



Office of the Archbishop

## The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

Post Office Box 29260, Washington, DC 20017-0260

Friday 22 July, 2022

Dear Brother Priests,

On July 16, 2021, Pope Francis promulgated *Traditionis Custodes*, an apostolic letter issued *motu proprio* on the use of the Roman Liturgy prior to the reform of 1970. On that same day, I wrote that I would prayerfully reflect on this apostolic letter and carefully consider how the Holy Father's intentions would be realized in our Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington. To that end, I asked a small working group to assist me with this task. In the meantime, I granted the faculty to those who celebrate the Mass using the liturgical books issued before 1970 to continue doing so until further guidance could be developed.

On December 18, 2021, the then-Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments issued additional direction on the implementation of *Traditionis Custodes*. During this time, the Archdiocese of Washington was in the midst of its listening sessions for the Synod on Synodality. It was determined that these sessions would also invite input from the faithful who celebrate the Mass according to the liturgical books issued prior to 1970. These Synod listening sessions concluded on May 14, 2022.

During these intervening months, I have learned much about the history of the celebration of the pre-1970 Roman Missal in our Archdiocese. As far back as 1984, with the publication of *Quattuor abhinc annos* by the Congregation for Divine Worship, a small group of the faithful were given permission by then-Archbishop James Hickey to offer the Mass according to the 1962 Roman Missal. When Saint Pope John Paul II issued *Ecclesia Dei*, Cardinal Hickey followed the intention of the Holy Father by designating several locations in the Archdiocese where the Mass according to the 1962 Roman Missal could be celebrated. Again in 2007, with Pope Benedict XVI's publication of *Summorum Pontificum*, the Archdiocese of Washington followed the direction of the Holy Father and the number of locations where the Mass according to the 1962 Roman Missal was celebrated (as well as the sacraments according to the liturgical books prior to 1970) increased throughout the archdiocese.

In the time I have served as Archbishop of Washington, I have discovered that the majority of the faithful who participate in these liturgical celebrations in the Archdiocese of Washington are sincere, faith-filled and well-meaning. Likewise, the majority of priests who celebrate these liturgies are doing their very best to respond pastorally to the needs of the faithful.

As my predecessors in the Archdiocese of Washington have followed the intentions of the Holy Father in regards to the celebration of the Mass according to the 1962 Roman Missal, I, too, desire to follow the path most recently traced out for us by Pope Francis. In reflecting on *Traditionis Custodes* and the letter the Holy Father wrote accompanying this *motu proprio*, and on his recent apostolic letter, *Desiderio Desideravi*, on the liturgical formation of the People of God, it is clear that the Holy Father's sincere intention is to bring about greater unity in the Church through the celebration of the Mass and sacraments according to the 1970 Roman Missal of Pope Paul VI, which was the fruit of the renewal in the liturgy that the Second Vatican Council called for. However, it is also my desire, following the intention of Pope Francis, to ensure that those who celebrate the Mass according to the 1962 Missal continue to be provided for in our archdiocese, a plea that was expressed in our Synod listening sessions

Therefore, the enclosed decree contains the norms implementing *Traditionis Custodes*, effective 21 September, 2022 in The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington.

I have asked The Reverend Monsignor Charles Pope, V.F., to act as my delegate in the pastoral care of these communities. I am profoundly grateful for Monsignor Pope's willingness to serve in this capacity.

As we begin to implement *Traditionis Custodes* and these norms, please be assured of my constant prayers for the faithful who share a deep devotion to the celebration of the Mass according to the 1962 Missal. As St. Paul counseled the Roman Church in his letter, "May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rm. 15: 5-6).

With every sentiment of esteem, I am

Fraternally yours in Christ,



✠ Wilton Cardinal Gregory,  
*Archbishop of Washington*



WILTON CARDINAL GREGORY  
BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE APOSTOLIC SEE  
ARCHBISHOP OF WASHINGTON

### DECREE

I hereby promulgate the Liturgical Norms for the Implementation of the *motu proprio Traditionis Custodes* within The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington.

These norms come into effect on 21 September 2022. They will be reviewed after three years.

When these Norms come into effect, they will replace any contrary provisions of Chapter 14 of the Liturgical Norms and Policies promulgated in 2010 by my predecessor, His Eminence, Donald Cardinal Wuerl.

Anything else to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington on 22 July 2022, the feast of Saint Mary Magdalene.

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✠ Wilton Cardinal Gregory,  
*Archbishop of Washington*

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Terence J. Farrell  
Chancellor



# The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

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## *The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington Liturgical Norms for the Implementation of Traditionis Custodes*

“May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Preamble**

St Paul’s encouragement to the Roman community holds true today for our community in The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, and indeed for the Universal Church. On July 16, 2021, Pope Francis promulgated *Traditionis Custodes*, an apostolic letter issued *motu proprio*, as a means of encouragement and to bring harmony to the celebration of the Mass in the Roman Rite of our Catholic Church so that together we may with one accord glorify God.

*Traditionis Custodes* restored throughout the Roman Rite of the Church the celebration of the Mass according to the liturgical books promulgated by Saint Paul VI and Saint John Paul II, and declared that these reformed liturgical books guarantee the fidelity of the reform of the Second Vatican Council, as *Desiderio Desideravi* has affirmed.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 15: 5 - 6.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Francis, *Letter To The Bishops Of The Whole World, That Accompanies The Apostolic Letter Motu Proprio Data “Traditionis Custodes,”* 16 July 2021; accessible: [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2021/documents/20210716-lettera-vescovi-liturgia.html#\\_ftn28](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2021/documents/20210716-lettera-vescovi-liturgia.html#_ftn28).  
DD, Art. 6. Francis, apostolic letter *Desiderio Desideravi*, June 29, 2022: published online here: [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_letters/documents/20220629-lettera-ap-desiderio-desideravi.pdf](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/20220629-lettera-ap-desiderio-desideravi.pdf). Abbreviated as DD.

*Traditionis Custodes* reaffirms the theological and canonical principle that the diocesan bishop is the high priest, principal dispenser of the mysteries of God, and the director, promoter, and guardian of the entire liturgical life in the church entrusted to him.<sup>3</sup> Thus in *Traditionis Custodes*, Pope Francis has confirmed that the diocesan bishop is competent for the regulation and use of the Roman Missal of 1962 as an exceptional concession.<sup>4</sup>

A recommendation of the recent listening sessions in the Archdiocese of Washington for the Synod on Synodality called for pastoral outreach to and accompaniment of those who have a devotion to the Mass celebrated according to the Roman Missal of 1962. To this end, I have asked that the archdiocesan Offices of Liturgy, Ministerial Leadership, and Pastoral Ministry and Social Concerns assist pastors in accompanying our brothers and sisters who share that devotion. This assistance can take various forms, including but not limited to a pastoral implementation plan, personal pastoral visits, and catechetical resources that explain the Second Vatican Council's principles of liturgical renewal and the beauty of the reformed Mass, which includes increased use of Sacred Scripture and an updated liturgical calendar. Additionally, those devoted to the Mass celebrated according to the Roman Missal of 1962 can celebrate the reformed Mass using the approved rubrics, which include reverent movement and gestures, Gregorian chant, Latin, incense, and extended periods of silence.

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<sup>3</sup> CIC, c. 835 §1. *Codex Iuris Canonici auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1983). English translation: *The Code of Canon Law, Latin-English Edition: New English Translation* (Washington, D.C.: CLSA, 1988).

<sup>4</sup> TC, Art. 2. Francis, motu proprio *Traditionis Custodes*, July 12, 2017: published online here: [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu\\_proprio/documents/20210716-motu-proprio-traditionis-custodes.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/20210716-motu-proprio-traditionis-custodes.html). Abbreviated as TC.

The norms set forth below implement the *motu proprio Traditionis Custodes* within The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington. Furthermore, the norms set forth take into account the provisions of the *Responsa ad Dubia* issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments.<sup>5</sup> Previous norms, instructions, permissions and customs that do not conform to the provisions of *Traditionis Custodes* and the norms set forth below are abrogated. These norms are binding in The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington on September 21, 2022, the feast day of our diocesan patron, St. Matthew the Apostle.

### **Norms**

1. As of September 21, 2022, all priests, deacons and instituted ministers need to request and receive permission from the Archbishop of Washington to celebrate the Eucharist using the Roman Missal of 1962, either privately or publicly, in the territory of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington. This request is to be in writing.

Those making such a request in writing must possess the qualities listed in *Traditionis Custodes* to ensure the proper and worthy celebration of the Eucharist according to *Missale Romanum*. Namely, the ministers “should be suited for this responsibility, skilled in the use of the *Missale Romanum* antecedent to the reform of 1970, possess a knowledge of the Latin language sufficient for a thorough comprehension of the rubrics and liturgical texts and

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<sup>5</sup> On June 5, 2022, the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium* reorganizing the Roman curia went into effect. Therefore, this document will refer to the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments when discussing documents issued before June 5, 2022, and will refer to the Dicastery for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments when discussing documents or actions that occur after June 5, 2022.

be animated by a lively pastoral charity and by a sense of ecclesial communion.”<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, clergy and instituted ministers making this request must also explicitly affirm in writing, “the validity and legitimacy of the liturgical reform, dictated by the Second Vatican Council and the Magisterium of the Supreme Pontiffs,”<sup>7</sup> and demonstrate an appreciation “of the value of concelebration, particularly at the Chrism Mass,”<sup>8</sup> all the while faithfully observing the other requirements of these norms.

2. When a priest is preparing the written request asking for permission to celebrate the Eucharist using the Roman Missal of 1962, either privately or publicly, he is to note the frequency and location of such celebrations, along with a statement of agreement to abide by the norms set forth in this document.

The *Responsa ad Dubia* states that “it is not possible to grant bination on the grounds that there is no ‘just cause’ or ‘pastoral necessity’” for weekdays,<sup>9</sup> as well as Sundays. However, there may be circumstances where for a just cause the Archbishop of Washington may grant the favor of bination on Sundays.

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<sup>6</sup> TC, Art. 3, § 4.

<sup>7</sup> TC, Art. 3, § 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Responsa ad dubia*. Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Responsa ad dubia on Certain Provisions of the Apostolic Letter Traditionis Custodes issued motu proprio by the Supreme Pontiff Francis*, December 4, 2021: published online here: [https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc\\_con\\_ccdds\\_doc\\_202112\\_04\\_responsa-ad-dubia-traditionis-custodes\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_202112_04_responsa-ad-dubia-traditionis-custodes_en.html).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

3. In accordance with *Traditionis Custodes*, the Archbishop of Washington will appoint a priest to serve as a delegate of the archbishop who will be entrusted to celebrate the Eucharist using the Roman Missal of 1962 and who will assist with the pastoral care of the faithful who wish to celebrate the Eucharist using the Roman Missal of 1962.<sup>10</sup> This delegate will also serve as a moderator of all the clergy and instituted ministers who have received permission to celebrate the Eucharist using the Roman Missal of 1962 to ensure that provisions of *Traditionis Custodes*, the *Responsa ad dubia*, and these norms are followed.
4. The celebration of the Mass according to the 1962 Roman Missal will occur only on Sundays in non-parochial churches distributed geographically throughout the Archdiocese. The three non-parochial churches designated as locations where the celebration of the Mass according to the 1962 Roman Missal may take place on Sundays are:
  - 1) The Chapel at Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Forest Glen, Maryland;
  - 2) The Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, Washington, D.C.; and
  - 3) The mission church of Saint Dominic, Aquasco, Maryland.
5. All celebrations of the liturgies on Christmas, the Triduum, Easter Sunday, and Pentecost Sunday in the Archdiocese of Washington are to use exclusively the liturgical books promulgated by Saint Paul VI and Saint John Paul II, either in the vernacular or in Latin. If the Mass according to the liturgical books promulgated by Saint Paul VI and Saint John Paul II is celebrated in Latin, then the faithful are to be provided the means to participate in the responses. In

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<sup>10</sup> TC, Art. 3, § 4.



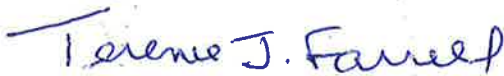
addition, any Mass celebrated according to the liturgical books promulgated by Saint Paul VI and Saint John Paul II, either in the vernacular or in Latin will follow the prescribed rubric for “*versus populum*,” unless permission is granted otherwise by the Archbishop of Washington. The intention of these requirements is to foster and make manifest the unity of this local Church, as well as to provide all Catholics in the Archdiocese an opportunity to offer a concrete manifestation of the acceptance of the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and its liturgical books.

6. If permission is granted to celebrate the Eucharist according to the Roman Missal of 1962, the Scripture readings must be proclaimed in the vernacular, using the official translation recognized by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the homily is to reflect the norms and directions for preaching indicated by the Second Vatican Council and post-conciliar documents.
7. All other sacraments are to be celebrated using the liturgical books promulgated by Saint Paul VI and Saint John Paul II. These rites may be celebrated in Latin.
8. These norms will be reviewed in three years.

*From the Office of the Archbishop of Washington, July 22, 2022, the feast of St. Mary Magdalene.*



✠ Wilton Cardinal Gregory,  
Archbishop of Washington



Mr. Terence J. Farrell  
Chancellor