

## The Revision of the Missal of 1962.

### The Concerns of the International Federation Una Voce,

#### Preamble:

It is known that work has commenced in Rome on the revision of the Missal of 1962. As has been the norm in recent years, these matters are being conducted discreetly and only made public when the relevant document is promulgated, viz: *Summorum Pontificum* and *Universae Ecclesiae*. The very narrow remit given by the Holy Father to the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei in his *Letter to Accompany Summorum Pontificum* [7 July, 2007] was that: “..new Saints and some of the new Prefaces can and should be inserted in the old Missal.” No other changes were sanctioned. Pope Benedict also stated that “The Ecclesia Dei Commission, in contact with various bodies devoted to the *usus antiquior*, will study the possibilities in this regard.”

Those who are “devoted to the *usus antiquior*” must continually and carefully ensure that this specific and narrow remit is not exceeded by those in Rome and elsewhere who desire to undermine the integrity of the Missal of 1962 by demanding the inclusion of some of the novelties which were introduced into the liturgy post-1962. The International Federation Una Voce was founded in early 1965, even before the Second Vatican Council had ended, and is by far the oldest organisation, lay or clerical, which is devoted to the *usus antiquior*. While other organisations and societies, clerical and lay, may also be devoted to the ‘*usus antiquior*’, none can match the 46 year history of the Una Voce Federation in its unswerving devotion to this cause. The Federation has played a unique role in being the first, and the continuous voice of the lay faithful in seeking adherence to the expressed wishes of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council as declared in *Sacrosanctum Concilium n.4*:

“Finally, in faithful obedience to tradition, the Sacred Council declares that Holy Mother Church holds all lawfully recognised rites to be of equal right and dignity; that she wishes to preserve them in the future and to foster them in every way.”

The members of the Foederatio Internationalis Una Voce, being ever mindful of this decree of the Council Fathers, have been faithfully obedient to tradition, have consistently upheld the equal right and dignity of the Mass of Antiquity, and have striven since 1965 to preserve and foster this lawfully recognised rite. In his *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum*, our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI, confirmed what the International Federation has always claimed, that the Missal of 1962 ‘was never juridically abrogated’. The Holy Father also confirmed in his letter that his decision was to bring about “an interior reconciliation in the heart of the church.”

Liturgical innovation and creativity is unwanted by the faithful and has consistently disturbed, angered and alienated them in the years following the Second Vatican Council. This must not happen again with the adulteration of the Missal of 1962. The International Federation accepts organic development but emphatically rejects liturgical innovation which is alien to the character, spirit, and integrity of the *usus antiquior*. The inestimable treasure of the ancient liturgy must not be undermined by novelty, reductionism, and destructive modernisation. Nothing describes the attraction of the *usus antiquior* more powerfully than the growing number of young Catholics world-wide, including many seminarians and young priests, who are discovering this ancient and deeply spiritual liturgy and are being captivated by it.

We are now entering a critical period in the life of the liturgy of Holy Mother Church. Decisions that are being taken in Rome today will have a lasting impact on the spiritual welfare of the faithful for generations. The need to implement the will of the Holy Father for a limited and organic change in harmony with the character of the Missal of 1962 must not be the excuse for the introduction into the traditional Roman liturgy of alien concepts that created so much disunity and disharmony in the years immediately following the Second Vatican Council.

Following the publication of the *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum*, the President of the Foederatio Internationalis Una Voce presented a document to the Ecclesia Dei Commission in June 2008. Now that work on amending the Missal of 1962 has commenced, it may be timely to republish this document, in an updated form, to make clear, once again, the desires and aspirations of the members of the Una Voce Federation.

## **A Reflection on Summorum Pontificum and the Role of the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei Prior to, and Post, September 2007.**

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**2 June 2008.**

Since the promulgation of *Summorum Pontificum* in July 2007 there has been great rejoicing from those in the Catholic Church who wish to retain traditions, and protect Tradition. There is no doubt that the statement from Pope Benedict that the Missal of 1962 had never been abrogated, and the freedom he has granted to priests of the Roman Rite to celebrate this form of the Mass, has led to a great increase in the celebrations of the ancient and venerable rite. However, it is also clear that the promulgation of this *Motu Proprio* has led to many questions about the manner of celebration and the rubrics that apply to the Missal revised by Blessed John XXIII. It seems that there are some, including many bishops, who deliberately wish to create confusion and dissent in an attempt to dissuade priests and faithful from benefiting from the Holy Father's pastoral solicitude, and insist that post-1962 developments (such as Communion in the hand, and female altar servers) are perfectly valid in Masses celebrated according to the Missal of 1962. On the other hand, there are others who have genuine queries about what is allowed during the celebration of the Extraordinary form of the Mass. Questions are being raised more or less on a daily basis and the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei [PCED] is being inundated with letters containing requests for clarification; to such an extent that a document has been prepared that seeks to clarify matters once and for all. We have been advised to wait patiently for the publication of this document.

As I made clear in my Report to the PCED on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008, I believe that *Summorum Pontificum* (and *Quattuor Abhinc Annos* [1984] and *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta* [1988] before it) should be interpreted according to the mind of the Legislator in his desire to redress, among other things, what many traditional Catholics believe to have been abuses of their legitimate aspirations. I believe those who seek to modify the directives of *Summorum Pontificum* to incorporate the changes post-1962 should be informed that they may freely avail themselves of the *Novus Ordo* in Latin where most of the various adaptations are already available, or can be adopted without any difficulty. The 1965 Ordo and the 1967 *Missa Normativa* were, by their own nature, only transitory and temporary stages and lost

any particular significance once the 1969 edition of the Roman Missal was published by Pope Paul VI. There is, consequently, no sense in encouraging the adoption of elements of those ordos as somehow being natural and genuine evolutions of the 1962 Missal, which remains the only legitimate expression of the Extraordinary form of Roman Rite as defined by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI.

Recently, there has been much publicity given to a letter that was issued by the PCED in 1997 and signed by the then President, Cardinal Felici, and by Monsignor Perl, the Secretary. This letter permits a number of modifications to celebrations of the Missal of 1962 concerning the Epistle, Gospel, Gloria, Credo, Pater Noster, and Prefaces from the appendix of the 1965 *Missale Romanum* and from that of 1970. They, therefore, are superseded by the provisions of *Summorum Pontificum*. For if the Supreme Pontiff wished prior liturgical provisions to be observed, he would have stated as much in his *Motu Proprio* of 7<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

In the midst of all this confusion there is, perhaps, a single question to be posed, the answer to which may make the responses to all the many queries irrelevant. But first it is necessary to set the scene.

The Holy Father, in *Summorum Pontificum*, could not have been clearer in stating what he means and meaning what he stated. He constantly refers to the Missal of 1962 **OR** the Missal of 1970. There is no ambiguity; it is a straight choice between one or the other. There is no in-between.

With the full authority of Peter, the Supreme Legislator stated “**We Decree**”. He then states that the Missal of Blessed John XXIII:

- “must be given due honour for its venerable and ancient usage” [Art.1];
- that the priest may use “the Roman Missal promulgated by Blessed John XXIII in 1962 **OR** (*my emphasis*) the Roman Missal promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1970” [Art.2];
- In parishes a pastor may “celebrate the Mass according to the rite of the Roman Missal published in 1962” [Art. 5].

The only concession granted by Pope Benedict in the *Motu Proprio* itself is in Article 6 when he states: “In Masses celebrated in the presence of the people in accordance with the Missal of Blessed John XXIII, the readings **MAY** (*my emphasis*) be given in the vernacular, using editions recognised by the Apostolic See.”

Thus, the mind of Pope Benedict in the *Motu Proprio* is clear – it is either the Missal of 1970 **OR** the Missal of 1962. His Holiness remains true to this theme in his Letter to Bishops which accompanied the *Motu Proprio*. He states that, “the last version of the *Missale Romanum* prior to the Council....in 1962 and used during the Council, will now be used as a *Forma extraordinaria* of the liturgical celebration.” He also states that, “There is no contradiction between the two editions of the Roman Missal”, thus indicating, once again, that, while there is no contradiction, there is a distinct difference between the two Missals.

And now I come to the crux of my argument. An **indult** is a permission, or privilege, granted by the competent ecclesiastical authority – the Holy See or the local ordinaries as the case may be – for an exception from a particular norm of church law in an individual case. Both *Quattuor Abhinc Annos* of 1984, and *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta* of 1988, were granted on the widespread opinion that the Missal of 1962 had been abrogated – abolished

- following the publication of the Missal of Pope Paul VI in 1970. The motives for *Quattuor Abhinc Annos* and *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta* would have been very different. *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta* (after the Commission of Cardinals had reported) may have been *pro bono pacis*, but this would not have applied to *Quattuor Abhinc Annos*.

[Note: A Commission of nine Cardinals was established Blessed Pope John Paul II in 1986 to determine whether the Missal of 1962 had been legally abrogated, or whether the bishops had the power to forbid the traditional Mass. The unanimous answer was 'No'.]

In his Letter to Bishops Pope Benedict states:

“As for the use of the 1962 Missal ...I would like to draw attention to the fact that this Missal was never juridically abrogated and, consequently, in principle, was always permitted.

In *Summorum Pontificum* he repeats this with the full force of law and states:

“...It is therefore, permissible to celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass following the typical edition of the Roman Missal promulgated by Blessed John XXIII in 1962 and **never abrogated** (my emphasis) .....The conditions for the use of this Missal **as laid down by earlier documents** ‘*Quattuor abhinc annos*’ and ‘*Ecclesia Dei*’ **are substituted** as follows:”[Art.1]

In the case of both these indulgences they were substituted as from midnight on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2007 and ceased to have any force of law. They are redundant, obsolete.

The Pope has given us two clear statements: that the Missal of 1962 was never abrogated, and that the Apostolic Letter *Summorum Pontificum* given *Motu Proprio* replaces the indulgences *Quattuor Abhinc Annos* and *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta*. All the various permissions and modifications granted by the PCED were granted during the periods of the indulgences. Logic dictates, therefore, that if the Missal of 1962 was never abolished and the Holy Father states that the conditions laid down in earlier documents [*Quattuor Abhinc Annos* and *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta*] for the use of the Missal of 1962 are substituted with effect from midnight on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2007, then all permissions, interpretations, relaxations, modifications *et al* that flowed from *Quattuor Abhinc Annos* and *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta* must also be ‘substituted’ with effect from midnight on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2007 and no longer apply. The Pope has clarified the situation that has existed since 1970 and has wiped the slate clean concerning the indulgences of 1984 and 1988. The 14<sup>th</sup> September 2007 brought us a new beginning in the understanding of the law, one which is based on juridical principles and not on the granting of a privilege.

If it is accepted that all the concessions and privileges that were granted under *Quattuor Abhinc Annos* and *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta* have been superseded by the new law, what, then, is the current position? Quite clearly we start with a clean slate. From 14<sup>th</sup> September 2007 we start once again with the Missal of 1962, untouched and without modification or adaptation. In his Letter to the Bishops, Pope Benedict recognises that some change will take place but he is very specific; and he speaks in the **future tense** only, not in the past. He says:

“new Saints and some of the new Prefaces can and should be inserted in the old Missal. The ‘*Ecclesia Dei*’ Commission, in contact with various bodies devoted to the *usus antiquior*, will study the practical possibilities in this regard.”

In effect, no changes can be made to the Missal of 1962 until the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission implements the will of the Holy Father and consults with the “various bodies devoted to the *usus antiquior*”. One would imagine that the first action of the Pontifical Commission would be the establishment of a list of ‘bodies’ to be consulted. Only when the various

bodies have been identified can the process begin of studying the practical possibilities of inserting new Saints and new Prefaces. We should be entering a period of quiet diplomacy and consultation during which the Missal of 1962 should remain untouched. Engaging in this properly-structured process will have a number of benefits. Those who fear that the Missal of 1962 will be adulterated bit by bit, as happened during the 1960s, should be reassured that nothing will change until serious debate has taken place between the PCED and those who are attached to the ancient Latin liturgical tradition, and the PCED will be able to address itself to the task entrusted to it by Pope Benedict XVI without being inundated on a daily basis with requests for clarifications on various matters, many of which are trivial and serve only to overwhelm the staff in the Commission and divert them from the important work they are there to do. ●

**Addendum:**

The long-awaited clarification document, *Universae Ecclesiae*, was published by the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei on 30th April 2011 and was subject to much comment and detailed analysis in the media. The International Federation Una Voce welcomed the document.

Although some have commented that *Universae Ecclesiae* still leaves some questions unclear, what is perfectly clear is that the Holy Father has fully restored to the universal Church the traditional Roman rite as enshrined in the liturgical books of 1962, that the rubrics in force in 1962 must be strictly observed, and that Latin and the *Usus Antiquior* must be taught in seminaries where there is a pastoral need. **And this pastoral need must be determined by those who wish to benefit from *Summorum Pontificum* and *Universae Ecclesiae*, and not be decided by those many in authority whose natural desire is to prevent their implementation.**

The International Federation Una Voce has worked patiently and tirelessly for the restoration of the traditional liturgy for more than 45 years and is now witnessing a vindication of its fidelity to Holy Mother Church and the See of Peter. However, its members, the lay faithful of Holy Mother Church, are fully aware that many in the ranks of the clergy have a burning desire to thwart their legitimate aspirations to benefit spiritually from the pastoral solicitude of Pope Benedict XVI. To this end, we who are beneficiaries of these documents, wish to state unequivocally that, while accepting the stated will of our Holy Father for the inclusion of new Saints and some new Prefaces into the Missal of 1962, we will respectfully and vigorously challenge any proposal that strays beyond these clearly defined limits and seeks to adulterate the integrity of that Missal.

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30<sup>th</sup> January 2012.**