

On 25 July 1960, Pope St. John XXIII issued new rubrics (“Rubricarum Instructum”) which would go into effect on **1 January 1961**. This code of rubrics governs what is now called the “Extraordinary Form”—and made numerous changes, especially to feast classification. Pope John’s document is very much in line with the 1958 document issued under Pope Pius XII (“De Musica Sacra”) Here is part of Chapter 10, which is a Commentary by Bishop Murphy:

### **SUNG MASSES**

The Church never tires of reminding us that the solemn or high Mass is the nobler form of the Eucharistic celebration, revealing to us the splendour of the divine mysteries and stimulating the devotion of the faithful.

The congregation may participate in a sung Mass by singing those parts proper to them. These include the short responses to the greetings or invitations of the celebrant, as *Amen*, *Et cum spiritu tuo*, &c. Certain parts of the Ordinary of the Mass properly belong to the faithful: *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus-Benedictus*, *Agnus Dei*; the whole congregation should be encouraged to sing as much of these as possible. For this purpose, the *Instruction* of 1958 directed that everyone be taught the Gregorian Mass XVI, with the *Gloria* of Mass XV, together with *Credo* I or II. The Proper of the Mass, i.e., Entrance, Offertory and Communion antiphons, with the Gradual and *Alleluia*, also belong to the people, but their variable character usually restricts them to a trained choir. The faithful may also say with the celebrant, the triple *Domine, non sum dignus* before their Communion.

If the *Sanctus-Benedictus* is sung in the Gregorian melody, it is completed before the Consecration, otherwise the *Benedictus* is sung after the Consecration. After the *Sanctus-Benedictus* there should be neither singing nor organ playing up to the *Pater noster*.

The Communion antiphon is sung during the Communion of the faithful, if there are people for Communion. An appropriate motet may also be added should time remain. If the faithful do not receive Communion, the Communion antiphon is sung during the Communion of the celebrant.

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## LOW MASSES

At a low Mass the faithful may say together whatever they may sing in a sung Mass, i.e., the short responses, *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus-Benedictus, Agnus Dei*. Furthermore, they may say everything that the server answers, namely the psalm at the foot of the altar and *Confiteor*, the reply to the *Orate, fratres*. They may say the triple *Domine, non sum dignus* before their Communion, and also the *Pater noster*, including *Amen*, with the celebrant in Latin. When capable of doing so, the faithful may even say with the celebrant the Proper of the Mass, i.e., Entrance, Offertory and Communion antiphons, the Gradual and *Alleluia*, and the sequence when it occurs.

It is not necessary that all parts be said by the faithful, and this will be hardly practicable in the beginning.

The congregational singing of English hymns is permissible, provided that they are not literal translations of the liturgical texts and that they are appropriate for the various parts of the Mass. The use of Latin hymns is also allowed, if they are suited to the parts of the Mass. Thus the *Kyrie, Sanctus-Benedictus, Agnus Dei* may be sung according to some simple melody which will not require their violating the rule about appropriateness because of their length. The *Gloria* and *Credo* are not suitable for low Masses, and should not be sung.

The rules for singing at low Mass may be summarised as follows:

**NO SINGING IS ALLOWED:** i. during those parts proper to the celebrant, i.e., Collect, Preface to the *Agnus Dei* (except for the short hymn at the *Sanctus*), Postcommunion;  
ii. during the greeting-responses between celebrant and people, i.e., *Dominus vobiscum*, dialogue before Preface, &c.  
iii. during the reading of the epistle and gospel, even when they are not read at the same time by a lector;  
iv. at the *Domine, non sum dignus* before the Communion of the faithful.

**APPROPRIATE HYMNS MAY BE SUNG:** i. at times corresponding to the singing of the Proper in a sung Mass, i.e., Entrance (including the prayers at the foot of the altar), Offertory (after *Oremus* to Secret), during the Communion of the faithful (after *Domine, non sum dignus*), at the Gradual, *Alleluia* (necessarily brief);  
ii. at the *Gloria* and Creed (provided it is finished before the *Dominus vobiscum* which follows), at the *Sanctus* (a short hymn), at the *Agnus Dei* (to conclude before the *Ecce Agnus Dei*), after the blessing.

If congregational prayers are recited in English, they are subject to the same rules as hymns during low Mass.