who asked not to be forced to learn the New Mass. Many people completely stopped practicing their Catholic faith as a consequence of this. Others eventually went to the Society of St. Pius X (which was suppressed by Rome in 1975) in order to continue to attend the Old Mass. Still others went to Protestant denominations.

In 1984, Pope St. John Paul II issued a letter to the bishops of the world asking them to allow the Traditional Latin Mass for those who requested it in writing. In February of 1985, the Archbishop of St. Louis at the time permitted the Traditional Latin Mass at St. Agatha parish – on the south side by the AB Brewery. But he only allowed it on the first Saturday of the month and it did not count for your Sunday obligation. Many other bishops ignored the Pope's request and continued to refuse to allow the Traditional Latin Mass in their dioceses.

So, in 1988, Pope St. John Paul II issued a *motu proprio* titled *Ecclesia Dei adflicta*. In it he pressed the bishops to make use of the permission already in place to allow the Traditional Latin Mass. This time, he got a better response. In St. Louis, the Mass at St. Agatha moved to a weekly Sunday Mass. But there were still bishops who would not comply with the Pope's wishes. In fact, in Missouri, repeated requests to the bishop of the Cape Girardeau – Springfield diocese met with repeated refusals.

Aware of this continued reluctance on the part of some bishops, Pope Benedict XVI, who had been one of the *periti* or “experts” at the Second Vatican Council, issued a law in the form of another *motu proprio* called *Summorum Pontificum* on July 7, 2007. This law reinstated the Traditional Latin Mass which he said had never been “abrogated” - a legal term which means repealed or revoked or nullified. Since that time there has been a resurgence of the Traditional Latin Mass in many countries. Today, with the blessing of Archbishop Carlson, we are part of that resurgence.

This is also the first of several explanations of the Traditional Latin Mass that I want to provide to you so that you may come to fully appreciate its beauty and its differences.

So, you might ask how “traditional” can the Latin Mass be if we haven't done it at St. Barnabas before? If you look at the large red book on the altar, its title is “1962 Missale Romanum.” It represents the seventh edition of the Roman Missal¹, whose first published edition appeared in 1570, at the request of the Council of Trent. But it was not new in 1570. Far from it. Gutenberg's printing press did not exist before 1450. So, Mass books had been painstakingly copied by hand. This resulted in transcription errors. At the time of the Protestant Revolution,

INSTRUCTION #1 – A BRIEF HISTORY

there were multiple rites in the Latin church. The Dominicans had their version of the Mass, the people of Milan, Italy had their version, the people of Toledo, Spain had their version, and so forth. But most of Europe followed the practices for Mass at Rome. Luther and his followers abhorred the Latin Mass and continuously changed Sunday services in many places as they strove to distance their services from that of Catholic Rome. The Council of Trent wanted an “official” version of the Catholic Mass to eliminate transcription errors in the copying and to stand in contrast to the new vernacular services of the Lutherans and Calvinists. The Mass at Rome was the model for that “official” Catholic Mass. The editors of the first edition of the Roman Missal did not change the Mass of Rome, they made it a matter of law and published it as such with the papal bull *Quo primum* issued by Pope St. Pius V. Much of the actual content was already a thousand or more years old. In fact, most of the content was in place at the time of Pope Gregory the Great in 600. So, today, we are looking at Mass content that is a millenium and a half in age. That's “traditional”!

An unfortunate consequence of this codifying of the Mass in 1570 was that it made further change to it very rare. It became a matter of law rather than a matter of Tradition (that's Tradition with a capital 'T'). As I said, the Missal we are using today is only the 7th edition in 445 years. Except for the periodic addition of new saints to the calendar, the organic development of the Roman Missal was, for the most part, arrested by this codification. Realizing this, the Second Vatican Council called for an updating of the Roman Missal in 1963. What actually happened was not really an updating, but rather a total replacement with something new. In fact, it was so new and different it was called by those who developed it (in a short period of only 5 years), the New Order of Mass, or *Novus Ordo Missae*.

I would like to read three quotes from the only document on the Mass that was actually produced by the fathers of the Second Vatican Council ⁱⁱ. The document gave guidelines for updating the Mass. Among them, the following:

- Article 36. (a “norm”)
The use of the Latin language, with due respect to particular law, is to be preserved in the Latin rites. But since the use of the vernacular, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments, or in other parts of the liturgy, may frequently be of great advantage to the people, a wider use may be made of it, especially in readings, directives and in some prayers and chants.
- Article 54. (a “decree”)
A suitable place may be allotted to the vernacular in Masses which are celebrated with the people, especially in the readings and “the common prayer,” and also, as local conditions may warrant, in those parts which pertain to the people, according to the rules laid down in Article 36 of this Constitution. Nevertheless care must be taken to ensure that the faithful may also be able to say or sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them.
- Article 116. (a “decree”)

INSTRUCTION #1 – A BRIEF HISTORY

The Church recognizes Gregorian chant as being specially suited to the Roman liturgy. Therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.

Three questions are obvious:

1. In practice, has Latin been preserved in the New Order of Mass? - In most places the answer is quite simply - No.
2. How many of you can “say or sing together in Latin” anything at all? - I suspect very few.
3. Until this morning, have you heard Gregorian chant given “pride of place in liturgical services”?

There is an insert in your bulletin that identifies 10 obvious differences between the two forms of Mass in the Latin rite. This will be the basis for some future explanations like this one on some future Sundays. Once again, I thank you for coming and for your support, and I ask you to participate by saying the responses that are highlighted in gray in the St. Barnabas Hand Missal.

- i The editions of the *Missale Romanum*:
 - 1570 – Pius V
 - 1604 – Clement VIII
 - 1634 – Urban VIII
 - 1884 – Leo XIII
 - 1911 – Pius X
 - 1920 – Benedict XV
 - 1962 – John XXIII
- ii *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 12/4/1963