

# Why the Traditional Latin Mass?

The Past (as Prologue)  
Benedict XVI and the Mass  
Language and Translation  
Common Objections

When we speak of the TLM, we are referring to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962, promulgated by Pope St. John XXIII. Benedict XVI labeled it “The Extraordinary Form of the Latin Rite.”

When we speak of the *Novus Ordo*, we are referring to the Mass of Paul VI, promulgated in November of 1969. Benedict XVI labeled it “The Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite.”

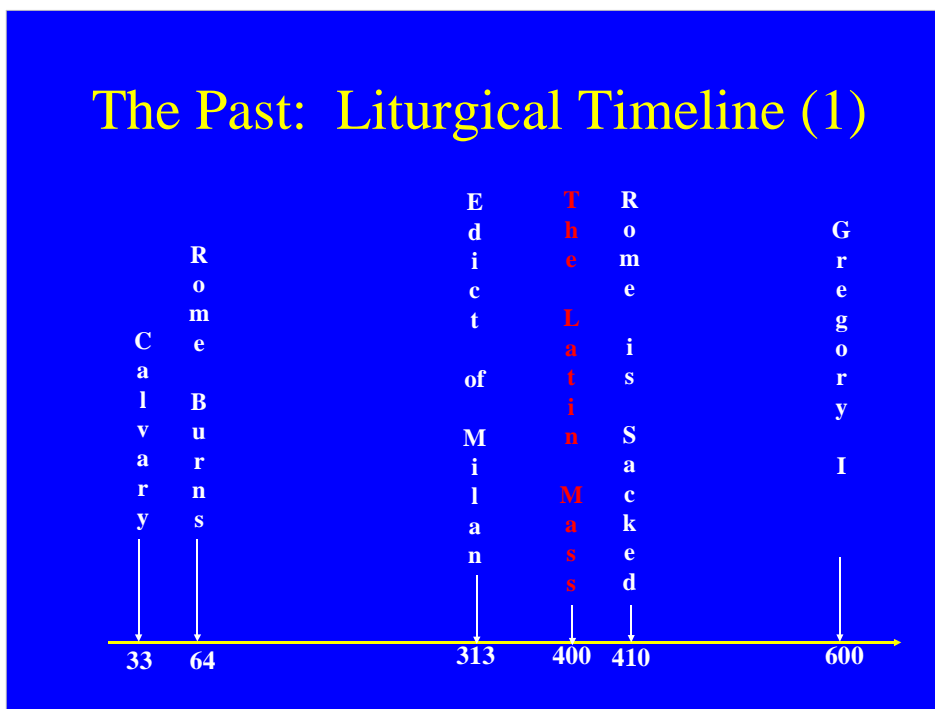
The Traditional Latin Mass (TLM) is experiencing a rebirth after a long time in the “refrigerator” where it was misplaced in 1970. This presentation will briefly review liturgical history in order to understand how the TLM got into the “refrigerator” in the first place, and the events leading up to its resurrection from the ashes of history.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI is a renowned liturgist in his own right and we will see how his thinking about the TLM developed over time.

The *Novus Ordo Missae* in the vernacular necessitates translation. We will examine some of the pitfalls involved.

Finally, we will address common objections to the TLM.

## The Past: Liturgical Timeline (1)



The sacrifice that we celebrate and commemorate in every Mass occurred when our Lord gave his life for us on Calvary.

Nero found it convenient to blame the Christians for the conflagration at Rome. Consequently, from 64-313, the persecutions meant that worship was “underground”; in private homes, in the catacombs, etc. and generally in small groups. It was primarily in Greek.

The Edict of Milan ended the persecutions and that meant that worship could be public, i.e. “liturgy”, and open to large gatherings of the faithful.

After Theodosius made Christianity the religion of the empire late in the same century, the liturgy had to be in Latin, the official language of the empire. It developed essentially (but not completely) into the Mass of the 1962 Roman Missal by the time of Gregory I (the Great, 590-604), the advocate of the chant that has come to bear his name.

From the Edict of Milan:

“When I, Constantine Augustus, as well as I, Licinius Augustus, fortunately met near Mediolanurn (Milan), and were considering everything that pertained to the public welfare and security, we thought, among other things which we saw would be for the good of many, those regulations pertaining to the reverence of the Divinity ought certainly to be made first, so that we might grant to the Christians and others full authority to observe that religion which each preferred; whence any Divinity whatsoever in the seat of the heavens may be propitious and kindly disposed to us and all who are placed under our rule.”

From The Mass of the Roman Rite by Joseph Jungmann, S.J.

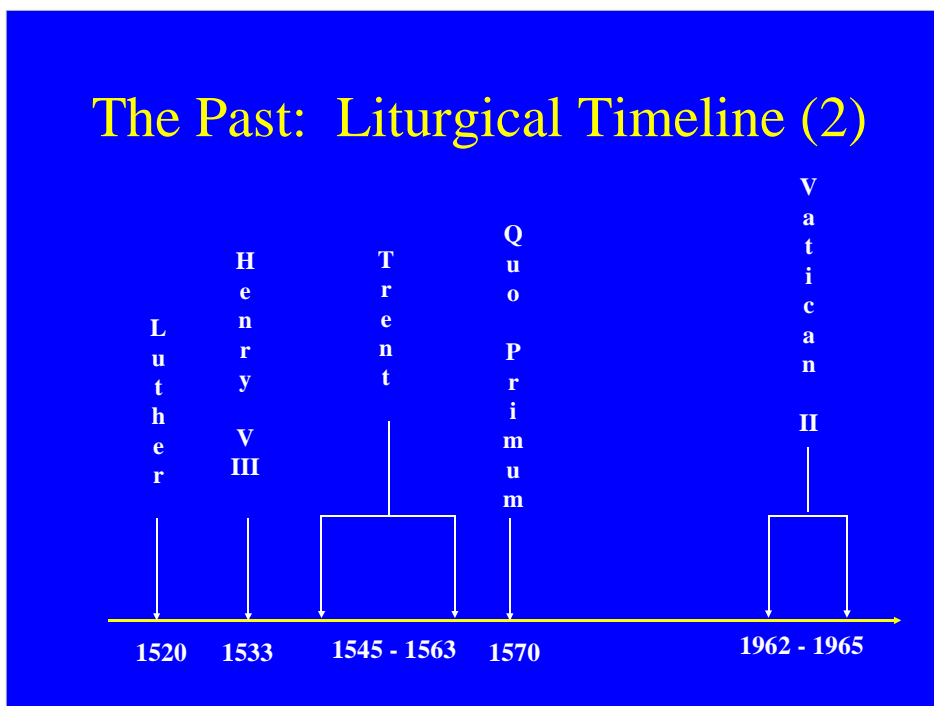
“...we must accept this as certain: the core of our Mass canon, from the *Quam oblationem* on, including the sacrificial prayer after the consecration, was already in existence by the end of the fourth century.” (p.53)

“Only the following parts of our Roman canon could not be found at the beginning of the fifth century:

*Communicantes*, *Hanc Igitur*, and after the Consecration, *Memento etiam*, and *Nobis quoque*. However, these formulas too, are to be found in the oldest extant manuscripts of the Roman canon, in a form that must at all events belong to the sixth century. During the interval all these prayers came into being; and the others took on, where they differed, the form they have at present.” (p.55)

“The framework of the Roman Mass - and this is the conclusion to be drawn from all the facts we have established - must therefore have been essentially determined by the turn of the fifth century, at least as regards the public utterance of prescribed prayers by the priest. Later on, in the course of our study of various Mass elements, we will encounter only a few modifications by Gregory the Great (590-604) - chiefly in the *Kyrie*, *Pater Noster*, preface, and *Hanc Igitur*; but these are for the most part a return to older simpler forms.” (p.58)

## The Past: Liturgical Timeline (2)



For nearly 1000 years, there was only the TLM. Then, the heretic, Luther, determined that he alone knew what books should be in the Bible and how God should be worshiped.

A few years later, because the Pope would not annul his marriage, Henry VIII forced England into the Protestant camp.

As a result of the onslaught against the faith from the Protestant Reformation, the Council of Trent was convened. It had to identify what was “Catholic” and what was not (Protestant heresy). The Council requested that the Pope, Pius V, issue a normative statement about the Mass.

This was the papal Bull *Quo Primum Tempore*. Note the respect for tradition shown in the text that follows.

From *Quo Primum Tempore* (emphasis mine):

“From the very first, upon our elevation to the chief Apostleship, We gladly turned our mind and energies and directed all our thoughts to those matters which concerned the preservation of a pure liturgy, and We strove with God’s help, by every means in our power, to accomplish this purpose....This new rite alone is to be used unless approval of the practice of saying Mass differently was given at the very time of the institution and confirmation of the church by Apostolic See at least 200 years ago, or unless there has prevailed a custom of a similar kind which has been continuously followed for a period of not less than 200 years, in which most cases We in no wise rescind their above-mentioned prerogative or custom. However, if this Missal, which we have seen fit to publish, be more agreeable to these latter, We grant them permission to celebrate Mass according to its rite, provided they have the consent of their bishop or prelate or of their whole Chapter, everything else to the contrary notwithstanding.”

Since that time (1570) the Mass has often been erroneously labeled the “Tridentine Mass” because of this connection to the Council of Trent. It is imperative to recall that Pius V did not change the Mass, he only codified it against the threat of Protestantism. The 1962 edition of the *Missale Romanum* is the last edition with the Latin “Mass of the Ages”. Pope John XXIII convened the second Vatican Council and its first document was *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the “Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy”. As we shall see when we examine the few paragraphs relevant to the Mass in this text, it has had the unintended consequences of making Latin and Gregorian Chant very rare exceptions in the Mass.

## The Past: 12/4/1963

Vatican Council II approves ***Sacrosanctum Concilium*** – the only Council document on the liturgy.

From *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (emphasis mine):

**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.

This was the first document produced by VCII. What does “with due respect to particular law” mean? It is not explained in the document. In practice, it came to mean that the local bishop could do whatever he wanted to do. The language used is (deliberately?) loose, unspecific.

Do you see anything here you could label a “rule”?

Has Latin been “preserved” in the *Novus Ordo*?

## The Past: 12/4/1963

### 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.

(Note: “the common prayer” are the petitions concluded by “We pray to the Lord.”)

Again, the “loophole” language: “suitable,” “may,” “as local conditions may warrant.” Is there an implication here that private Masses are to remain in Latin? Are there any real “rules” in Article 36 that we just examined?

One thing is certain. The only firm statement in this “decree” has been ignored. How many attendees of the *Novus Ordo* liturgy can “say or sing together in Latin” anything at all?

## The Past: 12/4/1963

**Article 116.** (a “decree”)

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

What does “other things being equal” mean? It is never explained.

How many Catholic churches give “pride of place in liturgical services” to Gregorian chant?

Based on this document from 1963, the Mass of over 15 centuries, the Mass of nearly all the saints, the Mass that subdued the barbarians when the Roman legions failed, the Mass that spread Catholicism throughout the world, would be banned in 1970.

## The Past: 1965-70

A Committee on the Liturgy, led by [Annibale Bugnini](#) (who had been dismissed in 1962 by Blessed John XXIII before the Council, and then appointed after the Council in 1966 by Paul VI), built the new Mass and changed all the readings. How did he approach his task?

"We must strip from our Catholic prayers and from the Catholic liturgy everything which can be the shadow of a stumbling block for our separated brethren, that is, for the Protestants."

[Annibale Bugnini](#), *L'Osservatore Romano*, 3/19/1965

"Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes - our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Democracy tells us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our groom. Tradition asks us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our father."  
G.K.Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*

In 1960 Father Bugnini was appointed Secretary to the Preparatory Commission for the Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council. In 1962 he was dismissed as Secretary of the Commission and from his seat at Lateran University. (Bugnini was the only secretary of a preparatory commission who was not confirmed as secretary of the actual conciliar commission of VC II. Cardinals Lercaro and Bea intervened with Pope St. John XXIII on his behalf, without success.) After the death of Pope John, Paul VI rehired Bugnini in 1966 (after the Council), to hold the key position of Secretary for the Liturgy Committee charged with implementing *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Seven years later, in January, 1976, Paul VI sent him to Tehran as Papal Nuncio. This backwater post was not a reward for his services!

The changes wrought by Bugnini led him to boast in 1974 that the reform of the liturgy had been "a major conquest of the Catholic Church". Another *peritus* at the Council and a proponent of the postconciliar revolution, Father Joseph Gelineau SJ, said of the reform (from *Demain la liturgie*, 1976): "To tell the truth it is a different liturgy of the Mass. This needs to be said without ambiguity: the Roman Rite as we knew it no longer exists. It has been destroyed."

Gilbert Keith Chesterton was a convert to Catholicism and one of its greatest apologists. In modern times, nearly every generation seems to equate its larger warehouse of facts and data to greater intelligence. The pride of man continually rears its ugly head.

What if the Pope issued this papal directive tomorrow:

“Effective the First Sunday of Advent, 2015,  
I decree that, because of widespread abuses,  
the current Ordinary Form (*Novus Ordo*)  
of the Mass of the Latin rite  
is to be replaced throughout the world with the  
Extraordinary Form (Traditional Latin Mass)  
of the same rite.”

???

Consider how would you feel? Indifferent? Elated? Irritated? ...

What action(s), if any, would you take?

If you substitute “Traditional Latin Mass” for “Ordinary Form” and *Novus Ordo Missae* for “Extraordinary Form” and 1969 for 2015 in the text above, you have what Paul VI decreed on Holy Thursday, 1969 in his Apostolic Constitution Promulgation Of The Roman Missal Revised By Decree Of The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. In his General Audience – 11/26/69 – he would affirm that the Council made him do it (not because there were widespread abuses):

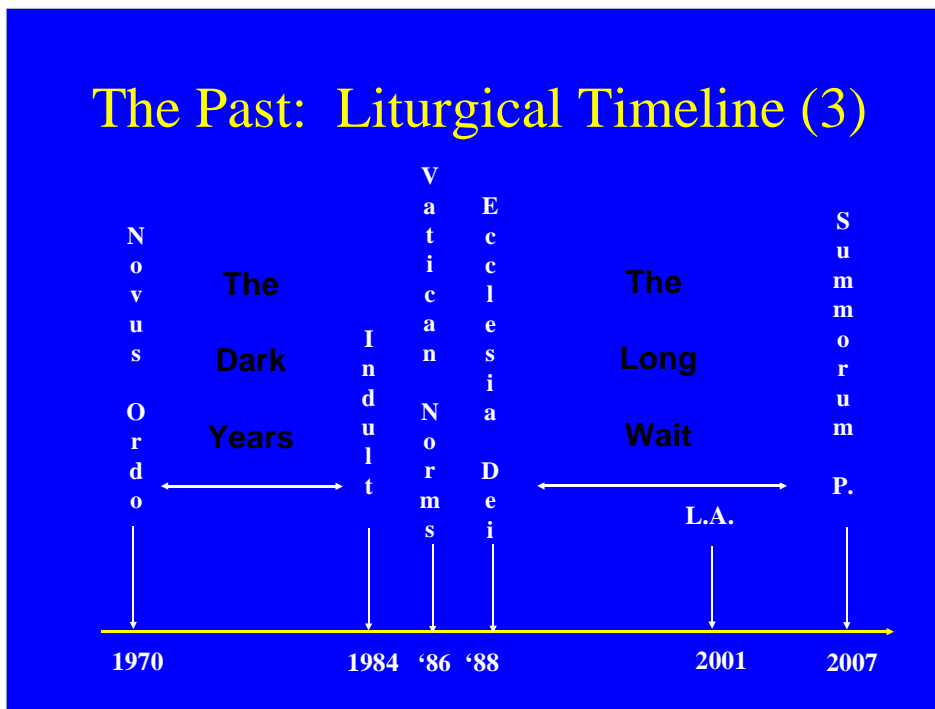
“As We said on another occasion, we shall do well to take into account the motives for this grave change. The first is obedience to the Council.”

I should also note (as someone who lived through this revolution) - the people in the pews were not protesting on Sundays either to change the Mass or to eliminate Latin. This so-called “reform” was imposed from above, it did not originate with the average Catholic.

As a consequence, two generations of Catholics were deprived of their Catholic heritage - the Traditional Latin Mass. For forty years we wandered in a liturgical wilderness, but unlike the Hebrews who knew they were lost in the desert, and who were searching for the promised land, few bishops had the courage to say to us that we had lost our liturgical way. Two generations of Catholics were exposed to nothing else and think the present disintegrated state of the liturgy is “normal.”



## The Past: Liturgical Timeline (3)



Fifteen years will now elapse, fifteen very unfavorable years for the Church in the “first world” countries where it was long-established, before the next significant event - a finger-sized hole punctured in the dam. Public Masses according to the 1962 Roman Missal were illicit during The Dark Years. Contrast this approach to that of *Quo Primum*. Many Catholics voted their disapproval with their feet and left the Church.

The “Indult” was an instruction letter (*Quattuor Abhinc Annos*) from Cardinal Mayer, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship, to the bishops. It permitted them to allow (or not allow) the Latin Mass in their diocese. Conditions were attached to any permission granted for the “old Mass”. If they chose to allow it, it was not then “illicit”. (It was never “invalid” as a Mass and it was said by some priests (privately) and by certain monastic orders through The Dark Years.)

The Vatican Norms of 1986 was a report commissioned by Pope St. John Paul II regarding the use of the TLM and Latin in the liturgy.

Because of the poor response from the bishops, the same Pope, four years later, basically said “you’re not listening to me” and established a papal commission - *Ecclesia Dei* - to oversee and encourage the use of the TLM. At the same time he authorized the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter to say only the TLM in those dioceses where they were invited by the local bishop for that purpose.

Nearly twenty years would elapse before Benedict XVI would remove the requirement for the local Bishop’s permission and restore the right of every Catholic priest to say the TLM with his *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum*. Let’s examine these four events, and one in 2001 not directly related to the TLM, but important nonetheless.

## The Past: 1984 Indult

Cardinal Mayer (as Prefect for the Congregation for Divine Worship) issues an instruction letter - *Quattuor Abhinc Annos* to the bishops, permitting the TLM as an "indult" (emphasis mine):

"Since, however, the same **problem** ("of priests and faithful holding to the so-called 'Tridentine' rite") continues, the Supreme Pontiff, in a desire to meet the wishes of these groups, grants to diocesan bishops the **possibility** of using an **indult** whereby priests and faithful, who shall be expressly indicated in the letter of request to be presented to their own bishop, may be able to celebrate Mass by using the Roman Missal according to the 1962 edition, but under the following conditions:...

This **concession**, indicative of the common Father's solicitude for all his children, must be used in such a way as not to prejudice the faithful observance of the liturgical reform in the life of the respective ecclesial communities."

Consider that twenty years before this document was issued, the TLM was THE Mass of the Latin rite and had been for over 15 centuries.

After banning it in 1970, the undying love for the "old Mass" is here labeled "the same problem". It required a special privilege or "Indult" from the local bishop to say it legally. And note the insistence that the malcontents "be expressly indicated in the letter of request". Among the conditions enumerated were two rather onerous ones:

- a) "That it be made publicly clear beyond all ambiguity that such priests and their respective faithful in no way share the positions of those who call in question the legitimacy and doctrinal exactitude of the Roman Missal promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1970." (So, if they want a TLM, their loyalty is suspect.)
- b) "Such celebration must be made only for the benefit of those groups that request it; in churches and oratories indicated by the bishop (not, however, in parish churches, unless the bishop permits it in extraordinary cases); and on the days and under the conditions fixed by the bishop either habitually or in individual cases." (In other words, find some out of the way place (or vary the place) and time (or vary the time) to do this, lest it catch on.)

The closing sentence to a document that purportedly manifests the desire of the supreme pontiff "to meet the wishes of these groups" provides every bishop with an excuse to continue the prohibition. All he has to assert is that allowing the TLM will "prejudice the faithful observance of the liturgical reform." (i.e. the *Novus Ordo*)

In St. Louis, Archbishop May allowed the "Indult Mass" only on the first Saturday of the month, only at St. Agatha, and it did not fulfill your Sunday obligation.

## The Past: 1986 Norms

**Ad Hoc commission of nine cardinals (Ratzinger, Mayer, Oddi, Stickler, Casaroli, Gantin, Innocenti, Palaz-zini, and Tomko) told Pope St. John Paul II that the Traditional Latin Mass had not been officially suppressed, any priest could say it without permission privately. They (8) also recommended that the “honor due” to the Latin language meant that at least one Latin Mass in the old or the new form should be said in any important city in a diocese every Sunday. The Pope did not act on this recommendation, unofficially called the *Vatican Norms of 1986*.**

When the *Novus Ordo* was originally promulgated, many places continued to use Latin for the parts of the ordinary of the Mass that had been chanted by the choir in the TLM High Masses. Specifically, the “Lord have mercy / *Kyrie eleison*” the “Glory to God in the highest / *Gloria in excelsis Deo*” the “Creed / *Credo*” the “Holy, Holy, Holy / *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus*” and the “Lamb of God / *Agnus Dei*”. However as time passed, guitar Masses and newly-composed saccharine hymns in the vernacular replaced Latin and chant. This commission’s recommendations were an attempt to reverse this trend in the *Novus Ordo* and also promote the TLM.

Unfortunately, it took the Pope two more years to do anything further.

## The Past: 1988 *Motu Proprio*

*Motu Proprio* [Ecclesia Dei](#) issued by Pope St. John Paul II – (emphasis mine):

“To all those Catholic faithful who feel attached to some previous liturgical and disciplinary forms of the Latin tradition I wish to manifest my will to facilitate their ecclesial communion by means of the necessary measures to guarantee respect for their [rightful aspirations](#). In this matter [I ask for the support of the bishops](#) and of all those engaged in the pastoral ministry in the Church.”

This document represents progress in the restoration of the TLM. While still requiring an “indult”, the Holy Father has acknowledged that the Catholic who wants to attend one has a right to do so, and he urges the bishops to make it so. Unfortunately, many of them still refused to do so.

## The Past: 1988 *Motu Proprio*

“Taking account of the importance and complexity of the problems referred to in this document, by virtue of my Apostolic Authority I decree the following:

c) moreover, respect must everywhere be shown for the feelings of all those who are attached to the Latin liturgical tradition, by a wide and generous application of the directives already issued some time ago by the Apostolic See for the use of the Roman Missal according to the typical edition of 1962.”

In many cases derision, not respect, was shown for the “feelings of all those who are attached to the Latin liturgical tradition...” By way of example, the now retired (2008) bishop (Leibrecht) of the Springfield - Cape Girardeau diocese refused multiple requests and never permitted it in his diocese. (But his replacement bishop was the pastor of the TLM parish in Knoxville and has permitted it.)

## The Past: 2001 *Liturgiam Authenticam*

With this document, Rome's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments reasserted its authority over translations of the *Novus Ordo* into vernacular languages.

On June 15, 2006, Bishop Arthur Roche, Bishop of Leeds (England) and **Chairman of the International Commission for English in the Liturgy (ICEL)**, spoke to the American Bishops prior to the vote telling them that their vote was

“a very important moment.... If the bishops of the English-speaking countries can agree on a single version of the Mass, what a sign of catholicity that will be.”

(more...)

This event does not apply to the TLM for reasons which will be clear, but its impact on the *Novus Ordo* in English was felt in local parishes in Advent of 2011.

The document, *Liturgiam Authenticam* indicated a “refreshing breeze”(1) blowing from Rome.

From *Liturgiam Authenticam* (emphasis mine):

20.)...In order that such a rich patrimony (the Latin liturgical texts of the Roman rite) may be preserved and passed on through the centuries, its is to be kept in mind from the beginning that the translation of the liturgical texts of the Roman Liturgy is not so much a work of creative innovation as it is of rendering the original texts faithfully and accurately into the vernacular language. While it is permissible to arrange the wording, the syntax and the style in such a way as to prepare a flowing vernacular text suitable to the rhythm of popular prayer, the original text, insofar as possible, must be translated integrally and in the most exact manner, without omissions or additions in terms of their content, and without paraphrases or glosses.

76.)...For this reason (“the effective exercise of her universal solicitude for the Christian faithful”), it has been determined that in the future, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments will be involved more directly in the preparation of the translations into these major languages.

80.)The practice of seeking the *recognitio* from the Apostolic See for all translations of liturgical book accords the necessary assurance of the authenticity of the translation and its correspondence with the original texts....

By Bishop Roche's own measure, what a sign of catholicity the TLM is. Consider also that there would have been no need for *Liturgiam Authenticam* if Latin had been “preserved in the Latin rites.”

(1) Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz, *A Welcome Instruction from the Holy See*

## The Past: 2001 *Liturgiam Authenticam*

Bishop Roche told the bishops that, following Vatican II there was,

"an urgent feeling that the liturgy should be made available to the people as soon as possible, and the work was rushed."

Many theologians, he said, think that through the hurried translation currently in use, much of the richness of the Church's Eucharistic theology has been "severely diminished." This, he said may change with the new translation. Roche closed by telling the bishops,

"Of course, if you try to carry a cup of coffee across a room too quickly, much of the contents may spill. This time, we have tried to keep the coffee in the cup."

This document made its appearance over thirty years after the debut of the *Novus Ordo*. Five years later in 2006 the bishops were still arguing over the English translation, which was a disaster. But at least some appeared willing to acknowledge it. The corrections were adopted. This was a "pro forma" vote – the corrections were coming, like them or not. Finally, in Advent of 2011, ten years after the publication of this document, a corrected translation was implemented in the English-speaking world.

It took over forty years to get a reasonably accurate translation in place!

Consider that if the Mass had remained in Latin, this would not have been a problem.

## The Past: 7/7/7

Benedict XVI issues the *motu proprio*

### *Summorum Pontificum*

With this document, Benedict XVI reasserted the Pope's control of the sacred liturgy. It is not up to the bishops to allow or forbid the Traditional Latin Mass. Every priest in the Latin ~~r-i-t-e~~ has the ~~r-i-g-h-t~~ to say the Traditional Latin Mass which was "never abrogated" i.e. never annulled or revoked.

### WHY DID HE DO THIS?

From *Summorum Pontificum*:

"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.'....

"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....

"But in some regions, no small numbers of faithful adhered and continue to adhere with great love and affection to the earlier liturgical forms....

"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.

("Abrogated", perhaps not. Banned, definitely.)

To answer the question – why did he do this – we have to examine his thinking from the conclusion of Vatican Council II until 7/7/7.



## Benedict XVI and the Mass

Pope Benedict XVI was a *peritus* at Vatican Council II, that is, a theological and liturgical “expert”. He was part of the revolution. In his earlier writings during and immediately after the Council, he was optimistic and could probably be fairly characterized as a liberal reformer. He observed the effects of the Council for 42 (1965-2007) years. After 10 years of anything but the renewal that was hoped for, he began to, shall we say, rethink his views. Here are a few of his observations over time since the Council (emphasis mine):

Judge for yourself what appears to be happening in the thought of Cardinal Ratzinger / Benedict XVI relative to the Council and to the *Novus Ordo* in the following quotes:

- Where does he start?
- Where does his focus turn?
- What are his conclusions?

## Benedict XVI and the Mass

From a statement by Cardinal Ratzinger published in the December 24, 1984 English edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*:

"Certainly the results [of Vatican II] seem cruelly opposed to the expectations of everyone, beginning with those of Pope John XXIII and then of Pope Paul VI: expected was a new Catholic unity and instead we have been exposed to self-destruction. Expected was a new enthusiasm, and many wound up discouraged and bored. Expected was a great step forward; instead we find ourselves faced with a progressive process of decadence which has developed for the most part under the sign of a calling back to the Council, and has therefore contributed to discrediting it for many. The net result therefore seems negative. I am repeating here what I said ten years after the conclusion of the work (Vatican II): it is incontrovertible that this period has definitely been unfavorable for the Catholic Church."

This first quote is twenty years after the Council, but confirms an earlier reservation made only 10 years after the conclusion of the Council.

*L'Osservatore Romano* is the semi-official newspaper of Vatican City.

# Benedict XVI and the Mass

From The Ratzinger Report, 1985:

“Many of the concrete effects, as we see them now, do not correspond to the intentions of the Council Fathers, but we certainly cannot say: ‘It would have been better if it had not been.’.... I believe, rather, that the true time of Vatican II has not yet come, that its authentic reception has not yet begun: its documents were quickly buried under a pile of superficial or frankly inexact publications. The reading of the letter of the documents will enable us to discover their true spirit.”

If thus rediscovered in their truth, those great texts will make it possible for us to understand just what happened and to react with a new vigor. I repeat: the Catholic who clearly and, consequently, painfully perceives the damage that has been wrought in his Church by the misinterpretations of Vatican II must find the possibility of revival in Vatican II itself. The Council is his, it does not belong to those who want to continue along a road whose results have been catastrophic.”

A year later, he says that the intentions of the Council Fathers were not followed. By returning to the documents the Fathers authorized and rereading them, maybe we can get it straight.

Remember that the “letter” of the document on the liturgy says Latin is to be preserved, and says the vernacular may be used, especially in the readings.

Just how “catastrophic” have the results been?

From Index of Leading Catholic Indicators, by Kenneth Jones (of St. Louis)

In the U.S.:

- The number of priests had more than doubled between 1930 and 1965 to a total of 58000. (Over 12 priests for every 10000 Catholics.) By 2002 the number of priests had dropped to 45000. (7 priests for every 10000 Catholics.) And the remaining priests were aging.
- The number of ordinations plummeted from 1575 in 1965 to 450 in 2002.
- The number of parochial schools dropped from 10503 in 1965 to 6623 in 2002.
- The number of Jesuit seminarians in 1965 was 3559. In 2002, there were 389.

(A Fordham University study by Professor James Lothian concluded that where 65 percent of Catholics went to Mass every Sunday in 1965, only 25 percent went every Sunday in 2000.)

## Benedict XVI and the Mass

From Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger's address to the Chilean bishops, July 13, 1988:

"While there are many motives that might have led a great number of people to seek a refuge in the traditional liturgy, the chief one is that they find the dignity of the sacred preserved there.

After the Council there were many priests who deliberately raised 'desacralization' to the level of a program,... they put aside the sacred vestments; they have despoiled the churches as much as they could of that splendor which brings to mind the sacred; and they have reduced the liturgy to the language and the gestures of ordinary life, by means of greetings, common signs of friendship, and such things...

That which previously was considered most holy -- the form in which the liturgy was handed down -- suddenly appears as the most forbidden of all things, the one thing that can safely be prohibited."

Three years later, he gets specific about the problems in the liturgy. The occasion for this address was ten days after the *Ecclesia Dei motu proprio* of JP2 called for "a generous application" of the Indult for the TLM.

## Benedict XVI and the Mass

From Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger's preface to [The Reforms of the Roman Liturgy, Its Problems and Background](#) by Msgr. Klaus Gamber, 1988:

"It is difficult to say briefly what is important in this quarrel of liturgists and what is not. But perhaps the following will be useful. J.A. Jungmann, one of the truly great liturgists of our century, defined the liturgy of his time, such as it could be understood in the light of historical research, as "[liturgy which is the fruit of development](#)"; probably in contrast with the Eastern notion which does not see liturgy as developing or growing in history, but only the [reflection of the eternal liturgy](#), whose light, through the sacred celebration, illumines our changing times with its unchanging beauty and grandeur. Both conceptions are legitimate and are not irreconcilable....

What happened after the Council (Vatican II) was something else entirely: in place of liturgy as the fruit of development over centuries came fabricated liturgy. We abandoned the organic process of growth and development over centuries, and replaced it - as in a manufacturing process - with a fabrication, a banal, on-the-spot product."

Five years later, he is writing a preface (to the French edition) of a book that was extremely critical of the reform of the liturgy by a renowned liturgist, Msgr Gamber. And he, like Gamber, is very critical of the new liturgy.

## Benedict XVI and the Mass

From Milestones by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 1998:

“...the crisis in the Church that we are experiencing today is to a large extent due to the disintegration of the liturgy.”

Finally, yet another five years later, we arrive at the focus of his criticism of what happened after Vatican Council II. The liturgy has “disintegrated”.

## Benedict XVI and the Mass

From The Spirit of the Liturgy by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 2001:

*"Today celebration versus populum really does look like the characteristic fruit of Vatican II's liturgical renewal. In fact it is the most conspicuous consequence of a reordering that not only signifies a new external arrangement of the places dedicated to the liturgy, but also brings with it a new idea of the essence of the liturgy – the liturgy as a communal meal*

(more...)

Three years later, he writes a book on the liturgy, explaining what is wrong and why it is wrong (The late Msgr. Gamber would, I think, be pleased.)

The orientation of the priest is wrong and based upon a misunderstanding of the structure of St. Peter's Basilica.

If you look at the prayers the priest says, by far the majority of the prayers are addressed to God the Father:

- I confess to almighty God....
- The Opening Prayer
- Glory to God in the highest....
- Our Father who art in heaven....
- Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation....
- Father, all powerful and ever-living God....
- Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of Hosts....
- All the Eucharistic Prayers (Father, you are holy indeed....)

Why should the priest be looking at the congregation rather than everybody facing "liturgical east"?

## Benedict XVI and the Mass

From The Spirit of the Liturgy by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 2001:

“...the Eucharist that Christians celebrate really cannot adequately be described by the term “meal”. True, the Lord established the new reality of Christian worship within the framework of a Jewish (Passover) meal, but it was precisely this new reality, not the meal as such, that he commanded us to repeat. Very soon the new reality was separated from its ancient context and found its proper and suitable form, a form already predetermined by the fact that the Eucharist refers back to the Cross and thus to the transformation of Temple sacrifice into worship of God...”

The emphasis on meal is misplaced. The Sacrifice of the Cross reenacted on the altar is the “new reality” that is separated from the context of the meal in the early Church.



## Benedict XVI and the Mass

From The Spirit of the Liturgy by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 2001:

“It well may be that kneeling is alien to modern culture- insofar as it is a culture, for this culture has turned away from the faith and no longer knows the One before whom kneeling is the right, indeed the intrinsically necessary gesture. The man who learns to believe learns also to kneel, and a faith or a liturgy no longer familiar with kneeling would be sick at the core. *Where it has been lost, kneeling must be rediscovered.*”

I have included this quote specifically because of the state of some houses of worship where kneelers have been eliminated or the local bishop has instructed the faithful not to use them.

There is an old saying - “The devil has no knees” - because he refused to serve.

## Benedict XVI and the Mass

From *Voici quel est notre Dieu* (Here is our God), p. 29 - Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 2001:

“It is necessary to stop the ban of the liturgy that was in force until 1970. Currently, anyone who defends the validity of that liturgy or who practices it, is treated like a leper: all tolerance ceases. The like has never been seen before in the Church’s entire history. By adopting this attitude toward them, they despise the Church’s entire past.”

(And this, thankfully, he did with *Summorum Pontificum*.)

If we go back once more to the Council document *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, we find that its “Introduction” concludes with the following paragraph:

”Finally, in faithful obedience to tradition, the sacred Council declares that Holy Mother Church holds all lawfully recognized rites to be of equal right and dignity, that she wishes to preserve them in future and foster them in every way. The Council also desires that, where necessary, the rites be revised carefully in the light of sound tradition, and that they be given new vigor to meet present-day circumstances and needs.”

How do you “foster” something by banning it? The rites were not “revised carefully” and only “where necessary” but instead, very hastily and totally. In the case of the Mass, revision turned sacrifice to meal, universal Latin to localized vernacular, and focus from *versus Deum* to *versus populum*. None of this was intended by the majority of the Council fathers nor authorized in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. In light of what happened after the Council, “faithful obedience to tradition” would be risible were it not so tragic.

## Benedict XVI and the Mass

Pope Benedict addressing the Roman Curia, December 5, 2006:

“The last event of this year on which I wish to reflect here is the celebration of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council 40 years ago.... The question arises: Why has the implementation of the Council, in large parts of the Church, thus far been so difficult? ... Well, it all depends on the correct interpretation of the Council or - as we would say today - on its proper hermeneutics, the correct key to its interpretation and application.... On the one hand, there is an interpretation that I would call "a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture"... On the other, there is the "hermeneutic of reform", of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given to us.”

This last quote from Joseph Ratzinger, now speaking as Pope Benedict XVI with a Pontiff’s view for the entire Church, returns to his concern for the implementation of Vatican Council II. It recalls his remark in 1985 when he said “the reading of the letter of the documents (of VCII) will enable us to discover their true spirit”.

If we reread *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, perhaps we can discover a way to “reform” the “reform” that does not “rupture” the Church into pre-conciliar and post-conciliar pieces.

## THE TEXT MATTERS

What is the “mystery of faith” that has been referenced in every *Novus Ordo* Mass since its promulgation in Advent, 1969?

(Typically, the answer given by high school sophomores before the 2011 new translations was “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.” After the new translation, one of the acclamations is offered.)

## THE TEXT MATTERS

### Given this text:

*Accipite et bibite ex eo omnes. Hic est enim Calix Sanguinis Mei, novi et aeterni testamenti, Mysterium Fidei, qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum.*

Accept and drink from this all of you. For this is the Chalice of My Blood, of the new and eternal covenant, the Mystery of Faith, which will be poured out for you and for many for the remission of sins.

What is the “mystery of faith” referenced here?

This is the text of the TLM.

In this position, within the Consecration itself, the phrase appears to refer to the “Chalice of My Blood”. The mystery here is that of Transubstantiation, which has just occurred.

For a timely (9/3/65) discussion of “Mysterium Fidei” see Paul VI’s encyclical of the same name. A few excerpts (emphasis mine):

1. The Mystery of Faith, that is, the ineffable gift of the Eucharist that the Catholic Church received from Christ, her Spouse, as a pledge of His immense love, is something that she has always devoutly guarded as her most precious treasure, and during the Second Vatican Council she professed her faith and veneration in a new and solemn declaration.

10. For We can see that some of those who are dealing with this Most Holy Mystery (“the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist”) in speech and writing are disseminating opinions on Masses celebrated in private or on the dogma of transubstantiation that are disturbing the minds of the faithful and causing them no small measure of confusion about matters of faith, just as if it were all right for someone to take doctrine that has already been defined by the Church and consign it to oblivion or else interpret it in such a way as to weaken the genuine meaning of the words or the recognized force of the concepts involved.

15. First of all, We want to recall something that you know very well but that is absolutely necessary if the virus of every kind of rationalism is to be repelled; it is something that many illustrious martyrs have witnessed to with their blood, something that celebrated fathers and Doctors of the Church have constantly professed and taught. We mean the fact that the Eucharist is a very great mystery—in fact, properly speaking and in the words of the Sacred Liturgy, the mystery of faith. "It contains within it," as Leo XIII, Our predecessor of happy memory, very wisely remarked, "all supernatural realities in a remarkable richness and variety of miracles."

24. And so the rule of language which the Church has established through the long labor of centuries, with the help of the Holy Spirit, and which she has confirmed with the authority of the Councils, and which has more than once been the watchword and banner of orthodox faith, is to be religiously preserved, and no one may presume to change it at his own pleasure or under the pretext of new knowledge.

## THE TEXT MATTERS

Using this example of “Mysterium Fidei” -  
what principle have we just demonstrated  
about the importance of how we pray?

## THE TEXT MATTERS

Regardless of what reforms occur or do not occur:

**Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi** -

From The Catechism of the Catholic Church (emphasis mine):

**1124**

The Church's faith precedes the faith of the believer who is invited to adhere to it. When the Church celebrates the sacraments, she confesses the faith received from the apostles – whence the ancient saying: *lex orandi, lex credendi* (or: *legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*, according to Prosper of Aquitaine [5th cent.]). The law of prayer is the law of faith: the Church believes as she prays. Liturgy is a constitutive element of the holy and living Tradition.

**1125**

For this reason no sacramental rite may be modified or manipulated at the will of the minister or the community. Even the supreme authority in the Church may not change the liturgy arbitrarily, but only in the obedience of faith and with religious respect for the mystery of the liturgy.

The Latin in parentheses may be translated as “the rule of praying determines the rule of believing”. That is, what we say (and how we say it) in our prayers, determines what each of us believes. If you change the words of the prayer, you change (over time) the belief of the one who prays. Changes should not be fabricated by liturgists, they should evolve from the community of the faithful and the living tradition of the Church. Any changes to the liturgy must be made very carefully so that, as Benedict says a “hermeneutic of continuity” is maintained. This was NOT done after Vatican Council II. The “work was rushed”, the results, “catastrophic.”

Recall the earlier retrospective quote from then Cardinal Ratzinger -

“...the crisis in the Church that we are experiencing today is to a large extent due to the disintegration of the liturgy.”

St. John Henry Newman (for whom the Newman Centers on college campuses are named), in his sermon Ceremonies of the Church warned against changing liturgical forms (emphasis mine):

"Granting that the forms are not immediately from God, still long use has made them divine to us; for the spirit of religion has so penetrated and quickened them, that to destroy them is, in respect of the multitude of men, to unsettle and dislodge the religious principle itself. In most minds usage has so identified them with the notion of religion, that the one cannot be extirpated without the other. Their faith will not bear transplanting."

I can attest from personal experience to Newman's insight. My faith did not bear “transplanting” from the TLM to the *Novus Ordo Missae*. Shallow thinker that I was at 24, I did not understand the reason. There were many more like me, “the multitude of men,” and, sadly, many of them still don't know what happened.

The Church has relearned the lesson of *lex orandi, lex credendi* very painfully in recent history and the illumination of a new day is on the horizon.

# The TLM and You

## Common Objections

### "But the priest has his back to me!"

- *Novus Ordo* design (GIRM 5/26/70 - "facing the people" and "facing the altar")
- Liturgical "east" and St. Peter's Basilica
- *Versus Deum* (where is focus of the Mass?)
- Mass as sacrifice, not meal (the Ratzinger quote)
- ? How is the Last Supper represented in art

The *Novus Ordo* was designed for Mass to be said *versus Deum* not *versus populum*. There are three instructions (in the GIRM of 1970) to the priest in the Liturgy of the Eucharist that say "facing the people" because the priest is supposed to turn around in order to say:

- "Pray brethren that my sacrifice and yours...."
- "This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world...."
- "The Lord be with you...." (followed by the final blessing)

The priest is also instructed (thankfully) to receive his own Communion "facing the altar".

From The Spirit of the Liturgy by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger:

"In what direction should we pray during the Eucharistic liturgy? (p.76) ... Because of topographical circumstances, it turned out that St. Peter's faced west. Thus, if the celebrating priest wanted - as the Christian tradition of prayer demands - to face east, he had to stand behind the altar and look - this is the logical conclusion - toward the people... The liturgical renewal in our own century took up this alleged model...(p.77) This is, of course, a misunderstanding of the significance of the Roman basilica and of the positioning of its altar, and the representation of the Last Supper is also, to say the least, inaccurate. In the earliest days of Christianity, the head of table never took his place facing the other participants. Everyone sat or lay on the convex side of a C-shaped table, or of a table having the approximate shape of a horseshoe. The other side was always left empty for the service. Nowhere in Christian antiquity could anyone have come up with the idea that the man presiding at the meal had to take his place *versus populum*. The communal character of a meal was emphasized by precisely the opposite arrangement, namely, by the fact that everyone at the meal found himself on the same side of the table....(p.78)... Now the priest ... becomes the real point of reference for the whole liturgy... Less and less is God in the picture. More and more important is what is done by the human beings who meet here and do not like to subject themselves to a "pre-determined pattern". The turning of the priest toward the people has turned the community into a self-enclosed circle. In its outward form, it no longer opens out on what lies ahead and above, but is locked into itself. The common turning toward the East was not a 'celebration towards a wall'; it did not mean that the priest 'had his back to the people';.... For just as the congregation in the synagogue looked together toward Jerusalem, so in the Christian liturgy the congregation looked together 'toward the Lord'.... They did not lock themselves into a circle, they did not gaze at one another, but as the Pilgrim People of God they set off for the Oriens, for the Christ that comes to meet us ... (p.80). A common turning to the east during the Eucharistic Prayer remains essential. This is not a case of something accidental but of what is essential. Looking at the priest has no importance. What matters is looking together at the Lord. It is not now a question of dialog, but of common worship, of setting off toward the One who is to come. What corresponds with the reality of what is happening is not the closed circle, but the common movement forward expressed in a common direction for prayer." (p.81)



# The TLM and You

## Common Objections

**"Holy Communion takes too long and I can't receive the Blood of Christ."**

- Only a priest or deacon may distribute Holy Communion - no "Extraordinary" Ministers
  - Communicant does not handle the Body of Christ
  - Kneeling is a posture of humility & reverence
  - Only one species used - the bread, therefore no possible spillage of the Precious Blood
  - Paten is always used, lest the host fall to the floor
- ? Shouldn't the manner befit the Matter

I have deliberately labeled Eucharistic Ministers as "Extraordinary Ministers" because that is what they were initially called. Their use was only to be under extraordinary circumstances, such as when the priest was infirm or the crowd was unusually large. Then, they became, like lectors, another convenient way of getting more actors into the action. In most *Novus Ordo* Masses I have attended, the large majority of them are women, as are the lectors. This, I think, is unfortunate. We need more priests, not more "Extraordinary Ministers", and by saying anyone can distribute Holy Communion we effectively diminish, I believe, the exclusive relationship of the priest with Christ. This can discourage (male) vocations to the priesthood, and, potentially, encourage the heretical notion of a woman priest. (Remember, the priest acts *in persona Christi*.)

The priest washes his hands before the Consecration. The EM's do not and we do not. Does it not also diminish the sense of the Real Presence when we allow hands like mine to touch Him?

Receiving Holy Communion standing up reminds me of the audacious line from Eucharistic Prayer number 2 - "We thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you." When did God the Father ever say we were worthy to stand in His Presence? Did I miss something? Remember the Apostles at the Transfiguration?

Communion under both species is unnecessary for the efficacy of the sacrament. So why risk spilling the Precious Blood? This only extends the dishwashing after Holy Communion and gives us more of the not-so-extraordinary "ministers".

The paten should always be used, but it is a rare exception in the *Novus Ordo*.

# The TLM and You

## Common Objections

**"It was confusing, I didn't know what was going on."**

- ? Was it your first time at a TLM
- ? Did you use the red missalette
- ? Did the "regulars" seem to know what was going on
- "Repetition is the mother of learning"
- ? Have you ever been to Mass in a foreign country whose language you do not know

You cannot appreciate the TLM by going to one Mass and just watching. You have to read the prayers that are unchanging and try to understand them and then go to the TLM. Then go again and watch the actions, gestures, and posture of the priest and servers. Watch the choreography, the pace, and follow it not by reading the missal this time, but by noting the signs and the cues that will help you follow the Mass text in the future. Does this take an effort? Yes. And you will benefit to the extent that you make the effort.

The proverb, attributed by some to St. Thomas Aquinas, rhymes in Russian but is true in any language.

I have been to *Novus Ordo* Masses in Germany, Italy, and China. Only in Italy, because its language is not far removed from Latin, was I able to follow along reasonably well for the "Ordinary" parts of the Mass. Forget about the Liturgy of the Word, that was hopeless in all three places. My second Sunday in Beijing, China, I found a TLM. Think about it. In 1998, before Rome had freed the TLM, I was able to go to the "Mass of the Ages" in Communist China. And it was just like the TLM's that I was going to every Sunday in the US. I had my missal and I could understand everything but the homily. The sense of Catholicity and the Communion of Saints, of the Church universal through space and time was overwhelming. The Church had misplaced a great treasure. The Pope Benedict found it again and would have the Catholic world embrace it again. It is worth of any and all effort you make to get used to it.

# The TLM and You

## Common Objections

"I didn't get to participate like I'm used to doing."

- ? How many use the "Pray Together" booklets
- ? Has your mind ever wandered while waiting to make a response at Mass
- ? What do you mean by 'participation'
- ? True/False: your participation = your attention
- ? True/False: your participation = your focus
- ? Is it harder to lose your attention / focus when reading
- ? How often do you hear (all of) EP #1

In most *Novus Ordo* Masses that I have attended, the people seldom use the missalette except, perhaps, to read along with the readings. ( I do not see them use the booklets for the "Ordinary" parts of the Mass.) My point is that many seem to be just waiting for the next response they are supposed to make. The TLM requires you to focus on the content of the Missal, the text of the Mass. There are cues from the altar that you must watch for as you read the text: gestures from the priest, movements of the servers, bells, genuflections, etc.. The content of the TLM text is much richer than the *Novus Ordo*, especially since some of the things the priest says are not even printed in the *Novus Ordo* booklets. For me, the effort required to follow the TLM is more than paid in full by the resulting focus and attention to its beautiful prayers.

There is only one Eucharistic Prayer in the TLM and it is about 1600 years old. There is a variation (inferior due to its deviations, one of which is the Mystery of Faith problem) of it in the *Novus Ordo* and that is Eucharistic Prayer number 1. But I rarely hear anything but Eucharistic Prayer number 2, by far the shortest of the four available in the *Novus Ordo*. The Eucharistic Prayer is the heart of the Mass. Yet the general practice in the *Novus Ordo* is to minimize this. Are we so busy that we only want to "participate" in the shortest of Masses?

From a paper submitted by then Cardinal Ratzinger to a congress on the liturgy at Fontgambault in July of 2001 (emphasis mine):

"The liturgy derives its greatness from what it is, not from what we make of it. Our participation is, of course, necessary, but as a means of inserting ourselves humbly into the spirit of the liturgy, and of serving Him Who is the true subject of the liturgy: Jesus Christ. The liturgy is not an expression of the consciousness of a community which, moreover is diffuse and changing. It is revelation received in faith and prayer, and its measure is consequently the faith of the Church, in which revelation is received."

# The TLM and You

## Common Objections

"I didn't get the community feeling that I like at my usual Mass."

- ? Why do you go to Mass on Sunday
- ? What is the "communion of saints"
- ? Is silence observed in church - should it be
- ? What is the depth of that "community feeling"

I hope that the main reason you go to Mass is NOT to get the "community feeling". We have a "Sunday obligation" to go to Mass on Sunday because the Church says that's how we fulfill the Third Commandment. But I would hope that you don't go to Mass for that reason alone. Don't we have a personal duty to publicly worship God - for the beauty of His creation, for our life as a part of that creation, for all the many blessings we have, chief among them our hope of salvation because the Son of God hung on a cross and died there?

("Liturgy" is from a Greek word meaning public worship.)

The "community" that we profess belief in is the Communion of Saints: The Church Militant striving on earth, the Church Penitent in Purgatory, and the Church Triumphant in Heaven. These are all our "saints" because none of them have been condemned. The TLM acknowledges them before the first reading in every Mass when the priest kisses the altar: "We beseech Thee, O Lord, by the merits of thy saints whose relics are here, and of all the saints, that Thou wouldst vouchsafe to pardon me all my sins. Amen". Later, when the priest presents our gifts he says over the bread: "Receive, O Holy Father,....this spotless host, which I, Thine unworthy servant, offer unto Thee,...for all here present, and for all faithful Christians, whether living or dead, that it may avail both me and them to salvation, unto life everlasting.Amen" Isn't it a greater service to your community to fervently say this prayer than to turn to those in the pew behind you and say "Peace be with you"? A similar invocation occurs over the wine, and then over both gifts he says: "Receive, O holy Trinity, this oblation offered up by us in honor... of all the saints, that it may be available to their honor and to our salvation; and may they...intercede for us in heaven." These prayers are all gone from the *Novus Ordo*. Only in Eucharistic Prayer numbers 1 ("May their (all the saints) merits and prayers gain us your constant help and protection.") and 3 (...and all your saints, on whose constant intercession we rely for help.) does the *Novus Ordo* even reference the Communion of Saints. (And how often do you hear either of these EP's?)