

## **VTMS seeks Clarification from FSSP**

Dear Fr.Devillers:

From all that I've been hearing Protocol 1411 is a tremendous setback for the Traditional movement. What is the FSSP's position on it? How will it affect us all? What action can the laity take?

Sincerely Yours in Jesus and Mary

David Reid

## **FSSP Responds to the VTMS**

Dear Mr. Reid,

Fr. Devillers has asked me to respond to your email. In regards to protocol #1411 issued from the Congregation of Divine Worship, it is to be taken seriously. At present this document is not officially promulgated; therefore, what its effect will be is unknown -- however, many seem to be speculating the worse -- at least those who are hooked up to the Internet. The Protocol in itself does not impose anything new. The constitutions of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter do not say that a priest is forbidden from saying the Novus Ordo Mass. What is stated is the fact that we are allowed to say only the 1962 (or Tridentine) Mass. The basis for our Priestly Fraternity was granted by a protocol of May 5, 1988, which allowed for our exclusive use of the 1962 liturgical books. Therefore, while acknowledging that the New Mass is valid, we have chosen to say only the Old Mass (1962). And this remains the charism of our community. Those men who join the Fraternity of St. Peter do so with the express desire of offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass according to the 1962 liturgical books (Tridentine liturgy).

It would seem that the rationale behind this present protocol from the Congregation of Divine Worship pertains more too ecclesiological rather than liturgical questions. How this document will affect our community is not entirely clear at the present time. So until it is officially promulgated, we have little upon which to comment. While we are free to speculate as to its impact, there seems to be no reason to be overly reactionary. Therefore, as articles appearing in the Remnant, etc., possesses a certain editorial and journalistic leaning, which is sometimes reactionary and negative, I would advise taking their speculations with a grain of salt. What we all can do is pray

that God will bless His Holy Church, and that She will triumph over her many adversaries.

I have attached a letter, which explains pretty much the development of the present situation.

As for the laity, I suggest first of all that you pray. It is important not to let these issues disturb our spiritual lives. Pray especially for the Holy Father and those who govern the Church that they will seek God's will and be directed by His Divine Providence.

Please pray for me and the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter. Prayer obtains all things, as long as we seek to do God's will according to His Will.

I hope I have satisfactorily answered your query.

In Christ and Our Holy Mother,

Joseph Devereaux, FSSP

Dear Faithful Catholic,

There is a great deal of misunderstanding about the current status of the traditional movement following rumors of a change in Church policy. I would like to set the record straight so that everyone can have correct information about the current situation. This is a quick summary of what did take place.

In North America we have made great progress in gaining traditional apostolates due to the generous response of so many of our bishops. In Europe the bishops have not responded in such a positive way to the document "Ecclesia Dei", and in France some bishops have made concelebration of at least the Chrism mass a pre-condition of receiving a traditional apostolate. We have never concelebrated in order to be given an apostolate. However, as we continue to ordain priests for France while making no substantial progress in gaining apostolates, and as the faithful continue to ask us to do something to meet their traditional liturgical needs in the aforementioned dioceses, pressure to concelebrate has been mounting from every angle on the position of the Fraternity.

Finally, some of our priests in France wrote a letter to the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei, and in it offered their opinion about the current situation of the Fraternity.

Having read this letter Msgr. Perl, secretary of the Ecclesia Dei commission, posed four dubia (questions) to the Congregation for Divine Worship. These were answered in an official response signed by Cardinal Medina, head of the congregation. I will not reproduce the entire document here, for it is rather lengthy. The most relevant points made are that traditional priests have the right to concelebrate, and that they should even celebrate the new mass on those occasions when the needs of the faithful and the demands of pastoral charity would seem to require it. This Roman document will have no effect until it is officially promulgated. I would like to point out that, contrary to what is being said by many sources, Fraternity priests did not request permission to say the new mass.

Also, it is not true that our constitutions prohibit us from saying the new mass, and that this new pronouncement by Rome overturns our constitutions. Our constitutions do say that we have a right to use the liturgical books in force in 1962. That, however, still leaves open a loophole for use of the new rite. This loophole made possible the response of the Congregation for Divine Worship.

Certainly these events are a cause for concern for all traditionalists. We appreciate your desire to defend the traditional movement, and ask that you remember us all, and especially our Superior General, Fr. Josef Bisig, in your prayers. He is being attacked from many quarters right now while he does his best to avert any damage to the Fraternity and the whole traditional movement.