

## "THE SECOND INSTRUCTION"

A Commentary by A. Bugnini

On the 7th of March, 1965, throughout the Church the first phase of the liturgical reform was officially ushered in according to the norms laid down in the (first) "Instruction" of the 26th of September, 1964.

A quick glance at the results attained is very encouraging. The clergy have taken up their task wholeheartedly; the faithful everywhere have responded generously, and have greeted the "new" liturgy with great joy. There can be no doubt that interest in the liturgy has increased; the living, intelligent, active participation of the faithful, especially in the Mass, has been evidence everywhere of a resurgence of Christian piety. The introduction of the vernacular, and the simplification of some of the ceremonies, which makes them more intelligible, have been determining factors in this. A certain dissatisfaction, due in part to a sometimes inadequate translation of the liturgical texts from Latin to the vernacular, and to other difficulties which were inevitable in such a complex period of transition, have gradually been overcome.

This is the background of the "Second Instruction". Our experience of the vernacular, and of celebrations "versus populum", has shown that certain particular ceremonies are no longer of use; they can easily be changed, without altering the present liturgical books, in harmony with the guidelines of the renewal.

Let us consider some of these, which have particular pastoral implications.

*Choice of formulary.* Except in Lent, on 3rd class liturgical days the priest celebrants may henceforth choose either the Mass of the Office of the day or the Mass of a Saint or Office which is commemorated.

This general prescription offers various advantages. First of all, it allows us to honour one or another Saint without prejudice to the calendar. For example on the 19th of June we have the feast of St. Juliana Falconieri and the commemoration of the martyrs Sts. Gervase and Protase. The present rubrics do not permit the offering of the Mass of the martyrs, but this is allowed henceforth. The new prescription permits us also to offer an Advent Mass on a weekday in preference to a Mass of the Saints: this is of considerable importance, because Advent is one of the "special times", and everyone wishes to celebrate it well; as a matter of fact, it is possible that the liturgical renewal will result in proper Masses for the whole of Advent, and even now the Weekday Lectionary has a collection of texts very closely harmonized with the liturgical cycle.

With regard to the Weekday Lectionary, which has been unusually well received and very successful everywhere, the new "Instruction" provides for its use even when the priest celebrates without the people present. This will be no small help to priestly piety.

The third rule is in the same vein: On ordinary weekdays the priest who says the Mass of the preceding Sunday may substitute for the Sunday prayers one of the prayers designated "*ad diversa*", or prayers from some Votive Mass. Thus the Mass of an ordinary weekday may be composed of processional chants of the Sunday, the readings and their accompanying chants from the Weekday Lectionary, the "prayers" from the "*ad diversa*" or Votive Mass orations. This rule, which at first sight appears complicated, really involves no theoretical or practical difficulty. The processional chants of the Sundays *per annum* are as a rule neutral and easily adaptable to various intentions; the specific theme is provided by the prayers. If the people assist at the Mass, the priest need only present each time, and explain briefly, the new texts, reading them simply, in a clear and distinct voice, so they may be easily understood. Thus, we have discovered another source of liturgical piety. Whoever is familiar with the 35 sets of "Various Prayers" and the very many Votive Masses, knows what a treasury of prayers, rarely used but very appropriate, lies hidden within the pages of the Missal. The source is now open to us: our own good will is all we need to draw from it abundantly.

*A single prayer.* Only one prayer is to be said at Mass, except in special cases, provided for by the rubrics. This is a reasonable and wise simplification. The fundamental reason is psychological: The collect, said after a silent pause, summarizes the intentions of the assembly in a single priestly prayer. Anything added to it is an undesirable accretion. The same is true of the prayer over the offerings, in reference to the presentation of the gifts; and the postcommunion, which concludes the Eucharistic Rite.

There is a further difficulty of the same kind, arising from the repetition of the same conclusion and the reply of the faithful, especially in the vernacular.

In the Code of Rubrics, the "orationes" were already reduced to three at the most (cod. rubr., 435): The first, that of the Mass with its own conclusion, the other two together, with their second conclusion. In some cases, indicated in the C.R. no. 444, another collect is added to the Prayer of the Mass, *sub unica conclusione*.

In 1960, all the "prayers for various seasons", which had been joined to the Masses "de tempore", were abolished.

The present rule is a return to the original principle of clarity and simplicity; but it is also a tacit invitation to the priest to recite the texts quietly, without haste, so that the words of the Church's Prayer may penetrate our souls and truly nourish our piety.

From this principle of only one "oration", there follows the abolition of the prayer which formerly the Bishop could prescribe on certain occasions for his diocese.

Until 1960 two collects could be commanded by the Ordinary.

The C.R. n. 457, reduced the number to one and laid down certain conditions. Now even this one is suppressed, but its loss is compensated. The Bishop can insert in the Prayer of the Faithful one or two intentions:

This allows equally well, even better, for the participation of the faithful in the *oratio imperata*. In any case, this was already being done in some dioceses.

The same art. 6 also takes care of the prayers for those in authority, which in various regions are obligatory for various reasons and in various forms, and which are added at the end of each prayer (for example the formula *Et famulos* in Spanish speaking countries) or at the end of the Conventual Mass (for example the prayers for the President of the Republic in Italy). Even these prayers may now, by command of the Episcopal Conference, be included in the Prayer of the Faithful.

Thus, instead of an isolated prayer, shared in at most by the celebrant and his ministers, there will now be a prayer by the whole people for their own authorities.

*Certain changes in the Mass:* These are not spectacular. For the most part they concern ceremonies which require simplification from the very fact that celebrations in the vernacular, very often facing the people, make certain gestures anachronistic or superfluous, and therefore, especially under certain circumstances, given the increased interest in the liturgy, cause bewilderment and annoyance. Each detail has been studied in harmony with the *Ordo Missae* which will be presented to the next Synod.

*Communion at the "Mass of Chrism" on Holy Thursday:* In the past three years, there have been numerous requests from Episcopal Conferences and from the simple faithful for the privilege of having the people communicate at the "Mass of Chrism".

The first Instruction (1964) granted the privilege of communicating twice in the one day for Christmas and Easter. It is now applied to Holy Thursday also. We must agree that the exception is thoroughly justified.

The extension of the privilege will make it possible for certain classes of persons, unable to assist at the Mass "In Coena Domini", to approach the Holy Communion at the Mass of Chrism.

*Thanksgiving in common after Communion:* In the revision of the ceremonies of the Mass, the rite of Communion has been cut down considerably and there has been no corresponding compensation. A sort of "group" thanksgiving after Communion will perhaps satisfy a rather widespread desire. This is the aim of No. 15 of the *Instruction*. To make this truly effective, adequate and prolonged instruction is indispensable. But experience has shown that if the people are properly prepared they understand and welcome either an appropriate hymn or a short period "of sacred silence". The importance of this warrants every effort made on its behalf. It is clear that there is a difference here between a small assembly and a large crowd where there have been numerous communicants. This is the place for the exercise of a liturgical sense and prudence on the part of the celebrant: Hence the Instruction says "pro opportunitate". In any case, the experiment is introduced. This addition to the Communion rite justifies a certain shortening of the final part of the Mass.

*Blessing and Dismissal of the Faithful.* The *Instruction* lays down the following definite order: first the blessing, and then the dismissal of the faithful. The reverse order, which was followed until now, was not suitable.

In actual fact when the celebrant said to the people "The Mass is ended; go in peace", the assembly actually began to leave; and when the celebrant had paused for the *Placeat*, and turned to bless them, he found many of them already on the way out.

Some may find it rather poor to conclude such a sublime rite with a simple formula of dismissal. But for one thing the rite actually concludes with the blessing: it belongs to the deacon to dismiss the faithful. And besides we cannot say that the formula of dismissal is weak: the admonition of the deacon is spiritually rich: *Go in peace* and very rich indeed is the reply of the faithful: *Let us give thanks to God!* These words are a synthesis of the whole essence of the sacrifice of the Mass, which is of its nature "thanksgiving".

*Divine Office.* The clergy will find in the *Instruction* some simplification of the Office, which will be of help to their ministry in these days of multiple pastoral duties. But there is one point of special interest: the celebration of the principal *Hours* (Lauds and Vespers) with the people assisting. For the first time an official document treats of this *ex professo*, laying down suitable adaptations. These are an indication of the way the liturgical renewal has proceeded. The psalms are reduced from five to three: when recited in the vernacular, five psalms are a trifle long. Psalms must be prayed more slowly, allowing time for reflection and meditation. Replacing the extra psalms there are certain additions, of special pastoral value: a longer biblical reading, instead of the short chapter which is always said at Vespers. Some will undoubtedly find this quite idealistic. Granted. But we must not forget that the various pious exercises began to flourish with the loss of the liturgical sense and departure from liturgical practice. If we recall the people to the liturgy, they will love and relish the liturgy as they have relished at other times so many forms of devotion and piety which lack the richness and substance of the liturgy. The *Instruction*, as a matter of fact, represents real and concrete experience. We could mention countries, dioceses, parishes, all over the world, where the zeal and intelligence of the pastors have been able to reawaken the faithful through the living sources of the liturgy even in this area. Nor has the participation in traditional pious exercises, which are altogether indispensable for Christian piety, suffered. Everything depends on orderly, harmonious progress.

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Finally, we must emphasize the benign but vigorous insistence of the introduction to the document on the sacredness of liturgical law. The liturgy is not an individual matter, but is an ecclesial act, a hierarchical act, a community act. No one is allowed to change, or derogate from, its sacredness and its mystery by personal arbitrary innovations: "Let both local and religious Ordinaries bear in mind their grave duty before the Lord of diligently seeing to it that this norm, so important for the life and structure of the Church, be scrupulously observed. And let all sacred ministers and all the faithful seek to comply with this necessary ruling in a spirit of good will.

Both the edification and spiritual good of each one demands it, as well as the spiritual harmony in the Lord and the mutual good example among the faithful of the same local congregation. Finally, the grave duty incumbent upon each community of working together for the good of the entire Church — especially today when the good or evil done in local communities has immediate repercussions on the whole community of the family of God — demands the faithful observance of this norm.

Let everyone therefore reflect upon the admonition of Paul the Apostle: 'For God is not a God of disorder but of peace'. (Cor. 14, 33)".

These words are similar to those which our holy Father Paul VI addressed to the "Consilium" on the 19th of April of last year, when he was exhorting the clergy and faithful not to allow themselves "to be embroiled in willfulness and irresponsible experiments, but to seek rather the perfection and the fullness of the rites already prescribed by the Church".

To help to realize this desire of the holy Father, the *Second Instruction* has been issued, and it represents another step forward — balanced and wise, restrained and yet open, calm and yet dynamic, towards the new aims of the second Vatican Council.

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Translated from the Italian

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## CLARIFICATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE "SECOND INSTRUCTION"

By A. Bugnini.

The recent "Second Instruction" on liturgical modifications has been received everywhere with great satisfaction and, I might say, with a spirit of joy, judging from the reports which come in each day to the Consilium from all parts of the world.

There are also numerous requests for clarification on one point or another from rubricists, ceremonialists and jurists who as one knows, have a bent for precision. It is quite clear that all the fine points to which a certain liturgical lore has accustomed us, cannot and should not enter into a text of the law. An inextricable new labyrinth would result which the reform must avoid. Not simply for the sake of avoiding it, but because on the ecclesial level, it would be useless and harmful. Besides, both the liturgy and the law have more appropriate instruments for this purpose. For example, the *Instruction* depends upon the *Ritus servandus* and on the *Ordo Missae*. In a few days a practical booklet will be available to all concerned, in which they will find in double columns, together with the official text of the *Instruction*, the parts of the *Ordo Missae* which with the new document demand revision and adaptation. (*Variationes in Ordinem Missae inducendae ad normam Instructionis S. E. C. diei IV maii 1967*). Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis 1967. On sale at the Vatican Library.

Some publications have been too hurriedly printed and put on sale which attempt clarifications on every point. On the contrary however, because their authors lacked the prudence to make inquiry or the patience to await *Variationes*, they are filled with mistakes, sow the seeds of confusion and, render an ill service to good intentions.

*Vacatio legis*. Others with an even greater haste have already put the *Instruction* into practice. They have read the norms but they have certainly skipped over the introduction and have not read through to the end. The introduction would have reminded them in very strong and, I would say, appealing terms that the real enemies of liturgical renewal are not the attentive, conscientious and knowledgeable workers who prepare the reform but the dabblers who seek only immediate action at the expense of the importance, correctness and majesty of the sacred rite, thus bringing harm to the laws governing its progress. The liturgical renewal takes place only through patience, obedience and sacrifice. The concluding part of the document would have clearly pointed out to them that its implementation commences next June 29th and not before. The "Vacatio legis" is a juridical institution which is neither outdated nor superfluous. It is indispensable in order to enable the competent authorities, such as Episcopal Conferences or Bishops to give suitable directives and in order that the implementation of the new

norms be preceded by the proper pastoral and "technical" preparation. This means that the clergy must prepare themselves to carry out with competence, assurance and dignity, the sacred action. It also means the preparation of the people, instructing them in such a way as to lead them to an intelligent and necessary understanding of the new rites.

Several Episcopal Conferences have sought permission to carry out celebrations according to the new regulations at gatherings of the clergy or specially prepared groups of the laity. This is a wise and prudent method of procedure for seeking to introduce both the clergy and laity, with tact and intelligence, into the desired liturgical atmosphere. Here are a few clarifications of general use:

*A single oration* (n. 4). — In the Mass, only the orations listed in n. 4 are to be said under a single conclusion. Accordingly there are suppressed the orations referred to as "inseparable" (CR, 110), the ones indicated in the Code of Rubrics in nn. 333, 355, 453, and also the "privileged" commemorations (CR, 109). In the Office, on the contrary, commemorations are still regulated by the Code of Rubrics.

*Striking of the breast.* — No change has been made in this regard and so this gesture still remains as long as it is evidently compatible with the rite. Such is the case at the *Confiteor* and at the *Nobis quoque*. At the *Agnus Dei* however, if the priest, as happens at concelebration, is to break the host he cannot then strike his breast. The same is true at the *Domine non sum dignus*; if it is said together with the communicants, the priest cannot strike his breast because both hands are occupied holding the paten and host.

*Sign of the Cross.* — The sign of the cross is still to be made: a) over the offerings at the word *benedic* of the *Veni sanctificator* at the Offertory; b) over the cruet of water at the prayer *Deus, qui humanae substantiae*; c) at the words *benedicas haec dona* of the *Te igitur* — the only one to be made in the Canon; d) on the priest himself at *omni benedictione caelesti et gratia repleamur* of the *Supplices*

On the other hand, the triple sign of the cross with the particle of the host at the *Pax Domini* is suppressed.

*The rites of the "Fractio".* — Here again "Variationes" presents a few changes. The celebrant recites the entire Embolism with its conclusion (Per Dominum); he then uncovers the chalice, breaks the host and holding the particle above the chalice he says *Pax Domini*. The celebrant then drops the particle into the chalice while saying *Haec commixtio*; he then covers the chalice and says the *Agnus Dei*. This arrangement simplifies and makes more logical the whole procedure. But it is only the beginning of revision.

*Communion rite.* (n. 13). — "Variationes" envisages two possibilities. If there are communicants the priest proceeds as follows: having said *Panem caelestem*, he takes the paten in his left hand and the broken host in his right hand. There is no reason for concern if the people see the broken host; in fact the sign is much more evident with the fractured rather than with the entire host. The priest holds the broken host slightly elevated over the paten, turns to the people and says: *Ecce, Agnus Dei* and then recites along with the people *Domine, non sum dignus*. The people strike their breasts, but

the celebrant does not since he is prevented from so doing. He then turns to the altar and consumes the host. He then receives the Precious Blood as usual and proceeds to distribute communion to the faithful either with hosts consecrated at the Mass, and this preferable, or with hosts from the tabernacle.

If however there are no communicants, after saying *Panem caelestem* the priest does not turn toward the people but says the *Domine, non sum dignus* by himself and continues as usual.

After the *Agnus Dei* the server will ring the bell thus summoning the people to communion, and from this the celebrant will be able to know which of the two rites for communion he is to follow.

*Sacred silence and singing after Communion.* (n. 15). — If there is singing it must take place after the *Communio* has been sung (which commences as soon as the priest's Communion has begun, after the triple *Domine, non sum dignus*).

One of the psalms or canticles listed in the *Instruction* can be sung or a suitable popular melody (*canticum laudis*) selected by the rector of the church, according to liturgically good sense and taste. If "sacred silence" is preferred it should be distinct from the time necessary for the priest to take the ablutions and dress the chalice. The proper place for the silence is after this action (ablutions etc.) and the celebrant himself should join with his people in this eucharistic meditation in the precise sense indicated in the *Ritus servandus*, n. 79: "and he pauses for a short time in meditation upon the most holy Sacrament." It does not then have a place after the word *Oremus* before the postcommunion. Individual silent prayer comes only at the "Collect", directed by the deacon after the explicit invitation, *Flectamus genua*.

Moreover, the two could very well be combined, remaining in silence for some time and then concluding with a short and appropriate chant.

Finally, it is necessary to point out that in the reform of the Mass, it is possible, once the Communion is finished, for the Celebrant to go to the chair and be seated, the whole congregation likewise being seated. There, he may either spend some time in meditation on the Blessed Sacrament or even join with all the faithful in a hymn of thanksgiving. Then rising, and remaining at the chair he concludes the rite with the postcommunion and final blessing. The *singing* and the "sacred silence" proposed in the second *Instruction* is leading to this arrangement.

*Final Blessing.* (n. 16). — How are the concluding rites to be carried out? "*Variationes*" says this: having said the postcommunion, the celebrant kisses the altar, turns to the people and says: *Dominus vobiscum . . . Benedicat vos . . . Ite Missa est*.

At Pontifical Masses the Bishop gives generally the triple blessing as usual. At Masses of the Dead there is also said *Ite, Missa est* instead of "Requiescant in pace". But if another liturgical celebration follows the blessing is omitted and "*Benedicamus Domino*", instead of *Ite Missa est*, is invariably said, always facing the people.



*Mass for Bride and Bridegroom.* (n. 17). — If the Mass is celebrated at an altar facing the people, the celebrant, if he considers it opportune, genuflects after the mingling of the species and goes to stand before the bride and groom for the prayers “*Propitiare*” and “*Deus, qui potestate.*”

The reason why the celebrant goes to stand before the spouses is this: it may happen that the altar is of rather large dimensions and it would be less easy to communicate with the spouses by reciting the prayers across the altar. Since the prayers are said for them it is only fitting that the priest be not too far distant. The clause, “pro opportunitate”, leaves it to the good judgment of the celebrant.

At the ordinary altar the distance is less noticeable because the rubrics already oblige the priest to turn toward the spouses and there is no barrier between him and them.

“*Pro opportunitate*” A good many people, even persons of some distinction, have been disturbed by a certain measure of freedom accorded by some norms of the *Instruction*. The following expressions occur frequently: “pro opportunitate”, “omitti potest”, “adhiberi potest”, etc. The principle of a certain degree of freedom has been and actually is invoked. It is necessary to know how to use it properly.

The principle of a certain amount of freedom is extremely useful in order that certain prescriptions which are not of fundamental importance be not always imposed by authority and also to allow for education to change. If in a certain place the application of a norm may arouse wonderment or great astonishment, the prudent priest readily understands that he must first of all gradually prepare his people and then introduce the change. The principle of freedom affords him the possibility of a practical flexibility useful for pastoral purposes. But when the formulation of the law admits of attenuations the mind of the legislator is clear and when no particular difficulty is encountered, one simply follows the letter of the law which is clear.

It follows clearly from what I have said that if a bishop, in his diocese, should think it opportune to give more precise directives on points where the *Instruction* permits a certain flexibility, he may well do so. He is within his rights. This study of local adaptation is what is necessary during the period of the *vacatio legis*. Thus the substitution of violet for black in the Offices of the Dead, according to the *Instruction*, does not require any special intervention on the part of the authority. This substitution may be made commencing June 29th, whenever judged fitting, unless a bishop wishes to proceed systematically on the diocesan level and gives particular directives on the matter.

*Divine Office* (n. 19). — On days of the 1st and 2nd class which have three nocturns at Matins the priest will be able to choose one of the three nocturns, that is to say, the first, second or third, whether in private recitation or in recitation in common or in choir. In this latter case it is up to the dean of the Chapter or the Superior to decide which one of the three nocturns is to be said. In private recitation the individual priest makes his choice according to what he considers the most useful: the choice will be directed to the nocturn which has lessons most in keeping with the feast, and which spiritually is more substantial.

This relaxation has been suggested for a pastoral reason; on days of the 1st and 2nd class the clergy are more engaged in the work of the ministry. For the other days nine psalms and three lessons remain. These are less busy days from a pastoral point of view and the present arrangement remains unchanged as far as they are concerned.

However, in the new provisions one can see the direction which the reform will follow: the *officium lectionis* (Matins) will consist of a small number of psalms and a substantial reading from the Bible and the Fathers.

*The Canon in the vernacular* (n. 28). — Episcopal Conferences are able to determine that the Canon be said in the vernacular. After the collegial decision based on a majority of votes, the vernacular text in a faithful and integral translation, approved by the Conference itself, must be sent to the "Consilium" for confirmation.

The translations contained in the Missals provisionally approved two years ago by the various conferences cannot be used. A new translation must be made and for countries which speak the same language the text must be the same. It is only after confirmation by the Holy See that the vernacular text can be published and introduced into liturgical use.

For some months all the study committees of National Commissions on the liturgy have been working together to prepare translations of the Canon. It is hoped that very soon the Eucharistic Prayer will have in all languages a literary fine, harmonious and poetic form of expression befitting the eminent place it occupies in the heart of the sacred liturgy.

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L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO — June 2, 1967.

Translated from the French.