

35. SC RITES (Consilium), **Declaration** *Da qualche tempo*, repudiating arbitrary liturgical innovations, 29 December 1966: AAS 59 (1967) 85–86; Not 3 (1967) 37–38 (Italian).

For some time now certain newspapers and magazines have been providing for their readers reports and pictures of liturgical ceremonies, especially celebrations of the eucharist, that are foreign to Catholic worship and quite unbelievable. “Family eucharistic meals” followed by dinner are celebrated in private homes; there are Masses with novel and improvised rites, vestments, and texts, sometimes with music of an altogether profane and worldly character, unworthy of a sacred service. These travesties of worship, springing from mere private initiative, tend inevitably to desacralize the liturgy, the purest expression of the worship the Church offers to God.

Appeal to pastoral renewal as a motive is completely ruled out; renewal develops in an orderly way, not haphazardly. All the practices in question are at odds with the letter and spirit of Vatican II’s Constitution on the Liturgy and harmful to the unity and dignity of the people of God.

Pope Paul VI said on 13 October of this year: “Diversity in language and newness in ritual are, it is true, factors that the desire for reform has introduced into liturgy. Nothing is to be adopted however that has not been duly approved by authority of the bishops, fully mindful of their office and obligations, and by this Apostolic See. Nothing should be allowed that is unworthy of divine worship, nothing that is obviously profane or unfit to express the inner, sacred power of prayer. Nothing odd or unusual is allowable, since such things, far from fostering devotion in the praying community, rather shock and upset it and impede the proper and rightful cultivation of a devotion faithful to tradition.”

While deploring the practices described and the attendant publicity, we urgently invite Ordinaries, both local and religious, to watch over the right application of the Constitution on the Liturgy. With kindness but firmness they should dissuade those who, whatever their good intentions, sponsor such exhibitions. Where these occur, Ordinaries should reprove the abuses, banning any experiment not authorized and guided by the hierarchy and not conducive to a reform in keeping with the mind of the Council, so that the noble work of renewal may develop without deviation and produce those results in the life of Christians that the Church expects.

We add the reminder that apart from those cases envisioned by liturgical law and therein precisely defined, celebration of Mass in private homes is unlawful.