



DIocese OF ARLINGTON

Office of the Bishop

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July 29, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On July 16, 2021, Pope Francis issued an Apostolic Letter *motu proprio* entitled *Traditionis Custodes* (“Guardians of the Tradition”). With this letter, the Holy Father established new regulations for the celebration of the liturgy of the Roman Rite according to the liturgical books used prior to the Second Vatican Council, the *usus antiquior*. Subsequently, on December 18, 2021, the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments issued a *Responsa ad Dubia on certain provisions of the Apostolic Letter Traditionis Custodes* to assist the diocesan bishop in implementing faithfully the *motu proprio* in his diocese.

In fidelity to the Supreme Pontiff and in accordance with the clarifications from the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments and with pastoral solicitude for those who have found spiritual nourishment in the liturgical celebrations in the *usus antiquior*, I am implementing the *motu proprio* in the Diocese of Arlington by means of the attached diocesan policy. This policy will be effective on September 8, 2022, the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. After hearing from pastors of parishes in which the *usus antiquior* is celebrated, as well as from the faithful who participate in these liturgies, I recognize the pastoral need to permit the worship of the Mass according to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 as we work toward a unified celebration of the sacred liturgy in the Diocese of Arlington. Per the provisions of the *motu proprio*, I have appointed Reverend Bjorn Lundberg as my delegate to assist with the implementation of this policy and to oversee the pastoral and spiritual care of the faithful who are impacted by it.

While these new norms will bring some change to the places and times of worship, I ask all in our diocese to maintain a spirit of unity and fidelity. May we pray together that the Holy Spirit will always enliven us through the beauty of the sacred liturgy with the grace and mercy of Our Lord.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Arlington

Policy for the Implementation of *Traditionis Custodes* in the Diocese of Arlington

In *Traditionis Custodes*, the Supreme Pontiff asked bishops of the Roman Rite to work in communion with him and in fidelity to the regulations which he has provided for the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy. He has given to bishops the serious pastoral responsibility of discerning how best “to proceed in such a way as to return to a unitary form of celebration, and to determine case by case the reality of the groups which celebrate with [the] *Missale Romanum* [of 1962].” In doing so, the Holy Father has set forth two guiding principles. First, bishops are to provide pastoral and spiritual care for those who have found spiritual nourishment in celebrations according to the rites used prior to Vatican II and who “need to return in due time” to the liturgical books promulgated following the Council.ⁱ Second, bishops are not to erect new personal parishes for the celebration of Mass according to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962.

Effective September 8, 2022, the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and in accord with the provisions of the recent *motu proprio* of Pope Francis, *Traditionis Custodes* (TC), and with the *Responsa ad Dubia on certain provisions of the Apostolic Letter* from the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, after prayerful discernment and consultation with priests and faithful of the diocese, advisers to the bishop, and seeking to strengthen ecclesial communion in the Diocese of Arlington, the following policy is established:

1. The unique expression of the sacred liturgy is found in the liturgical books reformed according to the desires of the Second Vatican Council and promulgated by Pope Saint Paul VI and Pope Saint John Paul II.ⁱⁱ Consequently, use of the third edition of the Roman Missal, promulgated in English in 2011 (and in Spanish in 2018), is to take priority in the schedule of Sunday Masses in order to extend pastoral care to the great number of English and Spanish speaking faithful in this local Church. It is expected that priests will celebrate Mass using this Missal every Sunday and on weekdays as the principal, public celebration(s) of the day, including at the locations listed in Section 4.
2. A diocesan priest who meets the requirements of Article 3, section 4 of *Traditionis Custodes* will be appointed as the bishop’s delegate to oversee liturgical celebrations according to the *usus antiquior*, as well as the pastoral and spiritual care of those who take part in such celebrations. The delegate will actively coordinate with pastors, the Vicar General, and the Vicar for Clergy to discern the pastoral and spiritual needs of groups that are accustomed to such celebrations. He will also work with pastors regarding the requirements of *Traditionis Custodes*, article 3.
3. In accordance with *Traditionis Custodes*, any priest ordained prior to July 16, 2021, may write to the diocesan bishop to request the faculty to celebrate the Mass according to the ritual described in the *Missale Romanum* of 1962.ⁱⁱⁱ The deadline to make a request is August 31, 2022.

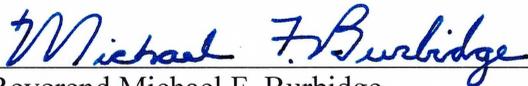
4. Only those parishes and places listed below have permission to celebrate the Mass according to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 (at times to be determined), with the exception of Holy Week and the Sacred Triduum.
 - a. Parishes that have locations other than the parochial church:
 - i. Saint John the Baptist Church, Front Royal, in Chelsea Academy, Front Royal
 - ii. Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, Winchester, in Sacred Heart Academy
 - iii. All Saints Church, Manassas, in Renaissance Montessori School, Nokesville
 - iv. Saint John the Apostle Church, Leesburg, in the historic chapel
 - v. Saint Patrick Church, Fredericksburg, in the former church building
 - b. Having received the necessary dispensation from the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the following parishes may offer the Mass in the *usus antiquior* in their parish church for a period of two years, which may be extended upon the approval of the Dicastery, so long as ongoing work toward a unitary form (use of the third edition of the Roman Missal, promulgated in English in 2011 and in Spanish in 2018) of celebration of the Sacred Liturgy continues:^{iv}
 - i. Saint Anthony Mission, King George
 - ii. Saint Rita Church, Alexandria
 - iii. Saint John the Beloved, McLean
5. Per the *Responsa ad Dubia* and as directed by the Dicastery, the parish may not publish the times of the Mass in the *usus antiquior* in the bulletin or on the parish website or social media sites.^v
6. Per *Traditionis Custodes*, in all celebrations of Mass according to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962, “the readings are proclaimed in the vernacular language, using translations of the Sacred Scripture approved for liturgical use by the respective Episcopal Conferences.”^{vi}
7. *Traditionis Custodes*, as clarified by the *Responsa ad Dubia* of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, allows the diocesan bishop to grant permission for the use of the *Rituale Romanum* only to those parishes erected as a personal parish for the celebration of the *Missale Romanum* of 1962. Since no such parish has been established in the Diocese of Arlington, diocesan priests only have permission to celebrate Mass according to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962; rites described in the *Rituale Romanum* are no longer to be celebrated by diocesan or consecrated religious priests assigned to the Diocese of Arlington (the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Peter retains its faculties, as affirmed by Pope Francis).^{vii}
8. In the Diocese of Arlington, groups of the faithful who are attached to celebrations of the *usus antiquior* have enjoyed stability for many years and will be spiritually and pastorally

cared for, according to the guidance given above. As *Traditionis Custodes* specifies, no new groups will be established.^{viii}

9. Pastors of parishes in which the Mass in *usus antiquior* is celebrated as listed in Section 4 must develop a pastoral plan “to lead the faithful who are attached to the antecedent liturgy towards the celebration of the liturgy according to the liturgical books reformed by decree of the Second Vatican Council, and which form the unique expression of the *lex orandi* of the Roman Rite.”^{ix} Already it is the reality that our faithful who participate in the *usus antiquior* also frequent the reformed liturgy interchangeably for daily, Sunday, and Holy Day Masses.

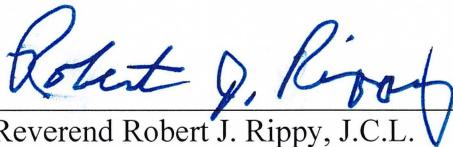
10. The promulgation of *Traditionis Custodes* recalls for all of us, Christ’s faithful, the Second Vatican Council’s teaching found in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: “Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the ‘sacrament of unity,’ namely, the holy people united and ordered under their bishops” (no. 26). For this reason, we ask the Holy Spirit to increase his gifts of unity and peace within the universal Church and within our local church. Let us pray with ever greater fervor that God our Father will be pleased to grant her peace, guard, unite and govern her throughout the whole world.

Given in Arlington on July 29, 2022 by:



Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge
Bishop of Arlington

Witnessed by:



Very Reverend Robert J. Rippy, J.C.L.
Chancellor

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- ⁱ Cf. TC Accompanying Letter, para. 12.
- ⁱⁱ Cf. TC, art. 1.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Cf. TC, art 5.
- ^{iv} Cf. *Responsa ad Dubia*.
- ^v Cf. *Responsa ad Dubia*; Dicastery of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Rescript, May 2022.
- ^{vi} TC, art. 3 §3.
- ^{vii} Cf. *Responsa ad Dubia*; Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter, “Decree of Pope Francis confirming the use of the 1962 liturgical books,” February 11, 2022, www.fssp.org/en/decreed-of-pope-francis-confirming-the-use-of-the-1962-liturgical-books (accessed July 29, 2022).
- ^{viii} Cf. TC, art. 3 §2 and art. 3 §6; cf. Accompanying Letter, para. 12.
- ^{ix} Cf. Dicastery of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Rescript, May 2022.