

## ***Tres Abhinc Annos***

Second Instruction on the orderly carrying out of the Constitution on the Liturgy

May 4, 1967

Sacred Congregation of Rites

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### **Introduction**

Three years ago the Instruction *Inter Oecumenici*, issued by the Congregation of Rites, September 26, 1964, established a number of adaptations for introduction into the sacred rites. These adaptations, the first fruits of the general liturgical reform called for by the conciliar Constitution on the Liturgy, took effect on March 7, 1965.

Their rich yield is becoming quite clear from the many reports of bishops, which attest to an increased, more aware, and intense participation of the faithful everywhere in the liturgy, especially in the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

To increase this participation even more and to make the liturgical rites, especially the Mass, clearer and better understood, the same bishops have proposed certain other adaptations. Submitted first to the Consilium, the proposals have undergone careful examination and discussion by the Consilium and the Congregation of Rites.

At least for the moment, not every proposal can be sanctioned. Others, however, do seem worth putting into effect immediately, because pastoral considerations commend them and they seem to offer no hindrance to the definitive reform of the liturgy yet to come. Further, they seem advantageous for the gradual introduction of that reform and are feasible simply by altering rubrics, not the existing liturgical books.

On this occasion it seems necessary to recall to everyone's mind that capital principle of Church discipline which the Constitution on the Liturgy solemnly confirmed. "Regulation of the liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church. Therefore, no other person, not even a priest, may on his own add, take away, or change anything in the liturgy" (SC art. 22, §§ 2-3).

Ordinaries, both local and religious, should therefore be mindful of their grave duty before the Lord to watch carefully over observance of this norm, so important for Church life and order. All ministers of sacred rites as well as all the faithful should also willingly conform to it.

Individual spiritual growth and well-being demand this, as do harmonious cooperation in the Lord and mutual good example among the faithful in any local community. It is required also by the serious responsibility of each community to cooperate for the good of the Church throughout the world, especially today when the good or evil that develops in local communities quickly has an impact on the fabric of the whole family of God.

All should heed the warning of the Apostle: "For God is not a God of discord but of peace" (I Cor 14:33).

The following adaptations and changes are instituted to achieve the more specific actualization and measured progress of the liturgical reform.

## **I. Options in the Text for Mass**

1. Outside Lent, on days of class III, the Mass either of the office of the day or of the commemoration made at morning prayer may be celebrated. If the second is chosen, the color of the office of the day may be used, in keeping with the *Codex rubricarum* no. 323.

2. Once the conference of bishops in its own region has sanctioned an order of readings for weekdays in Masses with a congregation this may also be used for Masses celebrated without a congregation and the readings may be in the vernacular.

This order of readings for weekdays may be used on certain days of class II, to be indicated in the Lectionary itself, and in all Masses of class III and IV, whether Masses of the season or of saints, or votive Masses not having their own, strictly proper readings, that is, those that mention the mystery or person being celebrated.

3. On weekdays in Ordinary Time, in the celebration of the Mass of the Sunday preceding, one of the Prayers for Various Needs or an opening prayer from the votive Masses for Various Needs may be taken from the Missal to replace the prayer of the Sunday Mass.

## **II. Prayers in the Mass**

4. In the Mass only one prayer is to be said; depending on the rubrics, however, there is added before the single conclusion:

a. the prayer proper to a rite (*Codex rubricarum* no. 447);  
the prayer from the Mass for the profession of men and women religious, displacing the Mass of the day (*Rubr. spec. Missalis* no. 447);  
the prayer from the votive Mass *Pro sponsis* displaced by the Mass of the day (*Codex rubricarum* no. 380).

b. the prayer from the votive Mass of thanksgiving (*Codex rubricarum* no. 382 and *Rubr. spec. Missalis*),  
the prayer for the anniversaries of the pope and the bishop (*Codex rubricarum* nos. 449-450);  
the prayer for the anniversary of the priest's own ordination (*Codex rubricarum* nos. 451-452).

5. If in the same Mass several prayers were to be required before the single conclusion, the only one added is the one most in keeping with the celebration.

6. Instead of an imperated prayer, the bishop may insert one or more intentions for particular needs into the general intercessions.

In them by decree of the conference of bishops intentions also may be included for civil rulers (now used in various forms in the different countries) and special intentions for the particular needs of a nation or region.

### **III. Changes in the Order of the Mass**

#### **7. The celebrant genuflects only:**

a. on going to or leaving the altar if there is a tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament;

b. after elevating the Host and the chalice;

c. after the doxology at the end of the Canon;

d. at communion, before the words *Panem caelestem accipiam'*,

e. after the communion of the faithful, when he has placed the remaining Hosts in the tabernacle.

All other genuflections are omitted.

8. The celebrant kisses the altar only: at the beginning of Mass, while saying the *Oramus te Domine*, or on going to the altar, if the prayers at the foot of the altar are omitted; at the end of Mass before the blessing and dismissal of the people. The kissing of the altar is otherwise omitted.

9. At the Offertory, after offering the bread and wine, the celebrant places on the corporal the paten with host and chalice, omitting the signs of the cross with paten and with chalice.

He leaves the paten, with the Host on it, on the corporal both before and after the Consecration.

10. In Masses celebrated with a congregation, even when not concelebrated, the celebrant may say the Canon aloud. In sung Masses he may sing those parts of the Canon that the rite for concélébration allows.

11. In the Canon, the celebrant:

a. begins the *Te igitur* standing erect and with hands outstretched;

b. makes one sign of the cross over the offerings at the words *benedicas + haec dona, haec munera, haec sancta sacrificia illibata*, in the prayer *Te igitur*. He makes no other sign of the cross over the offerings.

12. After the Consecration, the celebrant need not join thumb and forefinger; should any particle of the host have remained on his fingers, he rubs his fingers together over the paten.

13. The communion rite for priest and people is to have the following arrangement: after he says *Panem caelestem accipiam*, the celebrant takes the Host and, facing the people, raises it, saying the *Ecce Agnus Dei*, then adding three times with the people the *Domine, non sum dignus*. He then communicates himself with the Host and chalice and immediately distributes communion in the usual way to the people.

14. The faithful receiving communion at the chrism Mass on Holy Thursday may receive again at the evening Mass on the same day.

15. A Mass celebrated with a congregation should include, according to circumstances, either a period of silence or the singing or recitation of a Psalm or Canticle of praise, e.g., Ps 33 [34], I will bless the Lord, Ps 150, Praise the Lord in his sanctuary or the Canticle Bless the Lord [Dn 3:35] or Blessed are you, O Lord [1 Chr 29:10],

16. At the end of Mass the blessing of the people comes immediately before the

dismissal. It is recommended that the priest recite the *Placeat* silently as he is leaving the altar.

Even Masses for the dead include the blessing and usual dismissal formulary, *Ite, Missa est*, unless the absolution follows immediately; in this case, omitting the blessing, the celebrant says: *Benedicamus Domino* and proceeds to the absolution.

#### **IV. Some Special Cases**

17. In nuptial Masses the celebrant says the prayers *Propitiare* and *Deus, qui potestate* not between the *Pater noster* and its embolism, but after the breaking of Bread and the commingling, just before the *Agnus Dei*.

In a Mass celebrated facing the people the celebrant, after the commingling and a genuflection, may go to the bride and groom and say the prayers just mentioned. He then returns to the altar, genuflects, and continues the Mass in the usual way.

18. A Mass celebrated by a priest with failing sight or otherwise infirm and having an induit to say a votive Mass, may have the following arrangement.

- a. The priest says the prayers and the preface of the votive Mass.
- b. Another priest, a deacon, reader, or server is to do the readings from the Mass of the day or from a weekday Lectionary. If only a reader or server is present, he has permission also to read the gospel, but without the *Munda cor meum, lube, domine, benedicere* and *Dominus sit in corde meo*. The celebrant however says the *Dominus vobiscum* before the reading of the gospel and at the end kisses the book.
- c. The choir, the congregation, or even the reader may take the Entrance, Offertory, and Communion antiphons, and the chants between the readings.

#### **V. Variations in the Divine Office**

19. Pending the complete reform of the Divine Office, on days of class I and class II with a *Matins* of three Nocturnes, recitation of any one Nocturne with three Psalms and three readings is permitted. The hymn *Te Deum*, when called for by the rubrics, comes after the third reading. In the last three days of Holy Week the pertinent rubrics of the Roman Breviary are to be followed.

20. Private recitation leaves out the absolution and blessing before the readings as well as the concluding *Tu autem*.

21. In Lauds and Vespers celebrated with a congregation, in place of the *capitulum* there can be a longer reading from Scripture, taken, for example, from *Matins* or from the Mass of the day, or from a weekday Lectionary, and, as circumstances suggest, a brief homily. Unless Mass immediately follows, general intercessions may be inserted before the prayer.

When there are such insertions, there need only be three Psalms, chosen in this way: at Lauds one of the first three, then the Canticle, then the final Psalm; at Vespers any three of the five Psalms.

22. At Compline celebrated with a congregation participating the Psalms can always be those of Sunday.

## **VI. Some Variations in the Rites for the Dead**

23. The color for the office and Mass for the dead may in all cases be violet. But the conferences of bishops have the right to stipulate another color suited to the sensibilities of the people, not out of keeping with human grief, and expressive of Christian hope as enlightened by the paschal mystery.

24. At the absolution over the coffin and over the grave, other responsories taken from Matins for the dead, namely, *Credo quod Redemptor meus vivit, Qui Lazarum resucitasti, Memento mei, Deus, Libera me, Domine, de viis inferni*, may replace the *Libera me, Domine*.

## **VII. Vestments**

25. The maniple is no longer required.

26. The celebrant may wear the chasuble for the *Asperges* before Mass on Sundays, for the blessing and imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday, and for the absolution over a coffin or grave.

27. A concelebrant must wear the vestments obligatory for individual celebration of Mass (Rite of Concélébration no. 12).

When there is a serious reason, for example, a large number of concélébrants and a lack of vestments, the concélébrants, with the principal celebrant always excepted, may leave off a chasuble but never the alb and stole.

## VIII. Use of the Vernacular

28. The competent territorial authority observing those matters contained in the **Constitution on the Liturgy** art. 36, § 3 and § 4 may authorize use of the vernacular in liturgies celebrated with a congregation for:

- a. The Canon of the Mass;
- b. all the rites of holy orders;
- c. the reading of the Divine Office, even in choral recitation.

In the audience granted April 13, 1967 to the undersigned Cardinal Arcadio Maha Larrona, Prefect of the Congregation of Rites, Pope Paul VI approved and confirmed by his authority the present instruction as a whole and in all its parts, ordering its publication and its faithful observance by all concerned, beginning June 29, 1967.