

(The following is an adaptation of an annual presentation made to high school sophomores from 2003 until 2011. These were students (all male) at a Jesuit school in St. Louis, Missouri. As part of a “Sacraments” theology course, they were required to attend a Traditional Latin Mass and write a two-page paper on the experience. After the papers were turned in, I usually had the privilege to read them before I gave the presentation below. The actual presentation used “reveals” to keep the students focused on what I was addressing at the moment. *Italicized parenthetical text like this represents commentary that is not part of the presentation.* For ease of viewing the presentation has been broken down into five parts. **Highlighted text** represents extended quotes from the documents identified. All emphasis is mine.)

Questions? help@extraordinaryform.org

PART 1

Why the Traditional Latin Mass?

The Past (as Prologue)
 Benedict XVI and the Mass
 Language and Translation
 Common Objections

When we speak of the Traditional Latin Mass, we are referring to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962, promulgated by Pope St. John XXIII. Benedict XVI labeled it “The Extraordinary Form of the Latin Rite.”

When we speak of the *Novus Ordo*, we are referring to the Mass of Paul VI, promulgated in November of 1969. Benedict XVI labeled it “The Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite.”

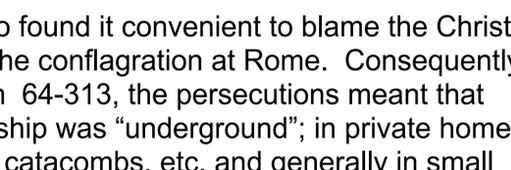
The Traditional Latin Mass (TLM) is experiencing a rebirth after a long time in the “refrigerator” where it was consigned in 1970. This presentation will briefly review liturgical history in order to understand how the TLM got into the “refrigerator” in the first place, and the events leading up to its resurrection from the ashes of history.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI is a renowned liturgist in his own right and we will see how his thinking about the TLM developed over time.

The *Novus Ordo Missae* in the vernacular necessitates translation. We will examine some of the pitfalls involved, and demonstrate a serious textual problem in it.

Finally, we will address common objections to the TLM in an effort to dispel them.

The Past: Liturgical Timeline (1)



The sacrifice that we celebrate and commemorate in every Mass occurred when our Lord gave His life for us on Calvary.

Nero found it convenient to blame the Christians for the conflagration at Rome. Consequently, from 64-313, the persecutions meant that worship was “underground”; in private homes, in the catacombs, etc. and generally in small groups. It was primarily in Greek.

The Edict of Milan ended the persecutions and that meant that worship could be public, i.e. “liturgy,” and open to large gatherings of the faithful.

After Theodosius made Christianity the religion of the empire late in the same century, the liturgy had to be in Latin, the official language of the empire. It developed essentially (but not completely) into the Mass of the 1962 Roman Missal by the time of Gregory I (the Great, 590-604), the advocate of the chant that has come to bear his name.

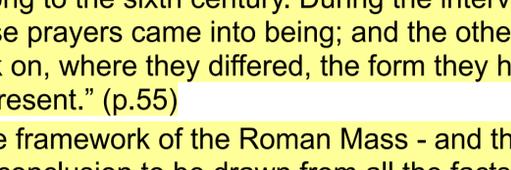
From the Edict of Milan:
 “When I, Constantine Augustus, as well as I, Licinius Augustus, fortunately met near Mediolanurn (Milan), and were considering everything that pertained to the public welfare and security, we thought, among other things which we saw would be for the good of many, those regulations pertaining to the reverence of the Divinity ought certainly to be made first, so that we might grant to the Christians and others full authority to observe that religion which each preferred; whence any Divinity whatsoever in the seat of the heavens may be propitious and kindly disposed to us and all who are placed under our rule.”

From The Mass of the Roman Rite by Joseph Jungmann, S.J.
 “...we must accept this as certain: the core of our Mass canon, from the *Quam oblationem* on, including the sacrificial prayer after the consecration, was already in existence by the end of the fourth century.” (p.53)

“Only the following parts of our Roman canon could not be found at the beginning of the fifth century:
Communicantes, Hanc igitur, and after the Consecration, *Memento etiam*, and *Nobis quoque*. However, these formulas too, are to be found in the oldest extant manuscripts of the Roman canon, in a form that must at all events belong to the sixth century. During the interval all these prayers came into being; and the others took on, where they differed, the form they have at present.” (p.55)

“The framework of the Roman Mass - and this is the conclusion to be drawn from all the facts we have established - must therefore have been essentially determined by the turn of the fifth century, at least as regards the public utterance of prescribed prayers by the priest. Later on, in the course of our study of various Mass elements, we will encounter only a few modifications by Gregory the Great (590-604) - chiefly in the *Kyrie, Pater Noster*, preface, and *Hanc igitur*; but these are for the most part a return to older simpler forms.” (p.58)

The Past: Liturgical Timeline (2)



For nearly 1000 years, there was only the TLM. Then, the heretic, Luther, determined that he alone knew what books should be in the Bible and how God should be worshiped.

A few years later, because the Pope would not annul his marriage, Henry VIII forced England into the Protestant camp.

As a result of the onslaught against the faith from the Protestant Reformation, the Council of Trent was convened. It had to identify what was “Catholic” and what was not (Protestant heresy). The Council requested that the Pope, Pius V, issue a normative statement about the Mass.

This was the papal Bull Quo Primum Tempore. Note the respect for tradition shown in the text that follows.

From Quo Primum Tempore:
 “From the very first, upon our elevation to the chief Apostleship, We gladly turned our mind and energies and directed all our thoughts to those matters which concerned the preservation of a pure liturgy, and We strove with God’s help, by every means in our power, to accomplish this purpose....This new rite alone is to be used unless approval of the practice of saying Mass differently was given at the very time of the institution and confirmation of the church by Apostolic See at least 200 years ago, or unless there has prevailed a custom of a similar kind which has been continuously followed for a period of not less than 200 years, in which most cases We in no wise rescind their above-mentioned prerogative or custom. However, if this Missal, which we have seen fit to publish, be more agreeable to these latter, We grant them permission to celebrate Mass according to its rite, provided they have the consent of their bishop or prelate or of their whole Chapter, everything else to the contrary notwithstanding.”

Since that time (1570) the Mass has often been erroneously labeled the “Tridentine Mass” because of this connection to the Council of Trent. It is imperative to recall that Pius V did not change the Mass, he only codified it against the threat of Protestantism. The 1962 edition of the *Missale Romanum* is the last edition with the Latin “Mass of the Ages.” Pope John XXIII convened the second Vatican Council and its first document was Sacrosanctum Concilium, the “Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.” As we shall see when we examine the few paragraphs relevant to the Mass in this text, it has had the unintended consequences of making Latin and Gregorian Chant very rare exceptions in the Mass.

The Past: 12/4/1963

Vatican Council II approves Sacrosanctum Concilium – the only Council document on the liturgy.
 (emphasis mine):

Article 36. (a “norm”)
 The use of the Latin language, with due respect to particular law, is to be preserved in the Latin rites. But since the use of the vernacular, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments, or in other parts of the liturgy, may frequently be of great advantage to the people, a wider use may be made of it, especially in readings, directives and in some prayers and chants.

This was the first document produced by VCII. What does “with due respect to particular law”

mean? It is not explained in the document. In practice, it came to mean that the local bishop could do whatever he wanted to do. The language used is (deliberately?) loose, unspecific.

Do you see anything here you could label a “rule”?

Has Latin been “preserved” in the *Novus Ordo* ?

The Past: 12/4/1963

Article 54. (a “decree”)

A suitable place may be allotted to the vernacular in Masses which are celebrated with the people, especially in the readings and “the common prayer,” and also, as local conditions may warrant, in those parts which pertain to the people, according to the **rules laid down in Article 36** of this Constitution. Nevertheless care must be taken to ensure that the faithful may also be able to say or sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them.

(Note: “the common prayer” are the petitions concluded by “We pray to the Lord.”)

Again, the “loophole” language: “suitable,” “may,” “as local conditions may warrant.” Is there an implication here that private Masses are to remain in Latin? Are there any real “rules” in Article 36 that we just examined?

One thing is certain. The only firm statement in this “decree” has been ignored: How many attendees of the *Novus Ordo* liturgy can “say or sing together in Latin” anything at all?

The Past: 12/4/1963

Article 116. (a “decree”)

The Church recognizes Gregorian chant as being specially suited to the Roman liturgy. Therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services

What does “other things being equal” mean? It is never explained.

How many Catholic churches give “pride of place in liturgical services” to Gregorian chant?

Based on this document from 1963, the Mass of over 15 centuries, the Mass of nearly all the saints, the Mass that subdued the barbarians when the Roman legions failed, the Mass that spread Catholicism throughout the world, would be banned in 1970.

The Past: 1965-70

A Committee on the Liturgy, led by Annibale Bugnini (who had been dismissed in 1962 by Blessed John XXIII before the Council, and then appointed after the Council in 1966 by Paul VI), built the new Mass and changed all the readings. How did he approach his task?

“We must strip from our Catholic prayers and from the Catholic liturgy everything which can be the shadow of a stumbling block for our separated brethren, that is, for the Protestants.”

Annibale Bugnini, *L'Osservatore Romano*, 3/19/1965

“Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes - our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Democracy tells us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our groom. Tradition asks us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our father.”

G.K.Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*

In 1960 Father Bugnini was appointed Secretary to the Preparatory Commission for the Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council. In 1962 he was dismissed as Secretary of the Commission and from his seat at Lateran University. (Bugnini was the only secretary of a preparatory commission who was not confirmed as secretary of the actual conciliar commission of VC II. Cardinals Lercaro and Bea intervened with Pope St. John XXIII on his behalf, without success.) After the death of Pope John, Paul VI rehired Bugnini in 1966 (after the Council), to hold the key position of Secretary for the Liturgy Committee charged with implementing *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Seven years later, in January, 1976, Paul VI sent him to Tehran as Papal Nuncio. This backwater post was not a reward for his services!

The changes wrought by Bugnini led him to boast in 1974 that the reform of the liturgy had been “**a major conquest of the Catholic Church**”. Another *peritus* at the Council and a proponent of the postconciliar revolution, Father Joseph Gelineau, SJ, said of the reform (from *Demain la liturgie*, 1976): “**To tell the truth it is a different liturgy of the Mass. This needs to be said without ambiguity: the Roman Rite as we knew it no longer exists. It has been destroyed.**”

Gilbert Keith Chesterton was a convert to Catholicism and one of its greatest apologists. In modern times, nearly every generation seems to equate its larger warehouse of facts and data to greater intelligence. The pride of man continually rears its ugly head.

What if the Pope issued this papal directive tomorrow:

“Effective the First Sunday of Advent, I decree that, because of widespread abuses,

the current Ordinary Form (*Novus Ordo*)

of the Mass of the Latin rite

is to be replaced throughout the world with

the Extraordinary Form

(Traditional Latin Mass)

of the same rite.”

???

Consider how would you feel? Indifferent? Elated? Irritated? ...

What action(s), if any, would you take?

If you substitute “Traditional Latin Mass” for “Ordinary Form” and *Novus Ordo Missae* for “Extraordinary Form” and date it 1969, you have what Paul VI decreed on Holy Thursday, 1969, in his Apostolic Constitution Promulgation Of The Roman Missal Revised By Decree Of The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. In his

General Audience – 11/26/69 – he would assert that the Council made him do it (not because there were widespread abuses):

“**As We said on another occasion, we shall do well to take into account the motives for this grave change. The first is obedience to the Council.**”

I should also note (as someone who lived through this revolution) - the people in the pews were not protesting on Sundays either to change the Mass or to eliminate Latin. This so-called “reform” was imposed from above, it did not originate with the average Catholic.

As a consequence, two generations of Catholics were deprived of their Catholic heritage - the Traditional Latin Mass. For forty years we wandered in a liturgical wilderness, but unlike the Hebrews who knew they were lost in the desert, and who were searching for the promised land, few bishops had the courage to say to us that we had lost our liturgical way. Two generations of Catholics were exposed to nothing else and think the present disintegrated state of the liturgy is “normal.”

(The next section looks at the period from 1970, when the Traditional Latin Mass was banned, until 2007, when Pope Benedict XVI emancipated it.)