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SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE USUS ANTIQUIOR OF THE ROMAN RITE

CARDINAL RAYMOND BURKE'S ADDRESS DURING THE 5th SUMMORUM PONTIFICUM 2020 MEETING

The situation of the traditional mass may seem more difficult these days, but its dynamic of extension will not cease. This was the theme of Father Barthe's introductory lecture at the Summorum Pontificum meeting in Rome on October 23rd. It was also the subject of Cardinal Burke's speech during the same meeting. Saluting, in the manner of a cardinal protector of the Summorum Pontificum movement, the efforts of all those who have worked and are working for this Mass, he exhorted them, through their representatives gathered in Rome around him, to develop all the virtualities of Benedict XVI's motu proprio. It is this invitation from Cardinal Burke that we are rewriting here.



Safeguarding and Promoting the *Usus Antiquior* of the Roman Rite

It pleases me to be able to speak to you today and to encourage you to continue your faithful work of safeguarding and promoting the Usus Antiquior of the Roman Rite, in accord with the intention of Pope Benedict XVI in the promulgation of his Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum*. By way of clarification, I prefer to

use the terminology, *Usus Antiquior* and *Usus Recentior*, instead of Extraordinary Form and Ordinary Form, in order to underline more strongly that the classical Roman liturgy has been, is, and will always remain a significant part of the daily life of the Church. If the word, extraordinary, is not properly understood, it can seem to imply that the classical Roman liturgy is something unusual in the life of the Church, which, from time to time, manifests itself. Its extraordinary character comes from its long history and remarkable beauty, which the Motu Proprio aimed to make ever more widely present for the whole Church.

I am deeply conscious of the growing confusion and error within the body of the Church and of the strong temptation to discouragement, which it can easily stir up in us as individuals and as a community. We also know that there are those in the Church, especially in the hierarchy, who would wish to abrogate definitively the legislation contained in *Summorum Pontificum*. They remain adherents of an ideology promoting a so-called "paradigm shift" in the Church, which, in fact, is a revolution attempting to separate the faithful from the living Tradition by which Christ continues always to be the Head and Shepherd of the flock. The ideology is totally mundane, secular, viewing the Church as a man-made reality subject to our manipulation, while the Church is a divine institution to which we are called to subject ourselves and our gifts in service. The ideology is often reflected in a kind of political view of the Church, which betrays the Kingship of Christ which He exercises through the living body of the faithful.

I recall well the meeting, just prior to the promulgation of the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum*, Pope Benedict held with Bishops from around the world on June 27, 2007, in which I was privileged to participate. During the meeting, one Bishop observed that the rupture in the liturgical tradition is a reflection of a rupture in the understanding of the Church herself, as Our Lord constituted her during His Public Ministry. Because the true nature of the Church as a hierarchical communion is so strongly expressed in the *Usus Antiquior*, the revolutionaries with their "paradigm shift" find it a nuisance, if not intolerable.

Given a current lack of correction of those who contradict the doctrines of the faith or violate Church discipline, the enemies of the *Usus Antiquior* become more emboldened. The lack of strong fatherly direction in essential and treasured elements of Church life, like the Sacred Liturgy, naturally engenders fear for the future.

Clearly, in such circumstances, it is more important than ever that we maintain our strong commitment to foster all that Pope Benedict XVI intended by his Motu Proprio for the good of the universal Church. We cannot comport ourselves as discouraged and fearful soldiers of Christ but rather as courageous and confident in the truths which Pope Benedict XVI wished to safeguard and promote by his most timely Motu Proprio. In sending the Apostles to act in His person to teach, sanctify and govern the faithful, Our Lord spoke plainly to them with these words: "Behold, I send you out in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."1 He continued by exhorting them, not to put their trust in men who would so readily betray them but to trust in the Holy Spirit Who acts in us, when we are doing Our Lord's work.2

Our Lord's exhortation applies to all of us who, in varying ways according to our vocation in life and our gifts, are called to serve Our Lord in His holy Church and, in a preeminent way, to worship Him "in spirit and truth."3 Following Our Lord's counsel, our service of the Sacred Liturgy by safeguarding and promoting the *Usus Antiquior* of the Roman Rite, begins with our own worship, prayer and devotions, by which Our Lord inspires and strengthens us with the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit. We should invoke the intercession of Pope Saint Gregory the Great and Pope Saint Pius V, in particular, because of their profound and enduring discipline of the Sacred Liturgy.

Having first prayed to God and worshipped Him, we are equipped to fulfill our responsibilities with the wisdom of serpents and the innocence of doves. In going about the work, we are fully conscious of the challenges we face, but we do not give way to discouragement and fear because we trust that Our Lord always fulfills His promises to us, above all, His promise: "[L]o, I am with you always, to the close of the age."4

Two events affecting directly the work governed by the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* are a cause of concern for us. Both events are difficult to interpret precisely. One is the suppression of the Pontifical Commission «*Ecclesia Dei*» and the integration of its competencies into the offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The second is the survey regarding the implementation of the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* recently conducted by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The reasons for both events are not immediately evident. Although we are told that they are simply routine administrative acts to be accepted without any special concern, it is not unreasonable to wonder how they will be helpful in safeguarding and promoting the important direction given to the universal Church by the Motu Proprio.

We must pray very much for the office of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which has the competencies formerly belonging to the Pontifical Commission «*Ecclesia Dei*», and for the superiors of the Congregation, who now deal immediately with the work of the office in question. At the same time, we must do all that we can to keep the office and, therefore, the superiors, informed regarding all of the good which redounds to the Church through the regular celebration of the Sacraments and sacramentals, according to the *Usus Antiquior*. At the same time, conscious of our sacred rights and duties as members of the faithful, we must, as necessary, insist upon the application of the provisions of the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum*, together with the Instruction, *Universae Ecclesiae*, on the Application of the Apostolic Letter *Summorum Pontificum* of His Holiness Benedict XVI Given Motu Proprio, given by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on April 30, 2011. In this context, I express deepest gratitude to the *Capo Ufficio* and members of the staff of the office of the Congregation

for the Doctrine of the Faith which has assumed the competencies of the former Pontifical Commission «*Ecclesia Dei*».

If necessary, the discipline of the Church provides for hierarchical and administrative recourse, so that the provisions of the Motu Proprio and of the Instruction are applied, in accord with justice. Charity cannot be served in the Church, if the fundamental requirements of justice are not observed. The faithful rightly lose confidence in the charity of their pastors, if their pastors do not even do what is just in their regard. Following the *regula iuris* (the rule of law) is not legalism; it is rather the secure foundation upon which the good order of the Church depends. The practice of justice is the condition of the possibility for all of the pure and generous acts of charity in the Church.

Regarding the survey, it is important that the many blessings which have come to the Church through the application of *Summorum Pontificum* be made known to pastoral authorities, so that those blessings are reflected in the results of the survey. But, beyond the immediate scope of the present survey, it is important to make these same blessings known through Catholic newspapers and journals, and through the social media. In this regard, I wish to commend once again the excellent work of Paix Liturgique, especially the publications of Les Dossiers d'Oremus, which provide, in several languages, surveys of the blessings which the Motu Proprio has brought to seven countries of Europe.5 Similar studies are underway for countries in Africa, America, and Asia.

In the same way, it is important to continue strongly the *Summorum Pontificum* apostolates in various countries and to make the sacrifices necessary to fulfill the requests of an ever growing number of the faithful for regular access to the *Usus Antiquior*. I commend the work of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life which are dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the classical liturgy. At the same time, I commend the work of so many lay faithful who dedicate themselves to these apostolates. I cannot fail to mention the work of associations of the faithful, for example, the International Federation Una Voce (Foederatio Internationalis Una Voce), Pro Missa Tridentina in Germany, and the Latin Society of England and Wales. Of course, above all, a deep debt of gratitude is owed to the Bishops who are striving steadfastly to provide for the regular celebration of the Sacred Liturgy according to the *Usus Antiquior* in the various parts of their dioceses.

In carrying forward the work of safeguarding and promoting the *Usus Antiquior* of the Roman Rite, it is important to study frequently the text of the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* and the Letter to the Bishops, which accompanied it.6 In studying the mind of Pope Benedict XVI, in promulgating *Summorum Pontificum*, we should be conscious that many in the Church have little appreciation of the *Usus Antiquior* because they have not been introduced to it and have not had experience of it. I commend all of the efforts to make the richness of the classical liturgy known in the whole Church, which surely was one of the ends which Pope Benedict XVI had in mind with the legislation contained in the Motu Proprio.

Also, I commend the efforts to produce again for the faithful beautiful hand missals and books of prayers and devotions, according to the *Usus Antiquior*. Recently, I was pleased to write the forward for a new hand missal for little children, especially at the time of First Holy Communion, published by Verlagsbuchhandlung Sabat in Bayreuth, Germany.7 Both the text, written by the monks of the Benedictine Abbey at Fontgombault, and the illustrations, created by Joëlle d'Abbadie, a French woman gifted in graphic arts, are outstanding. All such publications are a manifestation of how much the *Usus Antiquior* continues to be alive in the Church.

As the title of the Motu Proprio indicates, the legislation it contains is in continuity with the constant concern of the Roman Pontiffs to provide as fully as possible for the worthy offering of Sacred Worship in the Church. Pope Benedict XVI calls to mind, in particular, two Roman Pontiffs, Pope Saint Gregory the Great and Pope Saint Pius V, who were exemplary in the care for the Sacred Liturgy, which is inherent to the office of the Vicar of Christ on earth. Here, it must be observed that the Sacred Liturgy, by its very nature, receives its direction and care from the Roman Pontiff.

In the second paragraph of the Motu Proprio, Pope Benedict XVI cites no. 397 of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, in its Third Edition since the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council:

> [E]ach particular Church must concur with the universal Church, not only as regards the doctrine of the faith and the sacramental signs, but also as regards the usages universally accepted by uninterrupted apostolic tradition, which must be observed not only to avoid errors but also to transmit the integrity of the faith, because the Church's law of prayer corresponds to her law of faith.8

In the present time, in which there is frequent talk about the decentralization of the Church and the giving of more authority, even doctrinal authority, to Conferences of Bishops, it is important to insist that the discipline of the Sacred Liturgy belongs principally to the See of Peter.

It is important, too, to emphasize, in a particular way, the legislation contained in Article 1 of the Motu Proprio. First of all, the Motu Proprio affirms that, while the "Roman Missal promulgated by Paul VI is the ordinary expression of the 'Lex orandi' (Law of prayer) of the Catholic Church of the Latin rite," at the same time, "the Roman Missal promulgated by St Pius V and reissued by Blessed John XXIII is to be considered as an extraordinary expression of that same 'Lex orandi,' and must be given due honour for its venerable and ancient usage."9 It is clear that the use of the terms, ordinary and extraordinary, underline the particular

esteem to be shown for the *Usus Antiquior*, making it more readily available for all of the faithful.

Secondly, as Pope Benedict XVI makes clear in his Letter to the Bishops on the occasion of the publication of the Motu Proprio, the *Usus Antiquior*, that is, the Rite of the Holy Mass and the other rites in effect in 1962 were "never juridically abrogated and, consequently, [were] always permitted."10 It is important to emphasize that the *Usus Antiquior* has always maintained its vitality. The Motu Proprio did not bring back to life a liturgical usage which had fallen into disuse but recognized a living form of the Sacred Liturgy, with its long history and stunning beauty, and desired to make it as accessible as possible. Pope Benedict XVI comments:

> Immediately after the Second Vatican Council it was presumed that requests for the use of the 1962 Missal would be limited to the older generation which had grown up with it, but in the meantime it has clearly been demonstrated that young persons too have discovered this liturgical form, felt its attraction and found in it a form of encounter with the Mystery of the Most Holy Eucharist, particularly suited to them. Thus the need has arisen for a clearer juridical regulation which had not been foreseen at the time of the 1988 Motu Proprio [*Ecclesia Dei adflicta*, 2 July 1988]. The present Norms are also meant to free Bishops from constantly having to evaluate anew how they are to respond to various situations.11

The work of making the history and beauty of the *Usus Antiquior* more widely known is ever at hand.

Lastly, the *Summorum Pontificum* apostolate must help the present generation understand and embrace what "earlier generations held as sacred."12 I recall a meeting with priests of a certain city in which I was making more available the *Usus Antiquior*, in accord with the Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei adflicta*, in the time before *Summorum Pontificum*. Most of the priests at the meeting were my age or older. They were so hostile to the ancient usage of the Sacred Liturgy. At the end of the discussion, which lasted more than two hours, I asked them: "We grew up with the *Usus Antiquior*, we loved to serve the Holy Mass, our priestly vocations were inspired by it. Why do you now hate it?" No one responded. The lack of a response, I believe, reflects the fundamentally irrational nature of a failure to appreciate the truth and beauty of the *Usus Antiquior*; there are no true arguments to justify the repudiation of the classical liturgy. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "[i]t behooves all of us to preserve the riches which have developed in the Church's faith and prayer, and to give them their proper place."13

These are just a few reflections inspired by today's meeting. It is my hope that they are of some inspiration and encouragement for you. The fact that our annual pilgrimage had to be cancelled must not discourage us or cause us to give way to fear. In fact, while the response to the Wuhan virus has led to the cancellation of our pilgrimage, the experience of the crisis which it has generated, in fact, has led many to rediscover the great beauty of the *Usus Antiquior*. As one priest said to me, the faithful, experiencing a great evil about which so little seems to be clear, seek God in His most powerful presence with us, that is, in the Sacred Liturgy. They have experienced an attraction to the more ancient usage because of its strong manifestation of the divine presence in our midst.

Thank you. May God bless you and all of your labors to safeguard and promote the more ancient form of the Roman Rite for the greater glory of God and for the salvation of countless souls.

Raymond Leo Card. BURKE

1 Mt 10, 16.

2 Cf. Mt 10, 17-22.

3 Jn 4, 24.

4 Mt 28, 20.

5 Cf. *Eleven surveys for the History. The Ancient Liturgy and the Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum as seen by the Catholic faithful of nine countries in the world. Brazil-Germany-France-Spain-Great Britain-Italy-Poland-Portugal-Switzerland* (Croissy, France: Oremus, 2017). Available also in French, German, Italian, and Spanish.

6 Cf. Benedictus PP. XVI, Epistula "Ad Episcopos Catholicae Ecclesiae Ritus Romani," 7 Iulii 2007, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 99 (2007) 795-799. [Hereafter: Epistula]. English translation: "Letter of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Bishops on the occasion of the publication of the Apostolic Letter 'Motu Proprio Data' *Summorum Pontificum* on the use of the Roman Liturgy prior to the reform of 1970," in Benedict XVI, Summorum Pontificum: *Motu Proprio on the Use of the Roman Liturgy Prior to the Reform 1970* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2007), pp. 20-27. [Hereafter: EpistulaEng].

7 *Der kleine Tarzisius. Illustriertes Messbuch für Kinder ab 4 Jahren für die außerordentliche Form des römischen Ritus* (Kulmbach, Germany: Verlagsbuchhandlung Sabat, 2020).

8 "… unaquaeque Ecclesia particularis concordare debet cum universali Ecclesia non solum quoad fidei doctrinam et signa sacramentalia, sed etiam quoad usus universaliter acceptos ab apostolica et continua traditione, qui servandi sunt non solum ut errores vitentur, verum etiam ad fidei integritatem tradendam, quia Ecclesiae lex orandi eius legi credenda respondet." Benedictus PP. XVI, Litterae Apostolicae "Motu Proprio" Datae *Summorum Pontificum*, "De usu extraordinario antiquae formae Ritus Romani," 7 Iulii 2007, Acta Apostolicae Sedis 99 (2007) 777. [Hereafter: SP]. English translation: Benedict XVI, *Summorum Pontificum: Motu Proprio on the Use of the Roman Liturgy Prior to the Reform 1970* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2007), p. 11. [Hereafter: SPEng].

9 "Missale Romanum a Paulo VI promulgatum ordinaria expressio 'Legis orandi' Ecclesiae catholicae ritus latini est. ... Missale autem Romanum a S. Pio V promulgatum et a B. Ioanne XXIII denuo editum habeatur uti extraordinaria expressio eiusdem 'Legis orandi' Ecclesiae et ob venerabilem et antiquum eius usum debito gaudeat honore." SP, 779, Art. 1. English translation: SPEng, p. 6, Art. 1.

10 "… mai giuridicamente abrogato e, di conseguenza, in linea di principio, restò sempre permesso." Epistula, 795. English translation: EpistulaEng, p. 21.

11 "Subito dopo il Concilio Vaticano II si poteva supporre che la richiesta dell'uso del Messale del 1962 si limitasse alla generazione più anziana che era cresciuta con esso, ma nel frattempo è emerso chiaramente che anche giovani persone scoprono questa forma liturgica, si sentono attirate da essa e vi trovano una forma, particolarmente appropriata per loro, di incontro con il Mistero della Santissima Eucaristia. Così è sorto un bisogno di un regolamento giuridico più chiaro che, al tempo del Motu Proprio del 1988, non era previdibile; queste Norme intendono anche liberare i Vescovi dal dover sempre di nuovo valutare come sia da rispondere alle diverse situazioni." Epistula, 796-797. English translation: EpistulaEng, p. 23.

11 "… per le generazioni anteriori era sacro." Epistula, 798. English translation: EpistulaEng, p. 26.

1212 "Ci fa bene a tutti conservare le ricchezze che sono cresciute nella fede e nella preghiera della Chiesa, e di dar loro il giusto posto." Epistula, 798. English translation: EpistulaEng, p. 26.

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