

Tridentine Community News

July 15, 2007

The Motu Proprio "Summorum Pontificum": Tridentine Mass is Fully Restored to the Life of the Church

To the great joy of fans of classical liturgy, our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, on July 7, 2007, issued a *Motu Proprio*, or papal order, named "Summorum Pontificum" (Of supreme Pontiffs), decreeing that any priest in the Latin Rite Church may, as of September 14, 2007, celebrate the Tridentine Latin Mass without requiring the approval of his bishop. A private Mass may be celebrated on his own initiative. A public Mass may be held if there is an unspecified number of petitioners. The Novus Ordo Mass will henceforth be known as the "Ordinary Usage" of the Roman Rite, while the Tridentine will be the "Extraordinary Usage". We couldn't agree more...the Tridentine Mass is indeed extraordinary!

This is a momentous, indeed historic, announcement in the history of the Roman Catholic Church. Widely predicted since the election of Benedict XVI, it is the best news this writer has ever heard from Rome, as it will surely have long-lasting benefits for the liturgical integrity of the Universal Church.

Our Holy Father made this decision in part because of his longstanding desire to restore a sense of the sacred to the liturgy, and in part because he views this as a precursor to reconciliation with the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX).

The implications of this decision are enormous. Windsor's Assumption, Detroit's St. Josaphat, or indeed any church, will be able to hold daily as well as Sunday Tridentine Masses. Weddings, funerals, baptisms, confessions, and the Sacrament of the Sick will be permissible according to the Traditional Rite. The question becomes now one of supply (available and willing priests) and demand (members of the faithful actually wanting, and committing to attend and help administer, such services). In short, those who prefer the Traditional Liturgy are finally being treated like any other Catholic.

Art, architecture, sacred music, vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and a move towards more reverent celebrations of the Ordinary Usage of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass are certain to flow from this turn of events.

Challenges Before Us

Those of us who love the Tridentine Mass now have a responsibility to see that it is celebrated reverently. Since the 1984 Indult, it has generally only been celebrated in communities that ardently desire the Mass and therefore likely care about proper rubrics. Now, priests and parishes might choose to celebrate it

with less preparation. That could usher in a new wave of (mostly unintentional) abuses. But that is a small price to pay for the graces that are sure to flow from having this historic Mass more widely available to the faithful. Many, if not most, Catholics have no idea what they are missing, and may very well choose to attend a Tridentine Mass if they are exposed to it, and if it is more conveniently available to them.

It is likely that in the short term, multiple, more humble Tridentine Masses may spring up across our region. At St. Josaphat and Assumption, we have an advantage in that we have the infrastructure and volunteers in place to provide properly celebrated Traditional Masses, accompanied by the music programs and materials (vestments, handouts, architecture) appropriate for the Classical Rite. Metro Detroit deserves at least

these two principal Tridentine Mass sites, where people can experience appropriate music and occasional elaborately celebrated Solemn High Masses. If we splinter into numerous small groups across the area, we are likely to have no more than humble, sparsely attended Low Masses. Just because a Mass is nearby does not mean that it is better than what we have now.

St. Josaphat's Parish Council and Assumption Church's Windsor Tridentine Mass Association are committed to making our present Mass sites the premier examples in our region of how the Tridentine Mass can and should be celebrated. This is where we have the best facilities, the most supportive pastors and councils, and where the Traditional Rites can flourish. By

the same token, we are happy to provide assistance and training to our sister parishes who wish to start their own Tridentine Masses.

Daily Mass Soon

At the July 1, 2007 St. Josaphat Town Hall Meeting, Fr. Borkowski approved a Monday evening Tridentine Mass to start by September. Monday was chosen because of an opening in Father's schedule. Evening was chosen by popular vote. We need you to support this Mass: If it is successful, more Daily Masses may be scheduled. The time will be announced soon.

There is also a possibility of a weekday Mass in Windsor. If you would like one, please see Fr. Hrytsyk after Mass and specify what day(s) and time work best for you. Ideally, we would start with a day other than Monday, so that Assumption and St. Josaphat's schedules could complement one another.

Next week: Analysis of the Motu Proprio's contents.

Questions? Comments? Ideas for a future column? Please e-mail tridnews@stjosaphatchurch.org with your thoughts.

