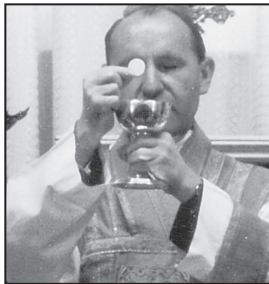


The Theology and Spirituality of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass



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FR. FRANZ SCHMIDBERGER



Letter of Bishop Fellay to the Faithful Concerning *Summorum Pontificum*

BISHOP BERNARD FELLAY



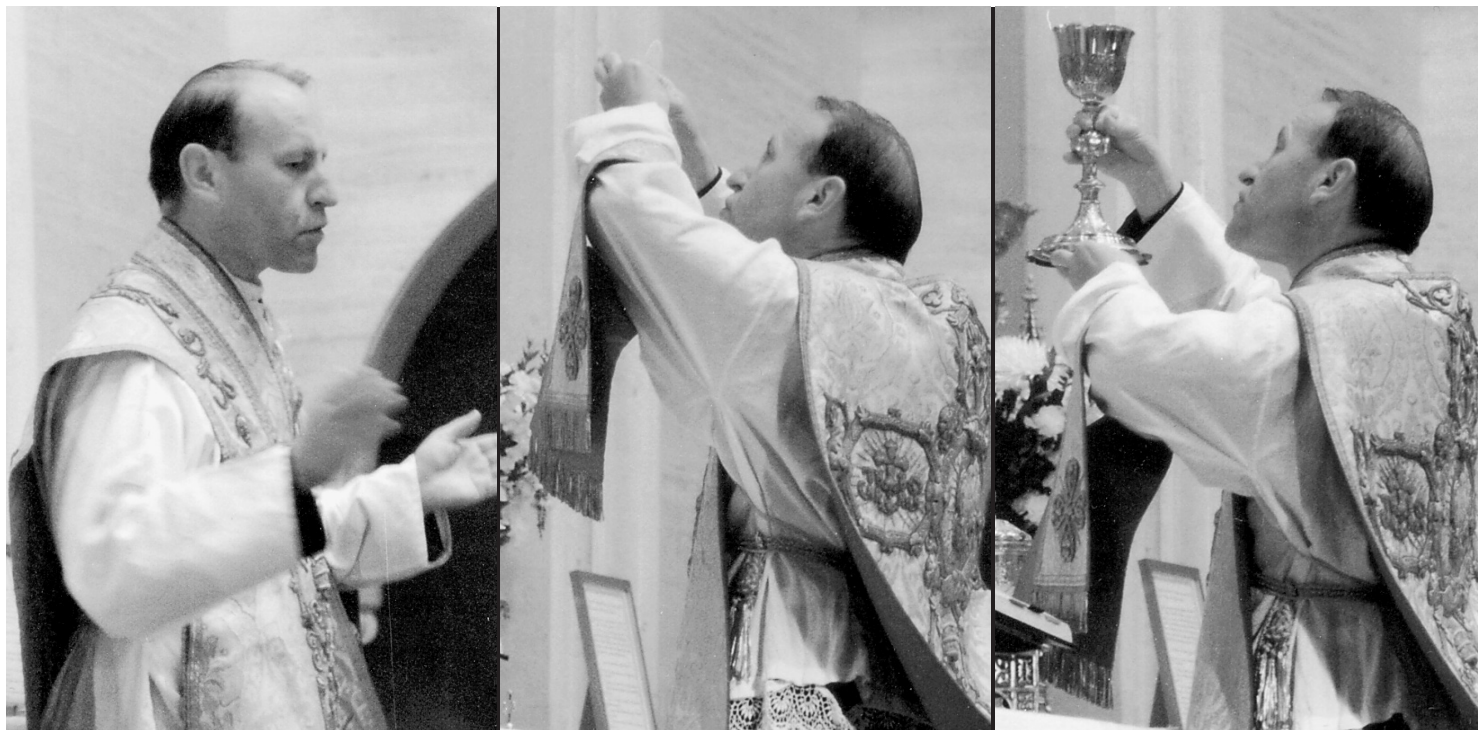
Archbishop Lefebvre on the Indult Mass

ARCHBISHOP MARCEL LEFEBVRE

In Article 1 of the “Motu Proprio,” Pope Benedict XVI wrote:

The Roman Missal promulgated by Paul VI is to be regarded as the ordinary expression of the law of prayer (*lex orandi*) of the Catholic Church of the Latin Rite. On the other hand, the Roman Missal promulgated by St. Pius V and published again by Blessed John XXIII should be held as the extraordinary expression of the same law of prayer (*lex orandi*), and on account of its venerable and ancient use let it enjoy due honor. These two expressions of the law of prayer (*lex orandi*) of the Church in no way lead to a division in the law of belief (*lex credendi*) of the Church, for they are two uses of the one Roman Rite....

What follows is a study comparing the theology and spirituality of the Latin Mass of 1962 with the *Novus Ordo* Mass which succeeded it. They are not two forms of the same Rite.



THE THEOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY OF THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

F R . F R A N Z S C H M I D B E R G E R

The theme of our catechetical study is a comparison between the traditional and new rites of Mass. The 22nd Session of the Council of Trent (Sept. 17, 1562) taught the following about the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass:

Chap. 1. [*The Institution of the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*]

Since under the former Testament (as the Apostle Paul bears witness) there was no consummation because of the weakness of the Levitical priesthood, it was necessary (God

the Father of mercies ordaining it thus) that another priest according to the order of Melchisedech [Gen. 14:18; Ps. 109:4; Heb. 7:11] arise, our Lord Jesus Christ, who could perfect [Heb. 10:14] all who were to be sanctified, and lead them to perfection. He, therefore, our God and Lord, though He was about to offer Himself once to God the Father upon the altar of the Cross by the mediation of death, so that He might accomplish an eternal redemption for them [ed.: *illic*, there], nevertheless, that His sacerdotal office might not come to an end with His death [Heb. 7:24,27] at the Last Supper, on the night He was betrayed, so that He might leave to His beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice

[can. 1] (as the nature of man demands), whereby that bloody sacrifice once to be completed on the Cross might be represented, and the memory of it remain even to the end of the world [I Cor. 11:23ff.] and its saving grace be applied to the remission of those sins which we daily commit, declaring Himself constituted “a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech” [Ps. 109:4], offered to God the Father His own body and blood under the species of bread and wine, and under the symbols of those same things gave to the apostles (whom He then constituted priests of the New Testament), so that they might partake, and He commanded them and their successors in the priesthood in these words to make offering: “Do this in commemoration of Me, etc.” [Lk. 22:19; I Cor. 11:24], as the Catholic Church has always understood and taught [can. 2]. For, after He had celebrated the ancient feast of the Passover, which the multitude of the children of Israel sacrificed [Ex. 12:1ff.] in memory of their exodus from Egypt, He instituted a new Passover, Himself to be immolated under visible signs by the Church through the priests, in memory of His own passage from this world to the Father, when by the shedding of His blood He redeemed us and “delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into His kingdom” [Col. 1:13].

And this, indeed, is the “clean oblation” which cannot be defiled by any unworthiness or malice on the part of those who offer it; which the Lord foretold through Malachias must be offered in every place as a clean oblation [Mal. 1:11] to His name, which would be great among the gentiles, and which the Apostle Paul writing to the Corinthians has clearly indicated, when he says that they who are defiled by participation of the “table of the devils” cannot become partakers of the table of the Lord [I Cor. 10:21], understanding by table in each case, the altar. It is finally that [sacrifice] which prefigured by various types of sacrifices, in the period of nature and the Law [Gen. 4:4; 8:20; 12:8; 22; Ex: *passim*], inasmuch as it comprises all good things signified by them, as being the consummation and perfection of them all.

Chap. 2. [The Sacrifice Is a Visible Propitiation for the Living and the Dead]

And since in this divine sacrifice, which is celebrated in the Mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner, who on the altar of the Cross “once offered Himself” in a bloody manner [Heb. 9:27], the holy Synod teaches that this is truly propitiatory [can. 3], and has the effect, that if contrite and penitent we approach God with a sincere heart and right faith, with fear and reverence, “we obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid” [Heb. 4:16]. For, appeased by this oblation, the Lord, granting the grace and gift of penitence, pardons crimes and even great sins. For, it is one and the same victim, the same one now offering by the ministry of the priests as He who then offered Himself on the Cross, the manner of offering alone being different. The fruits of that oblation (bloody, that is) are received most abundantly through this unbloody one; so far is the latter from being derogatory in any way to Him [can. 4]. Therefore, it is offered rightly according to the tradition of the apostles [can. 3], not only for the sins of the faithful living, for their punishments and other necessities, but also for the dead in Christ not yet fully purged (Denzinger, §§938-40).

In this explanation of the Council of Trent it is clarified that: **1)** the Mass is a true sacrifice, that is offered to God alone; **2)** this sacrifice is offered for the praise and adoration of God in three Persons as

thanksgiving, impetration, and above all as propitiation for our daily sins; **3)** Christ offers Himself to His heavenly Father under the appearances of bread and wine; **4)** He, as High Priest of the New Covenant, accomplishes this Sacrifice through human priests and by means of the services of the Church.

Let’s take a closer look at the issues surrounding these points.

The Mass Is a True Sacrifice Offered to God

First of all, it should be clear that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered to God and to God alone, while the sacraments are primarily instituted for humanity, for the sanctification of souls. Therefore, quite logically, the celebrant is turned towards God, the Incarnate and Crucified God. As shepherd, he stands with the flock facing one direction: both face the heavenly kingdom. Churches were therefore almost always built with their orientation to the east, so that the altar was placed against the rising sun, which was considered to be the symbol of the resurrected and glorified Christ, above all in His Second Coming. The liturgist Klaus Gamber has convincingly explained that the celebration *versus populum* (towards the people) never existed in the Church. This is the invention of a theology that is fast becoming anthropology. The new orientation of the liturgical celebration is a program of new direction for the Church contained within and according to the Second Vatican Council. Moreover, in the turning of the celebrant to the congregation, the celebrant is often turning his back on the Blessed Sacrament.

When sacrifice is offered to God, then it is also right and fitting to set apart a special place, to erect a proper building, to bless it as a chapel or to consecrate it as a church, to build a sanctuary for the exclusive celebration of this Sacrifice with all those things that relate to it and flow from it, namely, the proclamation of the holy Gospel and the administration of the sacraments as well as prayer.

Moreover, a sacred language, which raises people above everyday concerns, is most fitting for these proceedings. In our cultural *milieu*, Latin has become an expression and bond of the Church’s unity. Pope Pius XII declared:

...[T]he temerity and daring of those who introduce novel liturgical practices...deserve severe reproof. It has pained Us grievously to note, Venerable Brethren, that such innovations are actually being introduced, not merely in minor details but in matters of major importance as well. We instance, in point of fact, those who make use of the vernacular in the celebration of the august Eucharistic Sacrifice....

The use of the Latin language, customary in a considerable portion of the Church is a manifest and beautiful sign of unity, as well as an effective antidote for any corruption of doctrinal truth. (*Mediator Dei*, Nov. 20, 1947)

Meanwhile, the objection is raised that the faithful would thus not understand the Sacred Action. In response to these objections, we answer the Holy Mass is not in the first place instruction or catechesis, but sacrifice offered to God. The content of an action is understood much more in its outward gestures than by the words used. Besides, the Holy Mass concerns an unfathomable mystery of the Faith that will never be grasped fully by our sense of reason. May the faithful thus prepare for the Holy Sacrifice at home with their missals so that, together with the Blessed Virgin Mary, they may then stand at the foot of the Cross during the Sacred Action and offer to our heavenly Father, united with the celebrant, the Divine Victim, and, one with Him, offer themselves and their whole lives! In the Eastern rites this mysterious character of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is emphasized all the more inasmuch as the most important parts of the Liturgy are celebrated behind the iconostasis [*i.e.*, the partition separating the apse or choir from the nave in Byzantine churches—*Ed.*].

But to Which God Is the Sacrifice Offered?

This Sacrifice is offered to the God of the Bible, the God of Revelation, to the One, True, Living God, that is, to the Blessed Trinity. This truth is expressed through words and gestures in the rite as a whole. The celebrant begins the Sacred Action with the words: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” In the *Kyrie*, the three invocations are made three times. These have been reduced to six in the new rite of Mass. In the *Gloria*, the mystery of the Blessed Trinity is exalted in the most wonderful way:

Glory to God in the highest...O Lord God, heavenly King,
God the **Father** Almighty. O Lord, only begotten **Son**, Jesus
Christ...with the **Holy Ghost**, in the glory of the Father.

This basic mystery of our Faith is expressed in a distinctive manner at the end of the *Offertory*. The Church prays:

Receive, O Holy Trinity, this oblation which we make
to Thee in remembrance of the Passion, Resurrection and
Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ—*Suscipe, sancta Trinitas,
hanc oblationem....*

The first prayer of the Offertory addresses God as “Holy Father.” Furthermore in the *Sanctus* the holiness of God is praised three times. The Canon is begun with the words, “*Tē igitur, clementissime Pater*—Most merciful Father, we humbly pray and beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord.” It closes with the words: “*Per ipsum, et cum ipso, et in ipso...*—By Him and with Him and in Him are ever given to Thee, Almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honour and glory.” At the *Agnus Dei* we call three times on the mercy of God and at the same time we confess our unworthiness in the *Domine non sum dignus*—“Lord, I am not worthy”—said three times one after the other. The

Holy Mass ends with *Placeat tibi sancta Trinitas*—“May the homage of my bounden duty be pleasing to Thee, O Holy Trinity.” The priest then gives the blessing in the words “May Almighty God bless thee, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

Not only words proclaim this most sublime mystery, but actions also. The rite often prescribes three signs of the cross, one after the other, as in the following examples:

...*haec* ✠ *dona*, *haec* ✠ *munera*, *haec* ✠ *sancta sacrificia
illibata*—these ✠ gifts, these ✠ offerings, these ✠
unblemished sacrifices.

*Quam oblationem tu, Deus, in omnibus, quaesumus,
bene* ✠ *dictam, ad* ✠ *scriptam, ✠ ratam...*—Be pleased, O God,
to ✠ bless this offering, to ✠ accept it fully, to ✠ make it
perfect and worthy to please Thee....

...*Hostiam* ✠ *puram, Hostiam* ✠ *sanctam, Hostiam* ✠
immaculatam...—a Victim ✠ pure, a Victim ✠ perfect, a
Victim ✠ holy and spotless.

*Per quem, haec omnia, Domine, semper bona creas,
sanct* ✠ *ificas, vivi* ✠ *ificas, bene* ✠ *dicis et praestas nobis.*—
Through Him, O Lord, Thou dost ever create these good
things, and Thou ✠ hallowest, ✠ quickenest, and ✠
blessest them as gifts for us.

In the same way, three signs of the cross are traced at the *Per ipsum* at the end of the Canon.

For the incensations at the Offertory, the priest makes three signs of the cross with the thurible over the oblations, then two circles in a counter-clockwise direction and one in a clockwise direction. These gestures reveal the whole mystery of our Faith in a wonderful way. The number *three* signifies the Most Holy Trinity; the two circles signify the *two* natures in Our Lord Jesus Christ existing in the *one* Second Person of the Godhead.

These signs and even the words have nearly all been removed in the new rite. The same is true for the *Suscipe sancta Trinitas* at the end of the Offertory; likewise for the prayer at the end of the Holy Mass, *Placeat tibi sancta Trinitas*. In the first of the 1967 reforms, in each case, the three signs of the cross were abbreviated to a single one in order that the rite “...should be distinguished by a noble simplicity. They should be short, clear, and free from useless repetitions.”

The Mass is a Sacrificial Act

In the traditional rite of Mass three inseparably linked elements express without doubt its sacrificial character: the altar, the sacrificing priest, and the

offering of sacrifice. This trio corresponds to three inseparably linked elements in the new rite: the table, the president of the celebrating community, and the memorial meal. Such facts face us in the original framing of Article 7, which contains the definition of the New Order of Mass. As a result of vociferous protest, this Article 7 needed to be corrected only a year after the introduction of the *Novus Ordo Missae*. Article 7 of the original 1969 edition of the *Institutio Generalis* reads:

The Lord's Supper *or Mass* is the *sacred* assembly or meeting of the People of God, met together with a priest presiding, to celebrate the Memorial of the Lord. For this reason the promise of Christ is particularly true of a local congregation of the Church: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst" (Mt. 18:20). [The italicized words were omitted in the original International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) translation, making the English version worse than the Latin original—*Ed.*]

The Protestant influence is very evident. In fact, six Protestant ministers took an active part in the drawing up of this new rite of Mass.

In order to understand the absurdity of this definition, we may take an example from the world of music. What would a sane person say to the following definition: "A symphony is the assembly of music lovers under the presidency of a conductor for the memorial of its composer and its first performance?" No!—A symphony is not the assembly of music lovers, but a piece of music composed so that people could experience its performance again and again. In the same way, the Mass is not an assembly, but the unbloody renewal of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross, where Our Lord as the Eternal High Priest works through human priests, and the faithful assemble in order to participate in the Sacred Action and to draw from It graces and blessings. But even if no one gathered, even if the priest celebrated totally alone, the Holy Mass is still, according to its whole content, the Sacrifice of the God-Man.

Moreover the priest is not simply a president as a Protestant minister is at the celebration of a communion service. Rather he lends his tongue and his hands to Jesus Christ: Christ Himself offers through him. For this reason he says the words of Consecration: "For this is My Body....For this is the chalice of My Blood..." although, in this case, it is a question of the Body and Blood of Christ. The priest represents a mediator between God and men only insofar as he represents Christ. Pope Pius XII teaches this in *Mediator Dei*. The sacramental similarity to the High Priest comes before any representation of the people.

The Holy Mass is also not a simple celebration of the Memorial of the Lord, but the making present of the Sacrifice of the Cross in an unbloody manner. It is, therefore, a true *offering of sacrifice*. It is both the Sacrifice of Christ and the Sacrifice of the Church. The 37 signs of the cross in the traditional rite—from the Offertory to the Communion of the Priest inclusively

express clearly the actual content of the rite. In the new rite there remains only one sign of the cross. When Eucharistic Prayer I is used, however, there are two!

Before the third prayer of the Canon in the traditional rite—the *Communicantes*—the heading *Infra Actionem* ("Within the *Action*") is printed in the traditional altar missal. In the new rite, this heading is changed to *Narratio Institutionis et Consecratio*, that is, "The *Narrative* and Consecration." The Sacred Action of bread being made Our Lord's Body is clearly not the same thing as reciting a narrative of the Last Supper!

Moreover the difference in the ordering of the words of Consecration in the traditional rite in comparison with the new is important. In the former, the words introducing the Consecration are, "Who the day before He suffered..." written in the normal typestyle at the end of which is a period. Then, standing out in larger type are the words of Consecration themselves: "*Hoc est enim Corpus meum*—For this is My Body." Thus it is made clear that only these words can effect the Consecration. In the *Novus Ordo Missae*, the words, "*Accipite, et manducate ex hoc omnes*—Take and eat ye all of this" are *added* to the actual words of Consecration and the break after the introductory words precedes it. Consequently, according to the order and typestyle size of the *Novus Ordo*, the words, "Take and eat ye all of this" are part of the words of Consecration themselves. The same is true for the Consecration of the wine, where the words, "*Accipite, et bibite ex eo omnes*—Take and drink ye all of this" are similarly added to the words of Consecration.

Without doubt, the creators of the new rite wanted to bring to the fore the ideas of eating and drinking by emphasizing the idea of a meal. More evidence of this emphasis is that in the traditional rite, the Host lies both before and after being consecrated on the corporal, consequently, on the altar stone. In the new rite, the Host remains on the paten—the *plate*—subtly reducing the idea of sacrifice in favor of that of a meal. Yet the Council of Trent determined the following in rejection of Protestant error:

If anyone says that in the Mass a true and real sacrifice is not offered to God, or that the act of offering is nothing else than Christ being given to us to eat, let him be anathema (Session XXII, can. 1).

By contrast in the traditional rite, the two-fold Consecration and the ordering of the words of Consecration clearly express the Sacrifice. In addition the words, "*mysterium fidei*—the mystery of faith" have been excised from the form of the Consecration in the new rite and instead placed *after* it.

In this regard, a further observation must be made concerning the vernacular translations of the new rite. In these translations, the phrase "*pro vobis et pro multis*—for you and for many" in the words of consecration for the chalice are almost always rendered "for you and for all." On this point, the Roman Catechism, published on

the orders of the Council of Trent, states that it should read “for many” and why:

The additional words “for you and for many” are taken some from Matthew, some from Luke, but were found together by the Catholic Church under the guidance of the Spirit of God. They serve to declare the fruit and advantage of His Passion. For if we look to its value, we must confess that the Redeemer shed His Blood for the salvation of all; but if we look to the fruit which mankind have received from it, we shall easily find that it pertains not unto all, but to many of the human race. When therefore [Our Lord] said: “for you,” He meant either those who were present or those chosen from among the Jewish People, such as were, with the exception of Judas, the disciple with whom He was speaking. When He added, “and for many,” He wished to be understood to mean the remainder of the elect from among the Jews or Gentiles.

The words “for all” constitute a serious falsification of the words of Consecration unjustified linguistically by Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek, nor do they correspond to Catholic doctrine.

The new rite of Mass does not actually prescribe the replacement of the altar with a table, but in actual fact such an exchange has taken place just about everywhere. The innovators have acted quite logically on this point: a sacrifice is offered on an altar, a memorial meal is consumed with the guests at a table. According to Catholic practice an altar is consecrated by a bishop for the proper purpose of sacrifice and five signs of the cross are carved into it as an image of the five wounds of Christ. These five signs of the cross are anointed with chrism—the symbol and bearer of the Holy Ghost—and on them a plentiful amount of incense is burned in order to make it understood that this place is sacred and prayer and sacrifice should rise up to God from it. At the center of the altar stone, in the *sepulchrum*, the relics of saints, generally of martyrs, are placed. Pope Pius XII categorically rejects erroneous tendencies regarding altars: “...[O]ne would be straying from the straight path were he to wish the altar restored to its primitive table-form” (§62), and he further condemns the changing of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass into a meal:

They, therefore, err from the path of truth, who do not want to have Masses celebrated unless the faithful communicate; and those are still more in error who, in holding that it is altogether necessary for the faithful to receive Holy Communion as well as the priest, put forward the captious argument that here there is a question not of a sacrifice merely, but of a sacrifice and a supper of brotherly union, and consider the general communion of all present as the culminating point of the whole celebration.

Now it cannot be over-emphasized that the Eucharistic sacrifice of its very nature is the unbloody immolation of the divine Victim, which is made manifest in a mystical manner by the separation of the sacred species and by their oblation to the eternal Father. Holy Communion pertains to the integrity of the Mass and to the partaking of the august sacrament; but while it is obligatory for the priest who says the Mass, it is only something earnestly recommended to the faithful. (*Mediator Dei*, §§114-15)

The True Sacrifice Requires the Real Presence

A true sacrifice requires the presence of the sacrificial offerings, of the sacrificial Lamb. According to the Council of Trent, Christ is truly, really, and substantially present under the consecrated species in His Divinity and Humanity, with Body and Soul, in Flesh and Blood. Since this is the case, how are we to understand the definition of the Eucharistic action from the above-mentioned Article 7, even that of the revised edition? “Hence the promise of Christ: ‘Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them’ (Mt. 18:20) applies in a special way to the gathering of the local church.” I am familiar with a new catechism that goes so far as to say that Christ is present “*if* we gather together.” The sacramental presence of Our Lord is being put on the same level as His purely spiritual presence when two or three are gathered together in his Name. Doesn’t this lead to the denial of the Real Presence? The acclamation of the people in the new rite, “Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life, Lord Jesus, come in glory,” sounds bizarre coming immediately after the Crucified and Resurrected Lord is made present in the Consecration.

The various genuflections are the living expression of the faith in the presence of Our Lord; they are signs of reverence and adoration. In the new rite, for the most part, they are omitted. In this context, the changes at the Consecration are especially fatal. In the old rite, the celebrant speaks the words of Consecration over the bread and wine and immediately adores Christ, whom he has just made present by his words, by a genuflection. He then rises and elevates the consecrated Species for the adoration of the people and kneels once more in adoration. Such gestures express the Catholic dogma that the validly ordained priest alone effects the Consecration. In contrast, according to Lutheran doctrine, the faith of the people accomplishes their “Consecration.” In appearance, the new rite allows such an interpretation, too—this is not necessarily so, but is nevertheless possible. Only *after* speaking the words of Consecration and elevating the consecrated Species does the priest of the new rite genuflect in adoration. For Protestants, Christ becomes “present” at the elevation *through the faith of the community* as though the “words of consecration” of the Protestant minister have no effect. The new rite approximates the “look” of a Protestant “consecration” when the priest only genuflects after the Elevation. The ambiguity of the new rite is visible.

In order to express the true presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine and to show the appropriate reverence to our Eucharistic Lord, the celebrant holds together the index fingers and thumbs of each hand from the Consecration until after the distribution of Holy Communion so that not even the smallest particle of the Host will be lost through

carelessness. According to Catholic teaching, Christ is present even in this. This holding together of the index fingers and thumbs is omitted in the new rite.

It was always the custom of the Church and decreed with great solemnity that only the most precious vessels be used, *i.e.*, gilt chalices and ciboria. These were to be carefully purified immediately after the Sacred Action by the celebrant, or, in a Solemn High Mass by the subdeacon. In the *Novus Ordo Missae*, such precious materials are no longer prescribed. In addition, the chalice and ciborium are not purified during Holy Mass nor is it necessary that they be purified immediately after the Holy Mass; it could be done later, often by the sacristan, the acolyte, or other lay people.

This is related to Communion in the hand which has become customary everywhere, where persons give themselves power over the Eucharistic Lord, where

cloning are consequences of the decline in Eucharistic piety.

The administration of Holy Communion by lay people is equally to be rejected. The priest alone is the minister of the Eucharist. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, even the ordained deacon is only its *extraordinary* minister. What should we say when, in the principal city of a diocese in Germany, a woman carried the Blessed Sacrament at the *Corpus Christi* procession while the local bishop walked beside her?

It is a matter of grave importance to receive Our Lord kneeling, to express our subjection and obedience to God's Law and our humble love. The old rite prescribed that the altar—a symbol of Christ—be covered with three cloths, representing dually the burial cloths of Jesus and the Trinity. In the new rite only a single cloth is required. The old order had a practical sense,



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particles almost always remain in the hand of the receiver. What happens to them? Who is responsible for all the sacrileges...if school children take it home or commit all sorts of other such abuses? In this way, the faith in the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament is tangibly undermined and destroyed.

There is an undeniable correlation between irreverence committed in sacred places and the rudeness and irreverence in society in general. Whoever fails to give God respect loses reverence for creation and the creature, for humanity as the image of God, for the mystery of life. The atrocities of bomb attacks with innumerable innocent victims, the daily murder of thousands of unborn children in their mothers' wombs, and the sickening prospect of human

too: if a drop of the Precious Blood were to spill, the three cloths are best suited to absorb the Sacred Species.

We can see how reverence to the Holy Eucharist has declined and is in the process of dying out altogether. After the administration of Holy Communion, the Sacred Species are reserved in the tabernacle. Until the *Novus Ordo*, this was located on the main altar, at the center. Pope Pius XII condemned the removal of the tabernacle from the altar. Nowadays we find in most Catholic churches that the tabernacle has been moved somewhere to the side, into a corner, into the wall, or behind a pillar. Christ, King of His Church and of human society, King of Love of each and every soul, who pours His Holy Spirit out over the Church from

the tabernacle, is removed from the center and pushed aside.

The Offertory of the Traditional Rite and the Preparation of the Gifts of the *Novus Ordo Missae*

In order to make clear the profound changes in the rite of Holy Mass, the Offertory prayers of the traditional rite and those of the Preparation of the Gifts in the new rite are placed side by side for comparison:

In the traditional prayers, the sacrificial aims of reparation and propitiation are distinctively expressed. The celebrant describes himself as an “unworthy servant” who offers this sacrifice for his “countless sins, transgressions, and failings.” He also offers it for “all here present and for all faithful Christians, living and dead....” In the new prayer for the *Preparation of the Gifts*, one can hardly speak any longer of the idea of propitiation. At the end of Mass this idea of propitiation is recalled in the *Placeat tibi* which comes immediately before the priest’s final blessing. It says that the sacrifice has been offered for a *sacrificium propitiabile* (a “propitiatory sacrifice”). This prayer is entirely omitted in the new rite. The first prayer of the Offertory speaks of the *Hostia immaculata* (the “spotless host/victim”) by which Christ sacrificing Himself is signified. The new rite only speaks of bread as the fruit of the earth and as the work of human hands. This is more than a mere shift in emphasis.

Creation and redemption are spoken of at the commingling of the wine and the water at the *Deus, qui humanae substantiae* of the old rite; the latter transcends the former in glory. Neither mystery is referred to any longer in the new rite when now at the offering of the chalice it is implored that this be a blessing to us and salutary to the whole world, for eternal life.

The prayer invoking the Holy Spirit, *Veni, sanctificator omnipotens*, is entirely omitted in the new rite, and only one verse (of Ps. 25) remains of the *Lavabo*.

It is justifiable to claim that the four aims of the Holy Mass, *i.e.*, adoration and praise, thanksgiving, propitiation, and impetration are essentially obscured in the new rite, particularly in reference to a propitiatory sacrifice. It is disturbing that Martin Luther, the greatest destroyer of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, directed his attack precisely against the Offertory of the Roman Rite and its theme of propitiatory sacrifice. In contrast to the old Offertory, the descriptions of the bread and wine as “work of human hands” are naturalistic and rooted in this world.

It is of the greatest significance that Christ Himself is offered in the old Offertory (although He is not actually present until the Consecration) because the Church transcends both time and place and sees its most beloved Bridegroom as already present under

the appearance of bread and wine. The new prayers for the Preparation of the Gifts are, in comparison, a presentation of bread and wine. If there can be a claim to sacrifice at all, then we must see such a presentation as a return to the Old Testament, where animals and fruits of the earth were sacrificed, while in the New Testament Christ alone is the true and proper sacrificial Victim.

The Role of the Priest

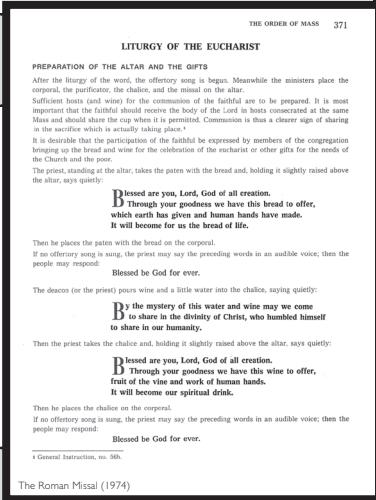
In the Holy Mass, the priest acts *in persona Christi*—in the person of Christ. He should therefore be made distinct from the people and even visibly separated from them because they do not have the powers of Consecration. Consequently, they offer the Body of Christ through the hands of the priest and, by virtue of the character received in Baptism, offer themselves spiritually with the divine sacrificial Victim. St. Paul exhorts us: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God, your reasonable service” (Rom. 12:1). At the end of the Offertory prayers a clear distinction is made of the twofold form of sacrifice in the *Orate, fratres*: “Brethren, pray that my Sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.” In the new rite this distinction still exists but the prayer is optional and can be replaced by other formulas. [In English translations, this distinction is most often obliterated by the use of “our sacrifice” in place of “my sacrifice and yours.”—*Ed.*]

The distinction between priest and people becomes clearly visible in the old rite by the actions of the priest in the sanctuary and the people in the nave and also by the twofold Confiteor prayed at the Prayers at the Foot of the Altar. In the new rite, the confession of sins of the celebrant and the people is made together. At its conclusion, the priest no longer calls down the mercy of almighty God on the people by reason of his office, but includes himself among them. In the old rite this prayer runs: “May the almighty God have mercy upon *you*, forgive *you your* sins, and bring *you* to life everlasting.” In the new rite, we read: “May almighty God have mercy upon *us*,....”

The original Article 7 of the *Institutio Generalis* stated that, “In the Mass...the People of God are called together into one place where the priest presides over them.” Here we are very aware of how much the *Novus Ordo Missae* has diminished the truth about the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Pope Pius XII warns of the denial of the ordained priesthood and its place in the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice:

For there are today, Venerable Brethren, those who, approximating to errors long since condemned, teach that in the New Testament by the word “priesthood” is meant only that priesthood which applies to all who have been baptized; and hold that the command by which Christ gave power to His apostles at the Last Supper to do what He Himself had

TRADITIONAL RITE	NEW RITE
OFFERTORY PRAYERS	PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS
Accept, O holy Father, almighty and eternal God, this unspotted host, which, I, Thine unworthy servant, offer to Thee, my living and true God, for mine innumerable sins, offences, and negligences, and for all here present: as also for all faithful Christians, both living and dead; that it may be of avail for salvation both to me and to them unto life everlasting. Amen.	Blessed are you, God of all Creation, through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life. [People: Blessed be God for ever.]
✠ O God, who in creating human nature, didst wonderfully dignify it, and still more wonderfully restored it, grant that, by the Mystery of this water and wine, we may become partakers of His divine nature, who deigned to become partaker of our human nature, even Jesus Christ our Lord, Thy Son, who with Thee liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God: world without end. Amen.	By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity.
We offer to Thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, beseeching Thy clemency, that it may ascend before the divine Majesty as a sweet savour, for our salvation and for that of the whole world. Amen.	Blessed are you, God of all Creation, through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink. [People: Blessed be God for ever.]
Accept us, O Lord, in the spirit of humility and contrition of heart and grant that the sacrifice which we offer this day in Thy sight may be pleasing to Thee, O Lord God.	Lord, we ask you to receive us and be pleased with the sacrifice we offer you with humble and contrite hearts.
Come, O almighty and eternal God, the Sanctifier, and ✠ bless this Sacrifice prepared for the glory of Thy holy Name.	Omitted
[In Solemn Mass the following is recited at the incensation of the offerings and the altar.] May the Lord, by the intercession of blessed Michael the Archangel, who stands at the right hand of the altar of incense, and of all His Elect, vouchsafe to bless ✠ this incense and receive it as an odor of sweetness: through Christ our Lord. Amen. May this incense, which Thou hast blessed, O Lord, ascend to Thee, and may Thy mercy descend upon us. Let my prayer, O Lord, be directed as incense in Thy sight: the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth and a door about my lips. Incline not my heart to evil words: to make excuses for sins. May the Lord enkindle within us the fire of His love, and the flame of everlasting charity.	Omitted
[The Washing of the Hands] I will wash my hands among the innocent: and I will compass Thine altar, O Lord. That I may hear the voice of Thy praise: and tell of all Thy wondrous works. I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thine house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth. Take not away my soul, O God, with the wicked: nor my life with bloody men. In whose hands are iniquities: their right hand is filled with gifts. But as for me, I have walked in mine innocence: redeem me, and have mercy on me. My foot hath stood in the direct way; in the churches I will bless Thee, O Lord. Glory be to the Father....(Ps. 25: 6-12)	Lord, wash away my iniquity, cleanse me from my sin
Receive, O holy Trinity, this oblation which we make to Thee, in memory of the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in honour of Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and of these and of all the Saints, that it may avail unto their honour and our salvation, and may they vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven, whose memory we celebrate on earth. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.	Omitted
Brethren, pray that my Sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father almighty.	Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours (or our sacrifice) may be acceptable to God the Almighty Father.
May the Lord receive the Sacrifice from thy hands, to the praise and glory of His Name, to our benefit, and that of all His holy Church.	May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.



done, applies directly to the entire Christian Church, and that thence, and thence only, arises the historical priesthood. Hence they assert that the people are possessed of a true priestly power, while the priest only acts in virtue of an office committed to him by the community. Wherefore, they look on the Eucharistic sacrifice as a “concelebration,” in the literal meaning of that term, and consider it more fitting that priests should “concelebrate” with the people present than that they should offer the sacrifice privately when the people are absent.

It is superfluous to explain how captious errors of this sort completely contradict the truths which we have just stated above, when treating of the place of the priest in the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ. But we deem it necessary to recall that the priest acts for the people only because he represents Jesus Christ, who is the Head of all His members and offers Himself in their stead. Hence, he goes to the altar as the minister of Christ, inferior to Christ but superior to the people. The people, on the other hand, since they in no sense represent the divine Redeemer and are not mediator between themselves and God, can in no way possess the sacerdotal power. (*Ibid.*, §§83,84.)

Mystery of the Church

The Mystical Body of the Lord is divided into the Church Triumphant, the Church Militant and the Church Suffering. The Church Triumphant is made up of the saints in heaven, and first and foremost the Blessed Virgin Mary. In order to express the dogma of her perpetual virginity, the expression, *semper Virgo*—ever Virgin—is found in all the texts of the Mass. This honor is given to her even in the original Latin text of the *Novus Ordo Missae*, but what is the case in the different vernacular translations? In the old rite, mention is made of the saints in heaven, in particular, St. Joseph, St. John the Baptist, the holy Apostles, the popes immediately succeeding St. Peter (*i.e.*, SS. Linus, Cletus, and Clement), then the martyrs particularly venerated in the specific church of Rome. St. John the Baptist is mentioned several times, even in the *Confiteor*, as is St. Michael the Archangel. Except for Canon I of the new rite, the lists of saints before and after the Consecration have been considerably shortened; even in Canon I the greater part of them are optional.

In the first prayer of the *Canon* of the old rite, the Church Militant is remembered in a distinctive way with the mention of the reigning Pope, the local bishop, and “all right believing teachers of the Catholic apostolic faith.” This prayer makes a clear distinction between orthodox and those who are not orthodox, *i.e.*, heretics and those who have fallen away from the Church and separated themselves from her. The distinction between baptized and unbaptized, between orthodox and heterodox, between the just and sinners, is of great importance for Catholic dogma, since between these various classes of people there are great differences. Contrarily, the new Liturgy has tendency to

speak of people without distinctions—an unmistakably naturalistic move. The Church Suffering is remembered in the *Memento* of the dead from the Canon of the old rite. Worthy of mention in this respect is that the word “soul” no longer appears in the new funeral rite.

The Catholic Church is ordered hierarchically. In consequence, through her principal action, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, this hierarchical order should find expression. To whom is the Holy Mass offered?—The Blessed Trinity. The Blessed Trinity should take the first place, the highest place. Thus we see Christ raised up hanging on the Cross. The Cross dominates the altar.

At the altar stands the bishop as the representative *par excellence* of Jesus Christ. [For this reason, by the way, the tabernacle is not situated on the principal altar of the bishop’s cathedral, but in its own Blessed Sacrament Chapel, because the bishop himself already represents Christ.—*Ed.*] Because the bishop is not able to be everywhere in every parish, he is represented by the priest who is his servant. The priest is totally dependent on the bishop; he is his representative and acts in his place. An “independent” priest without connection to a bishop or through a Congregation to the Holy See is a contradiction in terms.

In solemn ceremonies, the deacon and subdeacon stand at the priest’s sides. They are supported in turn in their ministry by those in minor orders, down to simple clerics. All the grades of Orders have their place in the sanctuary. In the nave of the church, the faithful gather: the religious and the Christian families—fathers, mothers, children. In the new Liturgy, the altar is not only replaced by a table, but the table moves ever closer to the mathematical center of the church in order to express a more democratic order.

In summary, we can say that the old rite was, according to its very nature, the service of God. On the contrary, the new rite is ordered in accordance to man and becomes the service of man. Hence we may make the following conclusions:

Both supporters and opponents of the *Novus Ordo Missae* are agreed: the New Order of Mass is a new orientation of the Church, a new ecclesiology. In this regard, we would like to cite different testimonies.

- In 1969 and more so in 1975-76, the hierarchy gave the impression that the old Liturgy had been forbidden once and for all. This was neither dogmatically possible nor juridically the case. In consequence, more and more voices were heard demanding an official right to the traditional rite in the Church so that finally an Indult was granted by Rome on October 4, 1984, for the celebration of this rite, though with entirely unacceptable conditions attached. As a result, the press office of the German Bishops’ Conference published documentation dated October 19, 1984, which contained the following statement:

The main difference between the pre-Conciliar and the renewed Order of Mass is perhaps made clear in the most simple way by the first words that begin each Order. The Tridentine Order of Mass begins with the words, "*Sacerdos paratus*," i.e., "The priest being vested." The renewed Order of Mass begins with the words, "*Populo congregato*," i.e., "When the people have gathered." From this it is clear that the weight of the old rite of Mass lay exclusively in the action of the celebrant; the renewed Order of Mass puts the common action of the People of God at the forefront, within which the celebrant fulfils an essential function which cannot be infringed upon. From this internal difference proceeds most of the external differences in the two Orders.

- Archbishop Annibale Bugnini, the primary architect of the new Liturgy, stated that the reform had been intended to remove anything from the Liturgy that could represent even the shadow of a stumbling block to the separated brethren. But what is so scandalous for Protestants in the traditional Liturgy?—The sacrificial character of the Holy Mass and the idea of propitiation. As a consequence, various Protestant ministers declared that they could celebrate the *Novus Ordo Missae* while rejecting the same possibility of the traditional rite. Obviously, Catholic dogma had been so weakened in the new Liturgy and expressed so equivocally, that it was acceptable for Protestants and their false theology.

- In early 1977, a group of 180 mainly young Catholic theologians from the diocese of Rottenburg, Germany, made the following statement in a letter written to the Protestant pastors of the Lutheran Church of the state of Württemberg:

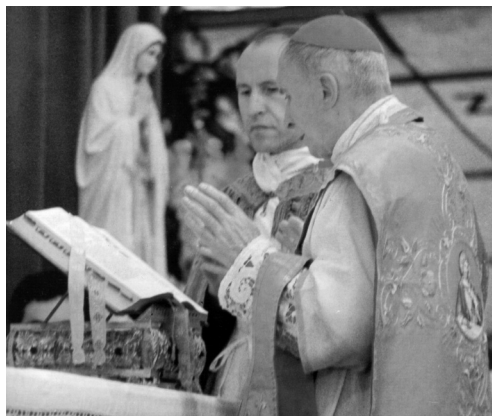
We have given up a theory of sacrifice that might give the impression that the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross should

be renewed or offered again and again for our atonement with God.

But the continued offering or renewal of the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross for our atonement *is* the Mass! If these innovators have given up such "a theory of sacrifice," then they have given up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass! In this same letter to the Protestant pastors, the Catholic theologians recognized them as the presidents of their communities and bearers of an office with the same powers and responsibilities as that of a Catholic priest. How can the Protestant minister that has never received the Sacrament of Holy Orders be the bearer of an office with the same powers as an ordained Catholic priest?! Impossible! By this example, we see the essential connection between the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the Catholic priest: whoever denies *one* puts the *other* into question.

- Archbishop Haas of Liechtenstein has stated that the background of dogma and spirituality of the old and new rites is so different that they are mutually incompatible. This is serious food for thought to those that claim that the difference between the rites is only a matter of one in Latin and the other in the vernacular, or to those who say the main difficulty with the new Liturgy is Communion in the hand. Surely, these practices are extremely damaging, but they are only pieces in the mosaic of the new rite, elements of a whole which is a new orientation of the Church.

- Archbishop Lefebvre compiled the following list of innovations as guidelines for his seminarians of Ecône, all officially authorized by ecclesiastical authorities and breathing forth the spirit of Protestantism:



Archbishop Lefebvre...explained the connection between the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Catholic life, and the building of a Catholic society. Without sacrifice there is no love; without love, no Christianity nor Catholic society. The reduction or obliteration of the notion of sacrifice breaks up both. For this reason we see the decline in those assisting at Mass,

the breakup of marriages and families, the disappearance of Catholic politics. The traditional rite of Mass means submission, obedience, love of God and neighbor. The new rite places humanity and its supposed rights in the center. The old rite means self-denial, giving, and service; the new rite means self-realization.

- The altar turned into a “table” without a consecrated altar stone
- The introduction of Mass facing the people
- Concelebration
- Mass celebrated in the vernacular
- Mass celebrated exclusively in a raised tone of voice
- Mass separated into the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist
- The profanation of the sacred vessels
- Leavened bread as the matter of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist
- The administration of Holy Communion by lay people
- Communion administered in the hand
- The reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in a wall [instead of a tabernacle]
- Liturgical readings made by women
- The administration of Holy Communion to the sick by lay people

● Ferdinand Cardinal Antonelli was a member of the post-Conciliar Committee for the revision of the liturgical texts according to the Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The Committee was referred to as the “Consilium.” He is long since dead. His posthumously published diary notes, an excerpt of which was published by *30 Days* (No. 11, 1998), let the cat out of the bag:

I am not enthusiastic about the work....The critical attitude and impatience towards the Holy See cannot come to a good end. The method of voting is even worse. Usually the voting took place by raising hands, but no one counted the Yes or No votes, and no one said how many were in favor or how many were against. A real disgrace.

How can it be possible that in the whole chapter on Baptism they speak of the forgiveness of sins, without mentioning Original Sin?

Many of those who have influenced the reform did not love or have any reverence for what has been handed down to us. We are living in the realm of confusion, and I regret it because the consequences are sad.

● A young Polish priest whom we know, who converted over a year ago to offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass according to the traditional liturgy, made the following confession in relation to the old rite and his own conversion to it:

This first Mass [in the old rite] was the same as a first Holy Mass, I celebrated on the first day of a pilgrimage to Ecône. This was an extraordinary experience: God at the center of the holy liturgy—the spirit of adoration, the presence of mystery, of the sacred, of holiness! What a spiritual treasure of a rite, expressed in words, gestures, and signs! At the same time, I realized the colossal difference between this Catholic Mass and the *Novus Ordo* with its desacralization and banality, with its loss of reverence and adoration of the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, where everything is concentrated on the community, on the people. When I assisted at the ordinations at Ecône and Zaitzkofen, I noticed what a treasure Catholics had been robbed of when the Mass of All Time was abolished. It was impossible for me to imagine beforehand that I should find such beauty

in the so-called Tridentine Catholic Liturgy, such a depth, majesty, and reverence.

● The traditional rite of Mass has sanctified generations and generations of priests and religious, of Catholic families and of many souls, and has sanctified them in the Blood of the immolated Son of God. Is it not a symbol of the new rite that the Feast of the Precious Blood, that was formerly celebrated as a feast of the First Class on July 1 has been totally abolished? The new rite must still prove that it is capable of sanctifying souls. As yet, there are no canonized saints or blessed today that have become so through it.

● Should one take part in the new Liturgy? The answer to that is an unequivocal “No.” If we have no opportunity to attend Mass, then we should pray the prayers of the Mass at home and make a good Spiritual Communion. The Catholics of Japan lived for 200 years in total isolation without priests or Mass and kept the Faith, while the faithful of today who regularly participate in the new liturgy slowly but surely take on a Protestant mentality and risk losing the Faith.

● We have seen how the reformers laid hands on the expression of sacrifice in the liturgy. The spirit of sacrifice is most profoundly akin to Christian life as a struggle against our own fallen nature, against the world, the devil, and sin. It would be quite an undertaking to study the changes in the Church’s Missal prayers to ascertain how the concepts of sacrifice—of contempt of the earthly and the love of the heavenly—have been deformed or even falsified almost everywhere.

● Christian life is like living out the Holy Mass: the Prayers at the Foot of the Altar represent Baptism; the *Gloria*, the prayer and the praise of God; the Gospel, our daily profession of Faith; sacrifice in the Offertory, our tribulations and crosses; the Consecration, our transformation through the grace of God by the events of life; Communion, the imitation of and union with the beloved divine Master; the *Ite Missa est*, our deathbed; the last Gospel, our passage into eternal life where we shall see the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, face-to-face.

● Doesn’t the priest offer himself up in the Eucharistic Action—his works, his efforts, his sufferings, and tears in the vineyard of the Lord? Don’t religious offer themselves on the steps of the altar as a sacrifice in union with the Divine Oblation—for the benefit of the Holy Church, the salvation and sanctification of souls? Don’t married couples, united in the cross of Christ, follow in the path of the divine Bridegroom from whose pierced side the new Eve, the holy Church, was born as His spotless Bride? Shouldn’t the sick, the elderly, the lonely and dying become one with the sacrifice

of our sanctuaries and so replace in their own bodies: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for his body, which is the church..." (Col. 1:24ff.)? Shouldn't our children and young people learn to follow Christ crucified, to deny themselves and the world, to live under the law of the Master, instead living a limitless egotism?

- Archbishop Lefebvre expressed himself masterfully in his Jubilee Sermon at his golden anniversary of ordination to the priesthood (Sept. 23, 1979) when he explained the connection between the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Catholic life, and the building of a Catholic society. Without sacrifice there is no love; without love, no Christianity nor Catholic society. The reduction or obliteration of the notion of sacrifice breaks up both. For this reason we see the decline in those assisting at Mass, the breakup of marriages and families, the disappearance of Catholic politics. The traditional rite of Mass means submission, obedience, love of God and neighbor. The new rite places humanity and its supposed rights in the center. The old rite means self-denial, giving, and service; the new rite means self-realization.

- No vocations of any value can be gained with the new rite, nor can the Church be renewed in the Holy Ghost or Christianity built up by it. It is no wonder that vocations to the priesthood and the religious life fail to materialize with this rite. If a bishop wants to breathe new life into his diocese, besides sound theology and the unabridged preaching of the Gospel, he must think above all of the Holy Mass; otherwise, he is building a house upon sand even if the apparent momentary successes at the time seem to indicate the opposite. For this reason bishops, priests, and faithful, with great strength of spirit, should hold firm to or return to the traditional rite of Mass. The falsifications in the vernacular translations and the innumerable abuses of individual celebrants are dangerous enough, but the new rite *itself* is dangerous even in its Latin original. Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci state this openly and in detail in their *Short Critical Study of the New Rite* (a.k.a. *The Ottaviani Intervention*):

The accompanying *Critical Study* is the work of a select group of bishops, theologians, liturgists, and pastors of souls. Despite its brevity, the study shows quite clearly that the *Novus Ordo Missae*—considering the new elements susceptible to widely differing interpretation which are implied or taken for granted—represents, both as a whole and in its details, a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Mass as it was formulated in Session XXII of the Council of Trent. The "canons" of the rite definitively fixed at that time erected an insurmountable barrier against any heresy which might attack the integrity of the Mystery. (*The Ottaviani Intervention*, TAN ed., p.27)

On account of this comes the well-known phrase, "*Legem credendi lex statuit supplicandi*—The law of belief is


determined by the law of prayer." An un-Catholic rite will necessarily lead one to fall away from the Faith of the Church. For that reason, if someone were to choose between the old rite in the vernacular and the new rite in Latin, he would have to choose the first.

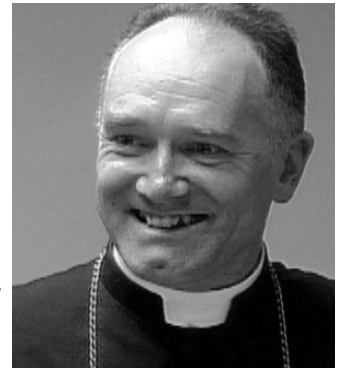
- There are priests and faithful who claim that they must have recourse to ecclesiastical authority to be allowed the traditional Mass. This is not the case. In *Quo Primum* (July 14, 1570) Pope St. Pius V ordered that the liturgy celebrated locally in Rome be prescribed for the whole Church and permitted its celebration to all priests for all time. These are his actual words:

And in perpetuity We grant and permit that they may by all means use this Missal in singing or reciting Mass in any church whatsoever without any scruple of conscience, without incurring any penalties, sentences, or censures; in order they may be able to do this and be able to use this Missal freely and lawfully, We by virtue of Our Apostolic Office, and by virtue of the present document, We grant and permit this forever.

No one may be required to offer Holy Mass in another way than has been determined by Us; no one, neither Pastors, Administrators, Canons, Chaplains, and other secular priests of whatever Order; and We likewise determine and declare that no one be compelled or pressured by anyone to change this Missal, or that this letter should ever be recalled or its effectiveness be restrained but that it may always stand firm and strong in all its vigor. (Bull *Quo Primum*, MIQC ed., pp.3,4)

Let me make a comparison here: let's assume an unjust regime permits and even prescribes abortion, as is the case in China. Must married couples who wish to have a child, or the pregnant woman who wants to have her child, ask the authorities for a permit to do so? The reader may find the example strong, or even inappropriate. But is it really so inappropriate? Can we not say in some sense that a foreign army occupying the Church of God has permitted a cult that in the long term will have the effect of the abortion of the Catholic Faith? The traditional rite, not the *Novus Ordo Missae*, is the full expression of our Catholic Faith.

May the faithful Virgin Mary ask for us the power from the Throne of God to remain in life and death faithful to this venerable, ancient form of the Holy Mass. Standing at the foot of the Cross, she saw the soldier open the side of her Divine Son from which "immediately there came out blood and water—*et continuo exivit sanguis et aqua*" (Jn. 19:34). This adverb "*continuo*" gives an immediacy, but also a permanence, a continuity, to an action or an event. From the heart of our Redeemer flow streams of mercy and grace *continually* until the end of time. How do they flow?—From the sacrificial altars of our sanctuaries. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. 



Letter of Bishop Fellay to the Faithful Concerning *Summorum Pontificum*

Dear Faithful,

The Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* of July 7, 2007 re-establishes the Tridentine Mass in its legal right. In the text it is clearly acknowledged that it was never abrogated. And so fidelity to this Mass—for the sake of which so many priests and lay people have been persecuted, or even severely punished, for almost forty years—this fidelity was never disobedience. Today it is only right and just to thank Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre for having maintained us in this fidelity to the Mass of all times in the name of true obedience, and against all the abuses of power. Also there is no doubt that this recognition of the right of the traditional Mass is the fruit of the vast number of rosaries offered up to Our Lady during our Rosary Crusade last October; let us not forget now to express to her our gratitude.

Beyond the re-establishment of the Mass of St. Pius V in its legitimate right, it is important to study the concrete measures issued by the Motu Proprio and the justification given by Pope Benedict XVI in the letter which accompanies the text:

- *By right*, the practical measures taken by the Pope must enable the traditional liturgy—not only the Mass, but also the sacraments—to be celebrated normally. This is an immense spiritual benefit for the whole Church, for the priests and faithful who were hitherto paralyzed by the unjust authority of the bishops. However, in the coming months it remains to be seen how these measures will be applied *in fact* by the bishops and parish priests. For this reason, we will continue to pray for the Pope so that he may remain firm following this courageous act.
- The letter accompanying the Motu Proprio gives the Pope's reasons. The affirmation of the existence of one single rite under two forms—the ordinary and the extraordinary forms—of equal right, and especially the rejection of the exclusive celebration of the traditional liturgy, may, it is true, be interpreted as the expression of a political desire not to confront the Bishops' Conferences which are openly opposed to any liberalization of the Tridentine Mass. But we may also see in this an expression of the "reform of the reform" desired by the Pope himself, and in which, as he himself writes in this letter, the Mass of Saint Pius V and that of Paul VI would mutually enrich one another.

In any event, there is in Pope Benedict XVI the clear desire to re-affirm the continuity of Vatican II and the Mass which issued from it, with the bimillennial Tradition. This denial of a rupture caused by the last Council—already shown in his address to the Curia on December 22, 2005—shows that what is at stake in the debate between Rome and the Priestly Society of St. Pius X is essentially doctrinal. For this reason, the undeniable step forward made by the Motu Proprio in the liturgical domain must be followed—after the withdrawal of the decree of excommunication—by theological discussions.

The reference to Archbishop Lefebvre and the Society of St. Pius X made in the accompanying letter, as well as the acknowledgment of the testimony given by the young generations which are taking up the torch of Tradition, clearly show that our constancy to defend the *lex orandi* has been taken into account. With God's help, we must continue the combat for the *lex credendi*, the combat for the faith, with the same firmness.

Menzingen, July 7, 2007
+ Bernard Fellay

Archbishop Lefebvre on the Indult Mass

THE INDULT MASS

By the Decree *Quattuor Abhinc Annos* of October 3, 1984, the Congregation for Divine Worship gave bishops the faculty to grant an indult for the celebration of Mass according to the 1962 Missal, provided that certain conditions be respected. The first one required that the celebrant and the faithful hearing the Mass “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.” If such an indult was in some way able to gladden Archbishop Lefebvre, he nonetheless pointed out its limitations...

Cardinal Ratzinger's letter implies that the Holy Father may be getting ready to authorize by decree the official public celebration of the Tridentine rite. But the religious authorities would only grant this freedom on condition that the traditional Mass not be celebrated out of contempt for the new rite. They would require priests to say the New Mass at least once in a while. It is difficult not to descry in the arrangement of the conditions a maneuver destined to put pressure on traditional priests to convince them to celebrate the New Mass.¹

Availing ourselves of the Indult is tantamount to putting ourselves into a state of contradiction because at the same time that Rome gives the Fraternity of Saint Peter, for example, or Le Barroux Abbey and other groups authorization to say the Mass of all time, they also require young priests to sign a profession of faith in which the spirit of the Council must be accepted. It is a contradiction: the spirit of the Council is embodied in the New Mass. How is it possible to desire to preserve the Mass of all time while accepting the spirit that destroys this Mass of all time? It is completely contradictory. One day, very gently, they will oblige those who have been granted the use of the Tridentine Mass, the Mass of all time, also to accept the New Mass. And they will tell them that it is simply a matter of squaring themselves with what they have signed, since they signed a statement that they accepted the spirit of the Council and its reforms. You cannot put yourself thus into an unbelievable, irrational contradiction. It is a very uncomfortable situation. This is what has created the difficulty for these groups that have signed it and that currently find themselves in a kind of impasse.²

THE FRUITS OF THE INDULT

From one standpoint (*sous un certain aspect*), Archbishop Lefebvre deemed the effect of this indult to be positive. Besides being a tacit avowal of the weakness of the new rite, which had been unable to supplant the former, it also gave the faithful to understand that the pope no longer opposed the traditional rite. But it also had, alas! more negative fruits. Several priests and laymen abandoned the doctrinal reasons for their refusal of the missal promulgated by Pope Paul VI, and their attachment to the rite revised by St. Pius V was reduced to a subjective and sentimental dimension.

1) First remark. Major precautions to safeguard the permanence of the New Mass. Whoever can say the old Mass must accept the new: bishop's authorization, protection of the parishes.

2) The precautions certify the weakness of the New Mass against the old.

3) The opportunity afforded some priests of saying the traditional Mass proves that some priests and faithful want the old Mass.

The motives adduced and the wording of the Decree reveal a frame of mind that is more political and diplomatic than supernatural.³

I had occasion to say, at first, that the indult has been beneficial to us, whatever the conditions, because many people concluded that the Pope was no longer against the celebration of the old Mass, and that, consequently, they could go to it, and that disobedience in going to the traditional Mass [false, moreover] was no longer an issue. Very many people thus joined us, and we have observed, in general, a rather considerable increase of the faithful coming to our centers. That was an initial positive result that pleased us.

But another result, unfortunate and disagreeable, was that a certain number of priests thought they had to accept the conditions of the indult in order to regularly celebrate the old Mass, and with the approval of their bishop. That has given rise to some fairly serious problems, since they have been obliged to consider the New Mass as good as the old Mass, which we have always refused, and which we have always opposed because we esteem that the New Mass is dangerous, and thus bad, because it was made in an ecumenical spirit. It diminishes the faith of Catholics and ends by giving them a Protestant mentality.

We are very sorry to see that some priests have consented to say that the new Mass is as good as the old Mass, so as to be able to say, so they say, the old Mass in all security and in conformity with the bishops' regulations....And now, supposedly for the sake of following the rules regarding the old Mass, they have given up the fight against novelties, particularly liturgical novelties....

Among traditionalists, you have some who are attached to Tradition the way people are attached to folklore: for example, they like the sung Mass; they like the Mass in Latin, because when they were young they were used to that Mass. They like Latin and Gregorian chant. So for them, as soon as the Mass is said in Latin, whether it is the traditional Mass or the New Mass, all the problems are resolved. Those people are quite content with the indult solution from Rome....⁴

¹ Manuscript note, 1983, Ecône Seminary archives.

² Homily, Friedrichshafen, April 29, 1990.

³ Manuscript notes, 1983, Ecône Seminary archives.

⁴ Spiritual conference, Ecône, January 14, 1986.

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