SUMMORUM PONTIFICUM

by Fr. Richard Tomlinson

14 September 2017

Fr. West, Fr. Smith, Fr. Tebalt,
my fellow clergy,
distinguished guests and friends,
it is with great joy that I welcome you
to this celebration of the tenth anniversary
of the implementation of Pope Benedict XVI's *motu proprio*,
Summorum Pontificum.

A *moto proprio* is a type of papal legislation,
rather like a Presidential executive order.
And like encyclicals and other Vatican documents,
a *moto proprio* is often called after its first words.

In this case, *Summorum Pontificum* refers
to "the concern of the Supreme Pontiffs…
for the worthy worship of the Divine Majesty…
so that the faith may be handed on in its integrity,
since the Church's rule of prayer (*lex orandi*)
corresponds to her rule of faith (*lex credendi*)."

In this document, Pope Benedict stated
that there are two usages of the Roman rite:

the Extraordinary Form, or traditional Latin Mass,
based on the 1570 Missal of St. Pius V
and most recently revised in 1962 by Pope John XXIII,
and the Ordinary Form,
based on 1970 Missal of Pope Paul VI.

The traditional Latin Mass, Benedict declared,
was never abrogated, and so may be lawfully celebrated
by any priest of the Latin rite
with no special permission
from the Apostolic See or his own Ordinary.

Summorum Pontificum thus clarified
the legal status of the traditional Latin Mass,
defined the specific conditions in which it may be offered,
and encouraged its more frequent celebration.

It was the result of Pope Benedict's
meticulous scholarship and profound spirituality,
and it has had a deep and wide-ranging
impact on the Church.

And so all of us who love the traditional Latin Mass
mark this tenth anniversary with joy and thanksgiving.

But my joy on this occasion
is mixed with sadness

that Monsignor Lawrence McInerny,
the Pastor of Stella Maris on Sullivan's Island,
who was scheduled to preach this evening,
is unableto be here because of damage to his church
from hurricane Irma.

Monsignor McInerny is the spiritual father
of the recovery of the Extraordinary Form
in the Diocese of Charleston,
and all of the priests present here on the altar
owe him an immense debt of gratitude
for helping us to learn the traditional Latin Mass
and offering us a place to celebrate it.

Monsignor McInerny grew up with the Latin Mass
in the 1950's and early 1960's,
but, like most priests of the post Vatican II generation,
he did not learn it in seminary
and did not offer it in the early years of his priesthood.

As many of you know,
those were difficult years liturgically,
both for priests and laity.

We can certainly be grateful
to Archbishop Lefebvre and the Society of St. Pius X,
whatever their theological and canonical difficulties,

for their firm witness to the beauty and tradition
of the traditional Latin Mass.

And we remember that in 1984,
Pope John Paul II granted an indult
to priests who wished to celebrate
the traditional Mass.

And in 1988, the Pope recognized
the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter,
a religious institute dedicated to the traditional Mass,
which has done so much to encourage
the celebration of the Mass in our Diocese.

And in that same year, John Paul II
also asked for a generous response
from bishops to those attached to the ancient liturgy.

That request was largely ignored—
but not totally.

After he became pastor of Stella Maris in 1995,
Msgr. McInerny became interested in the Latin Mass,
both as means of deepening his own priestly spirituality,

and also for pastoral reasons: as a way of fostering
a greater sense of reverence and awe at Mass,

of greater respect for the Eucharist,
and of kindling a deeper enthusiasm for the practice of the faith
and of works of charity in his congregation.
As a matter of fact,
Monsignor McInerny sent me a poem
he was going to read tonight,
which describes the state of the church
and the liturgy in the period after Vatican II
and before *Summorum Pontificum*.

I'd like to share it with you.
It's called,

THE CHURCH UPDATED OR A TRADITIONALIST'S LAMENT

Latin's gone
Peace is too
Singin' and shoutin'
From every pew.

Altar's turned 'round
Priest is too
Commentator's yellin'
"Page twenty-two!"

Communion rail's a-goin
Stand up straight!

Kneeling suddenly went out of date.

Processions are formin' in every aisle
Salvation's organized:
Single file.

Rosary's out
Psalms are in
Hardly ever hear a word against sin.

Listen to the Lector
Hear how he reads
Please stop rattlin'
Them rosary beads!

Father's lookin' puzzled
Doesn't know his part
Used to know the whole deal
In Latin by heart.

I hope that all the changes
Are just about done,
And they don't drop Bingo
Before I've won!

Well, in 2001, with the permission of Bishop Baker,
Msgr. McInerny began very slowly at first

by offering the Latin Mass once a month
and providing instruction to the people
in its rubrics and spirituality.
He told me that,
when he first went to Bishop Baker for the Indult,
that Bishop said that he had gotten more correspondence
about the Latin Mass than any other subject.

“I am sure,” Msgr. McInerny said,
“that the correspondence
was all organized in the Upstate of the Diocese
by the Homeschooling community,
with Brian Mershon as the ‘main culprit.’”

Bishop Baker said that he wanted the Latin Mass
to be celebrated once a month in 3 locations in the Diocese:
the coast, the midlands and the piedmont.

That's how the Mass got started at Stella Maris.
And after it got going for a while,
Msgr. McInerny decided to switched a to weekly celebration
in order to build a more stable community.

Stella Maris was the first diocesan parish
in the Carolinas to offer the traditional Mass,
and it became a center of inspiration
and instruction to priests who were interested

in learning how to celebrate it.

A few years later,
another Latin Mass community
began to form in the Diocese,
here in Greenville,
spearheaded by the efforts
of Brian Mershon (again) and Tuck McAffee.

It eventually found a home
here at Prince of Prince,
again with the permission of Bishop Baker,
and under the sponsorship
of Father, later Monsignor, Steve Brovey.

I remember, when I came to the Diocese in 2006,
the Latin Mass was established in Greenville
but its status was still somewhat unsettled.

But all of that began to change dramatically
the following year with the promulgation
of *Summorum Pontificum*.

Suddenly, priests were able to celebrate
the traditional Latin Mass more freely,
laypeople were able to experience the beauty
of the ancient liturgy, and a new sense

of vitality and enthusiasm was felt at worship
by young and old alike.

In his Apostolic Letter
accompanying the *motu proprio*,
Pope Benedict wrote:

"I would like to draw attention to the fact
that the 1962 Missal was never juridically abrogated
and, consequently, in principle, was always permitted…

"…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…

"…the fear was [also] expressed…
that the possibility of a wider use of the 1962 Missal
would lead to disarray or even divisions within parish communities.

"This fear also strikes me as quite unfounded.
The use of the old Missal presupposes
a certain degree of liturgical formation
and some knowledge of the Latin language;

neither of these is found very often…

…the two Forms of the usage of the Roman Rite
can be mutually enriching…

“It is a matter of coming to an interior reconciliation
in the heart of the Church. Looking back over the past,
to the divisions which in the course of the centuries
have rent the Body of Christ, one continually has the impression that,
at critical moments when divisions were coming about,
not enough was done by the Church’s leaders to maintain
or regain reconciliation and unity…

“Let us generously open our hearts and make room
for everything that the faith itself allows.

“There is no contradiction between the two editions of the Roman Missal.
In the history of the liturgy there is growth and progress,
but no rupture.
What earlier generations held as sacred,
remains sacred and great for us too,
and it cannot be all of a sudden entirely forbidden
or even considered harmful.

“It 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.”

Some aspects of Pope Benedict's program
of liturgical renovation, such as
"the hermeneutic of continuity" between
the pre and post Vatican II liturgies
and the "reform of the reform"
have produced controversy among scholars.

But there is, I think, no doubt
that the mutual enrichment which the Pope envisioned
between the Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms
of the Roman rite,
has in fact taken place
in many of the parishes and other communities
which celebrate both forms of the Mass.

For example, at both Stella Maris and Prince of Peace,
all Masses, in the Ordinary as well as in the Extraordinary Form,
are celebrated *ad orientem*; that is, with the priest and the people
praying in the same direction.

Other examples of mutual enrichment would be
the increased interest in sacred music,
particularly chant and polyphony;
the new translation of the Roman Missal in 2011;
and the establishment of the Anglican Ordinariates,
with their Book of Divine Worship.

Let me conclude with a few words from Cardinal Robert Sarah.
Cardinal Sarah is the former Archbishop of Conakry in Guinea,
an accomplished Biblical scholar, and the current Prefect
of the Congregation for Divine Worship.

His recent books, *God or Nothing* and *The Power of Silence*,
show a love of the liturgy and a depth of spirituality
worthy of Pope Benedict himself.

In an address at a conference in Germany earlier this year
to commemorate the tenth anniversary of *Summorum Pontificum*,
Cardinal Sarah wrote:
"In…a spirit of faith and profound communion with Christ's obedience on the cross, I humbly ask you to apply *Summorum Pontificum* very carefully; not as a negative, backward measure that looks toward the past, or as something that builds walls and creates a ghetto, but as an important and real contribution to the present and future liturgical life of the Church, and also to the liturgical movement of our era, from which more and more people, and particularly young people, are drawing so many things that are true, good and beautiful."