

Castrillón Speaks As Summorum Pontificum Goes Into Effect

It is September 14, 2007, 0000 Rome time (midnight), as the *motu proprio* Summorum Pontificum gradually goes into effect around the world.

Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos, President of the Pontifical Commission “Ecclesia Dei”, has some words on the main document of the current pontificate in an interview to Radio Vaticana



On the true meaning of the pontifical document:

Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos: I would say that John Paul II wanted to give to the faithful who loved the ancient rite — some of whom left to join Archbishop Lefebvre’s movement, but who later returned in order to maintain full unity with the Vicar of Christ — the opportunity to celebrate the rite that was nearest to their sensibility.

The Holy Father Benedict XVI participated from the beginning in the Lefebvrist question and therefore knew well the problem created for those faithful by the liturgical reform.

The Pope has a special love for the liturgy — a love that is translated into a capacity for studying, for learning more about the liturgy itself. This is why Benedict XVI considers the liturgy from before the Conciliar reform an inestimable treasure.

The Pope does not wish to move backwards. It is important to know and underline that the Council did not prohibit the liturgy of Saint Pius V and we must also say that the Fathers of the Council celebrated the Mass of Pius V.

It is not — as many maintain because they don’t know the reality — a step backward. On the contrary: the Council wanted to grant a wide freedom to the faithful. One of these freedoms was that of keeping this treasure — as the Pope says — which is the liturgy, to keep it alive.

Q: What has truly changed with this motu proprio?

Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos: With this *motu proprio*, in reality, there has not been a great change. **The important thing is that in this moment, priests can decide, without permission from the Holy See or the bishop, to celebrate the Mass in the ancient rite. And this holds true for all priests. It is the parish priests who must open the doors to those priests that, having the faculty [to do so], wish to celebrate. It is not therefore necessary to ask any other permission.**

Q: Your Eminence, this document was accompanied by fear and polemics. What is not true about what has been said or read?

Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos: It is not true, for example, that power was taken away from bishops over the liturgy, because the Code of Canon Law says who must give permission to say Mass and it is not the bishop: the bishop gives the “celebret”, the power to be able to celebrate [Rorate Note: any Mass, in any “Form”; in the Particular Church to which the priest belongs, with ordination; in other Particular Churches, cf. CIC, Canon 903], but when a priest has this power, it is the parish priest and the chaplain who must grant the altar to celebrate.

If anyone impedes him, it is up to the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, in the name of the Holy Father, to take measures until this right — which is a right that is clear to the faithful by now — is respected.

Q: On the eve of the motu proprio taking force, what are your hopes?

Cardinal Castrillón Hoyos: My hopes are these: The Eucharist is the greatest thing we have, it is the greatest manifestation of love, of God's redemptive love, Who wants to stay with us with this Eucharistic presence. This must never be a motive for discord, but only for love.

I hope that this can be a reason for joy for all those who love tradition, a reason for joy for all those parishes that will no longer be divided, but will have — on the contrary — a multiplicity of holiness with a rite that was certainly a factor and instrument of sanctification for more than a thousand years. We thank, therefore, the Holy Father, who rescued this treasure for the Church. Nothing is imposed on anyone, the Pope does not impose the obligation; **the Pope does impose offering this possibility where the faithful request it.**

If there is a conflict, because humanly speaking two groups can enter into conflict, the authority of **the bishop** — as written in the *motu proprio* — **must intervene to avoid it, but *without canceling the right that the Pope gave to the entire Church.***