

This statement by Pope Saint Paul VI has been printed in every Missal since 1969:

Also, "other elements which suffered injury through accidents of history" are restored "to the earlier norm of the holy Fathers":¹⁰ for example the homily,¹¹ the general intercessions or prayer of the faithful,¹² the penitential rite or act of reconciliation with God and the brethren at the beginning of Mass, where its proper significance is restored.

According to the decree of the Second Vatican Council, that "a more representative portion of the holy scriptures be read to the people over a set period of years,"¹³ the Sunday readings are arranged in a cycle of three years. In addition, on Sundays and feasts the Epistle and Gospel are preceded by an Old Testament reading or, at Easter, the Acts of the Apostles. This is to accentuate the dynamism of the mystery of salvation, shown in the words of divine revelation. These broadly selected biblical readings, which give the faithful on feastdays the most important part of sacred scripture, are complemented by the other parts of the Bible read on other days.

All this has been planned to develop among the faithful a greater hunger for the word of God.¹⁴ Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this word leads the people of the New Covenant to the perfect unity of the Church. We are fully confident that both priests and faithful will prepare their minds and hearts more devoutly for the Lord's Supper, meditating on the scriptures, nourished day by day with the words of the Lord. According to the hopes of the Second Vatican Council, sacred scripture will then be a perpetual source of spiritual life, the chief instrument for handing down Christian doctrine, and the center of all theological study.

This revision of the Roman Missal, in addition to the three changes already mentioned (the eucharistic prayer, the Order of Mass, and the readings) has also corrected and considerably modified other parts: the proper of seasons, the proper of

saints, the common of saints, ritual Masses and votive Masses. In all of these changes, particular care has been taken with the prayers. Their number has been increased, so that the new forms might better correspond to new needs, the text of older prayers has been restored on the basis of the ancient sources. Each weekday of the principal liturgical seasons, Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, now has its own prayer.

Even though the music of the Roman Gradual has not been changed, the responsorial psalm, which Saint Augustine and Saint Leo the Great often mention, has been restored for easier comprehension, and the introit and communion antiphons have been adapted for recited Masses.

In conclusion, we wish to give the force of law to all that we have set forth concerning the new Roman Missal. In promulgating the first edition of the Roman Missal, Saint Pius V presented it to the people of Christ as an instrument of liturgical unity and as a witness to purity of worship in the Church. There is room in the new Missal, according to the decree of the Second Vatican Council, "for legitimate variations and adaptations,"¹⁵ but we hope that it will be received by the faithful as a help and witness to the common unity of all. Thus, in the great diversity of languages, one single prayer will rise as an acceptable offering to our Father in heaven, through our High Priest Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit.

We wish that these decrees and prescriptions be firm and effective now and in the future, notwithstanding, to the extent necessary, the apostolic constitutions and ordinances issued by our predecessors and other prescriptions, even those deserving particular mention and derogation.

Given at Rome, at Saint Peter's, on Holy Thursday, April 3, 1969, the sixth year of our pontificate.

PAUL VI, POPE

NOTES

1. Cf. apostolic const. *Quo primum*, July 14, 1570.
2. Cf. Pius XII, Discourse to the participants in the First International Congress of Pastoral Liturgy at Assisi, September 22, 1956: AAS 48 (1956) 712.
3. Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, general decree *Dominicae Resurrectionis*, February 9, 1951: AAS 43 (1951) 128ff.; General decree *Maxima Redemptionis nostrae mysteria*, November 16, 1955: AAS 47 (1955) 838ff.
4. II Vatican Council, const. on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 21: AAS 56 (1964) 106.
5. *Ibid.*, art. 50: AAS 56 (1964) 114.

6. *Ibid.*, art. 51: AAS 56 (1964) 114.
7. *Ibid.*, art. 58: AAS 56 (1964) 115.
8. *Ibid.*, art. 50: AAS 56 (1964) 114.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Cf. *ibid.*
11. Cf. *ibid.*, art. 52: AAS 56 (1964) 114.
12. Cf. *ibid.*, art. 53: AAS 56 (1964) 114.
13. *Ibid.*, art. 51: AAS 56 (1964) 114.
14. Cf. Amos 8: 11.
15. II Vatican Council, const. on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 38: AAS 56 (1964) 110.

ITS EDITORS LEFT NO STONE turned in their quest for the best versions of these ancient Catholic hymns, combing through centuries of English translations from the sixteenth century to the present day. In the process, they have revealed much little-known material, and some that is published in a hymnal for the first time. [They] navigate this difficult terrain with assurance; indeed, the editors' explanation of the Urbanite reform and its impact on English translators is a model of clarity, and contains information this reviewer has not encountered elsewhere.