

CONTRA LEFEBVRISM

PART IV: ON THE MASS

1. Abstract

While perhaps not as foundational as the rest of the Society of St. Pius X's objections to the Second Vatican Council, their aversion to the liturgical renewal that followed, which manifested in 1970 as the Missal of St. Paul VI (i.e. the New Mass, or *Novus Ordo*), is certainly the most visible; both by their continued use of the 1962 Missal promulgated by St. John XXIII (the latest iteration of the Missal of St. Pius V, or the Traditional Mass), and by their complete and total rejection of the New Mass as, at the very least, a defective, "Protestantized", and lesser form of liturgy embodying all of the perceived errors of Vatican II.

However, it is clear not only from the documents of Vatican II and the post-conciliar magisterium, but also from the rubrics of the New Mass itself, that there is nothing "Protestant" about it. For far from diminishing the Catholic understanding of the Mass, the Missal of St. Paul VI, especially when celebrated correctly and free from abuse, makes clearly manifest the Biblical, Judaic, and eschatological roots of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. The Position of the Society of St. Pius X:

*"(T)he Novus Ordo represents, both as a whole and in its details, a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Mass."*¹

2a. The Traditional vs. the New:

The Society introduces its argument by claiming that the intention of the New Mass was to enforce the Council's ecumenical teachings, citing Archbishop Annibale Bugnini, Secretary for the Congregation for Divine Worship from 1969-1976, as proof of that intention:

"We must strip from our Catholic prayers and from the Catholic liturgy everything which can be the shadow of a stumbling block for our separated brethren that is for the Protestants."²

¹ *A Short Critical Study of the Novus Ordo Missae*, 3 April 1969.

² This is the phrasing used by the Society, which can be traced to an article from *L'Osservatore Romano* (dated March 19, 1965). However, Archbishop Bugnini is misquoted and used in a misleading manner by Society apologists. The complete quote, in English, reads as follows:

"Scholars think to shed light on biblical and liturgical sources from which the new texts are derived or inspired, which the Study Groups of the "Concilium" accomplished by using a chisel.

The Society further claims that Archbishop Bugnini enlisted the help of six Protestant ministers to further this goal.³ The result was the Missal of St. Paul VI, which turned away from the Catholic understanding of the Mass and created a man-centered liturgy.

To elaborate, the Society compares the Catholic understanding of the Mass, displayed in the Traditional Latin Mass...

- Focused on God and the sacrificial nature of the Mass.
- Teaches that Jesus Christ, through the priest, offers His Body and Blood to His Father in atonement for the sins of humanity.
- Communion is a consequence of the Sacrifice and allows men to receive the fruits of the reparation.

...with what it sees as an altogether different understanding found in the New Mass:

- Focused on man.
- The role of the priest is diminished and put on par with the laity, who together share a meal in Christ's presence (recalling, for example, the meal Jesus shared with His disciples⁴).

With this change of understanding, the Society points to several effects seen throughout the Church, whether officially approved or not:

- Use of vernacular language.
- *Versus populum* liturgical orientation (Mass said facing the people).
- Removal of the tabernacle from the visual center of the Church and placed out of view.
- Disuse of Gregorian chant.
- Communion on the hand.

And let's say that often the work proceeded 'with fear and trembling' by sacrificing terms and concepts so dear, and now part of the long family tradition. How not to regret that 'Mother Church-Holy, Catholic and Apostolic - deigned to revoke' the seventh prayer? ***And yet it is the love of souls and the desire to help in any way the road to union of the separated brethren, by removing every stone that could even remotely constitute an obstacle or difficulty, that has driven the Church to make even these painful sacrifices.***"

In this writer's opinion, these were Archbishop Bugnini's thoughts on the revisions of the Good Friday intentions, and not on the entire revised Missal. Whatever the case, it is irrelevant. As is clear from a casual reading of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Council's purpose and guidelines for revising the Liturgy involve much, much more than mere ecumenical intent. The will of the Council should therefore be discerned from the documents themselves, not from select quotations taken from newspaper interviews.

³ This claim is dubious to say the least, since there is no evidence that the Protestant observers present at the Council took an active role in the drafting of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, let alone the revised Missal. Cf. J. Likoudis & K. Whitehead, *The Pope, the Council, and the Mass*, 2006: Emmaus Road Publishing, Question 7, pp. 83-93.

⁴ John 21:9-13

- Lay eucharistic ministers and altar girls.

The Society blames these changes for causing the decrease in vocations, Mass attendance, and Sacramental confessions.⁵

2b. The Ottaviani Intervention:

The Society's arguments against the New Mass are based in the 1969 theological study "A Short Critical Study of the Novus Ordo Missae", commissioned by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, written primarily by Father Guerard des Lauriers, O.P., and presented by Cardinals Alfredo Ottaviani⁶ and Antonio Bacci. It consists of eight chapters, seven of which present the following charges against the New Mass:

- *Definition of the Mass:* The New Mass places the emphasis on "supper" and "memorial," rather than on the representation of the Sacrifice of Calvary.
- *Presentation of the Ends:* The New Mass, in its changes in prayers and rubrics, either compromises or completely obscures the ultimate (the sacrifice of praise rendered to the Most Holy Trinity), ordinary (the propitiatory sacrifice; making satisfaction to God for sin), and immanent (sacrificial) purposes of the Mass.
- *Essence:* The New Mass implicitly repudiates belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist through suppression or reduction of various signs, gestures, and prayers.
- *Elements:* The New Mass erroneously blurs the relationship between the priest and the faithful, reducing the role of the priest to mere presider while exaggerating the role of the faithful.
- *Unity:* The New Mass, by its adaptive and flexible nature, destroys the unity of the rite.
- *Alienation of the Orthodox:* While the New Mass purports to draw from the riches of Eastern liturgies, it ends up, in doing so, sacrificing its unique Roman character, and bringing it more in line with Protestant, rather than Eastern, liturgies.

⁵ SSPX FAQ, #7.

⁶ Cardinal Ottaviani later retracted this view on the New Mass, following a series of clarifications by Pope St. Paul VI. Notably, he wrote that, following those clarifications "no one can any longer be genuinely scandalized." He also took umbrage at the fact that the letter had been published to begin with. "I regret only that my name has been misused in a way I did not wish, by publishing a letter that I wrote to the Holy Father without authorizing anyone to publish it." Cf. J. Likoudis & K. Whitehead, *The Pope, the Council, and the Mass*, 2006: Emmaus Road Publishing, Question 14, pp. 143-149; "Letter from His Eminence Alfredo Cardinal Ottaviani to Dom Gerard Lafond, O.S.B.", *Documentation Catholique* (1970), no. 67, pp. 215-216; 343.

- *Abandonment of Defenses:* The New Mass does away with many of the defenses against error built into the Traditional rite.

2c. The Society's Judgment:

Taken together, the Society echoes the judgment of its founder, Archbishop Lefebvre, that the New Mass “does not profess the Catholic Faith as clearly as the old *Ordo Missae* did and consequently it may promote heresy.”⁷ Because of this “danger to the faith,” the Society proclaims that:

- Catholics are not obliged to attend the New Mass to fulfill their Sunday obligation, and indeed should completely avoid it as it is “an offense to God.”
- In situations where the Traditional Mass is not available, the Society claims that the faithful are dispensed from their Sunday obligation.
- If they must attend the New Mass (i.e., as part of a wedding or funeral), the faithful should attend passively, and only if there is no danger of scandal (the Society suggests praying the rosary during the ceremony).⁸

3. The Documents at Issue:

While the Vatican II documents themselves are not categorically at issue, since the New Mass was not promulgated until five years after the Council's conclusion, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy) gives the best insight into the mind of the Council in terms of liturgical reform. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM) is more directly implicated, as it directly governs both the theology and practice of the revised Missal.

4. The Position of the Second Vatican Council:

The Vatican II constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, contains not only the mind of the Council on what the Mass is, but also the entirety of the directives informing the revision of the Mass that took place over the following seven years. In considering the intention and meaning of the New Mass, this constitution should be considered before any other authority.

In addition, following the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, a commission was formed to implement the directives contained in the constitution.

⁷ “Mgr Lefebvre et le St. Office,” *Itinéraires*, 233 (May 1979): pp. 146-147.

⁸ SSPX FAQ, #15.

Many directives were issued both before and after the promulgation of the revised liturgy in 1970, both from the Pope and from the Concilium of the Implementation on the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy (“Concilium”). The most current directives are found in the third edition (2002) of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (“GIRM”).

For the sake of brevity, these two sources will be solely considered to arrive at an objective understanding about how the Church sees both the Mass in general and the proper implementation of the Missal of St. Paul VI in particular.

4a. *The Position of Sacrosanctum Concilium (December 4, 1963):*

The liturgy, “through which the work of our redemption is accomplished”, most of all in the Sacrifice of the Mass, is the outstanding means by which the faithful express and manifest the mystery of Christ and the nature of His Church to the world “as a sign lifted up among the nations”. To better meet the circumstances and needs to modern times, the Council desired that the liturgical rites be carefully revised in the light of sound tradition and be given new vigor to foster unity among all who believe in Christ and help call the whole of mankind into the Church (Introduction, §1-4).

The Lord instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood at the Last Supper, to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He comes again. In doing so, He entrusted the Church, His bride, a memorial of His death and resurrection, a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity⁹, a paschal banquet in which Christ Himself is consumed, filling our minds with grace, and giving us a pledge of future glory (Ch. 2, §47).

From the time of Pentecost, the Church has without fail come together to celebrate the paschal mystery, reading those things “which were in all the scriptures concerning him,”¹⁰ making present Christ’s victory over death, and rendering thanks to God for the gift of Christ. Likewise, Christ has never ceased to be present in the sacrifice of the Mass (1) in the person of His minister, (2) in His sacraments, as it is He who baptizes us, (3) in His word, since it is He who speaks when the Scriptures are read, (4) when the Church sings and prays “where two or three are gathered together in my name,”¹¹ and most of all (5) under the Eucharistic species.

In effect, the liturgy is an exercise of the priestly office of Christ, performed by the Mystical Body of Christ, namely the Head and His

⁹ Cf. St. Augustine, *Tractatus in Ioannem*, VI, n. 13.

¹⁰ Luke 24:27.

¹¹ Matthew 18:20.

members. It follows “that every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others.” It is a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy, celebrated in God’s holy city toward which we journey as pilgrims. It is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed. It is the font from which all her power flows. It calls the faithful to holiness, pours grace upon them and sanctifies them.

To better accomplish these effects to the fullest, the faithful must come to the liturgy with proper dispositions. It is not enough to be mere observers; the Church desires that the faithful render full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgy. It is their right and duty by reason of their baptism that they should be instructed by God’s word, be nourished at the table of the Lord’s body, render thanks to God, and to join with the priest in offering themselves through Christ the Mediator. Therefore, in revising the liturgy, the full and active participation by all the people is to be the primary aim (Ch. 1, §6-14; Ch. 2 §48).

The liturgy is composed both of immutable elements divinely instituted and of elements subject to change if they have (1) suffered from intrusion of anything out of step with the true nature of the liturgy, or (2) have become unsuited to it. In restoring it, the rites should more clearly express the holy things they signify so that the faithful may more readily understand and participate in them. In obedience to tradition and in accordance with legitimate progress, any revision should be diligently investigated, considered alongside experience gained from recent reforms, not carried out unless the good of the Church requires it, and done in such a way that they grow organically from existing forms (Ch. 1, §21-23).

More specific (and relevant) norms guiding the liturgical reform include:

- Public liturgical celebrations, especially the Mass, should be preferred to individual or quasi-private (§27).
- The faithful should be encouraged to take part via acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, along with actions, gestures, and bodily attitudes. At the proper times, all should observe a reverent silence (§30).
- In keeping with noble simplicity, the rites should be short, clear, and free from vain repetitions. They should be comprehensible and not require much explanation (§34).
- The Latin language should be preserved in the Latin rites. However, the use of vernacular may be expanded, as it may be of great advantage to the people. The limits of that expansion, if

any, is determined by the territorial bodies of bishops, and must be confirmed by the Apostolic See (§36). Nevertheless, the faithful should be enabled to say or sing together in Latin the parts pertaining to them (§54).

- In adapting the liturgy to various cultures, the Church admits any elements not bound to superstition or error into it, provided it is in accord with the true and authentic spirit of the liturgy. Provisions should also be made for legitimate variations and adaptations to diverse cultures in the liturgy, provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite remains intact, and that any adaptation is confirmed, when necessary, by the Apostolic See (§37-40).
- The rite should be revised and simplified so that the purpose of its parts, their connections, and the whole of the rite, may be more clearly rendered, taking care to preserve their substance. Elements that came to be duplicated or added with little advantage should be discarded, while those that have suffered injury should be restored as may seem useful or needed (§50).
- A larger portion of the Scriptures should be read to the people (§51).
- On Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, the common prayer, or “prayer of the faithful” is to be restored (§53).
- The dogmatic principles set forth by the Council of Trent remain in force. However, reception of communion under both species by the laity may be granted as the bishops see fit, in cases to be determined by the Holy See (§55).
- The faithful are to take part in the entire Mass since both the liturgy of the word and of the eucharist form one single act of worship (§56).
- Gregorian Chant is especially suited to the Roman liturgy and should be given pride of place in liturgical services. Other forms of sacred music, including polyphony, are not excluded from those services so long as they accord with the spirit of the liturgical action and have the necessary qualities. The texts intended to be sung should always be in conformity with Catholic doctrine (§112, 116, 121).
- Likewise, the pipe organ is held in high esteem in the Latin Church. Other instruments may be admitted with the consent of the proper authority, only on the condition that they are suitable for sacred use, accord with the dignity of the temple, and truly contribute to the edification of the faithful (§120).

4b. The Position of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 3rd Edition (November 12, 2002):

Following the establishment of the Concilium in January 1964,¹² a series of liturgical instructions were issued to begin implementing the reforms called for by *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. These all culminated in the promulgation of the revised Roman Missal in 1969 via the Apostolic Constitution *Missale Romanum*, succeeding the previous constitution *Quo Primum*.¹³

The revised Missal contained an instruction known as the General Instruction of the Roman Missal ('GIRM'), which specified the guidelines for the proper celebration of the new Missal. It was last revised in 2002, and contains the relevant passages:

- The sacrificial nature of the Mass and the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, as defined by Session 22 and 13, respectively, of the Council of Trent, was reaffirmed.¹⁴
- The nature of the ministerial priesthood is evident by reason of the more prominent place and office of the priest, as enunciated in the Preface for the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday.¹⁵
- The revised liturgy continues along the path outlined by *Quo Primum* to restore the Rite “to the original form of the holy Fathers,” and that both Missals, though different, embrace the same tradition, with the latter bringing to fulfillment the former.¹⁶
- The Council of Trent anathematized the statement that Mass should only be celebrated in the vernacular. In Vatican II, with the lawfulness of the use of Latin established and no longer in doubt, the use of the vernacular was thought to be advantageous and was therefore authorized for the sake of better comprehension of the mysteries.¹⁷
- Likewise, with the complete efficacy of Eucharistic Communion under the species of bread alone well-established, reception under both kinds was authorized under certain circumstances.¹⁸

¹² *Sacram Liturgiam*, 25 January, 1964

¹³ *Missale Romanum*, 3 April, 1969.

¹⁴ GIRM, §§2-3, 11; *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, §§7, 47.

¹⁵ GIRM, §§4-5

¹⁶ *Quo Primum*, §2; GIRM §6.

¹⁷ GIRM, §12.

¹⁸ GIRM, §14.

- Sacred buildings, namely Churches, should “be truly worthy and beautiful and be signs and symbols of heavenly realities.”¹⁹

5. Pre-Conciliar & Post-Conciliar Teachings:

5a. Pre-Conciliar Teaching:

Unlike the other topics disputed by the Society, the Catholic teaching on the Mass extends all the way back to the very beginning of the Church’s history, with its roots in the Last Supper, wherein Christ instituted the Eucharist,²⁰ His very Body and Blood,²¹ as an offering that would be sacrificed during His subsequent Passion on the Cross.

Following His command to “Do this in remembrance of me,”²² Christian worship has placed the Eucharist, and its offering in the Sacrifice of the Mass, in its absolute center. From the beginning, Christians would meet in groups to celebrate “the breaking of bread.”²³ This gathering, which initially was celebrated alongside the traditional Jewish liturgies, soon developed a regular form that took shape as the numbers of Christians grew.²⁴ An early form of the liturgy was described by St. Justin Martyr, in his First Apology (150 A.D.):

“But we, after we have thus washed him who has been convinced and has assented to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called brethren are assembled, in order that we may offer hearty prayers in common for ourselves and for the baptized [illuminated] person, and for all others in every place, that we may be counted worthy, now that we have learned the truth, by our works also to be found good citizens and keepers of the commandments, so that we may be saved with an everlasting salvation. ***Having ended the prayers, we salute one another with a kiss. There is then brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands. And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their assent by saying Amen.*** This word Amen answers in the Hebrew language to *γένοιτο* [so be it]. And when the president has given thanks, and all the people have expressed their

¹⁹ GIRM, §288-289.

²⁰ Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:14-20.

²¹ John 6:22-69.

²² Luke 22:19.

²³ Acts 20:7.

²⁴ Jungmann, S.J., Fr. Josef (1951). *The Mass of the Roman Rite*. “Vol. 1: Its Origins and Development.” Ave Maria Press, pg. 10-11.

assent, *those who are called by us deacons give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion.*

“And this food is called among us Εὐχαριστία [the Eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said, This do in remembrance of Me, Luke 22:19 this is My body; and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, This is My blood; and gave it to them alone. Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn.

“And we afterwards continually remind each other of these things. And the wealthy among us help the needy; and we always keep together; and for all things wherewith we are supplied, we bless the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Ghost. *And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things.* Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the orphans and widows and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need. But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world;

and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead. For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn (Saturday); and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught them these things, which we have submitted to you also for your consideration.” (Ch. 65-67).

From here, the form of the Mass began to take shape, as did the teaching surrounding it. At multiple points in history, the Church has taken a direct hand, sometimes to clarify, modify, or even create or discontinue some discipline or practice (including, but not limited to):

- During the reign of Pope Adrian II (867-872), the Pope authorized Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Moravia the use of a translation of the liturgy into the Slavic language. In a similar manner, missionaries throughout Church history would be authorized to use vernacular translations of the Roman Missal, including Syriac translations in India (c. 1500s),²⁵ Chinese (authorized by Pope Paul V on June 27, 1615),²⁶ Arabic in Persia (on April 17, 1624), Georgian and Armenian in Georgia (on April 30, 1631),²⁷ Mohawk and Algonquin translations in Canada (c. 1800s),²⁸ and Hindi in 1958.
- In 1439, at the Council of Florence, in the Bull of Union with the Armenians, the Church described the proper matter and form of each of the sacraments, including the Eucharist, which among other things, specified that only bread and wine mixed together with water were to be offered in sacrificed, and that, by virtue of the words spoken by a priest *in persona christi* effects the sacrament.
- In 1570, During the implementation period following the Council of Trent, Pope St. Pius V, with the assistance of “learned men”, oversaw the standardization of the Roman Missal into a single version that replaced all other western liturgies currently in use (an exemption could be made for any practice older than 200 years old), and promulgated the apostolic constitution *Quo Primum* to that effect.²⁹

²⁵ De Marco, Angelus (1963). "Liturgical Languages". *The American Ecclesiastical Review*. Catholic University of America Press. pg. 90-99.

²⁶ *Collectanea S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide*. Vol. I. Rome: Typographia Polyglotta Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide. 1907. p. 70n.

²⁷ Gratsch, Edward J. (October 1958). "The Language of the Roman Rite". *American Ecclesiastical Review*. 139 (4): 255–260.

²⁸ Salvucci, Claudio (2011). "American Indian Requiem Masses from the Book of the Seven Nations". *New Liturgical Movement*. Retrieved August 2, 2022.

²⁹ Supporters of the 1962 Missal have claimed that *Quo Primum* barred future pontiffs from modifying the Missal in any way. This claim is countered by the fact that this apostolic constitution was an exercise of the Pope’s ordinary Magisterium, not an act of the Pope’s solemn Magisterium or a dogmatic *ex cathedra* definition, and therefore cannot bind successor Popes.

- In 1794, Pope Pius VI in his papal bull *Auctorem Fidei*, condemned certain Gallican and Jansenist propositions of the Synod of Pistoia that touched on the liturgy, in particular Condemned Proposition 66, which called the introduction of the vernacular into liturgical prayers as “reckless” and “disturbing the order prescribed for the celebration of the mysteries”.³⁰
- During his reign, Pope St. Pius X issued several decrees that coincided with the Liturgical Movement taking place at the same time. In addition to an overall of the Roman Breviary, St. Pius X changed the age of eligibility for Communion from 12 to 7 (in *Quam Singulari*), promoted Gregorian Chant and other forms of sacred music (in *Tra Le Sollecitudini*), and encouraged frequent, even daily, reception of Holy Communion (in *Sacra Tridentina*).
- In 1955, Pope Pius XII reformed the Holy Week liturgy with new customs and a revised list of Lessons.
- In 1962, Pope St. John XXIII modified the Roman Canon to include the name of St. Joseph, while removing the term “perfidis” (“faithless”) from the Good Friday Prayer for the Jews.

At others, the Church set out to define what the Mass even was. The most famous example took place in the wake of the Protestant Reformation, when the Council of Trent was convened, in part, to respond to Protestant teachings and propositions. The Eucharist and the Sacrifice of the Mass were given special attention across multiple sessions, summarized here.

First, was Session 13, which issued a decree regarding the Holy Eucharist. It affirmed the following teachings:

1. Within the Most Holy Eucharist is contained truly, really, and substantially the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. It should not be considered a mere sign or virtue.
2. The Sacrament was instituted by Christ Himself, in which he poured out the riches of His Divine Love toward men as a remembrance of His works, that it should be received as “the spiritual food of souls.”
3. The Eucharist holds a unique place over the other Sacraments because it contains “the Author Himself of sanctity.” The whole of Christ is contained under each species of bread and wine. Upon consecration, the Real Presence of Christ remains permanently, even in consecrated particles.

³⁰ § 11, Proposition LXVI. This was clearly not to condemn the use of the vernacular in the Liturgy *per se*, as such had already been permitted with Sts. Cyril and Methodius centuries earlier, but the specific proposition that “it would be a work against apostolic practice and against God's plans not to provide the people with the easiest means to unite their voice to that of the whole Church.” In other words, the Pope condemned this proposition to protect liturgical integrity and to defend the venerable use of Latin in the Latin Rite.

4. By the consecration of the bread and wine, though the accidents remain, a conversion is made in which the substance of both become the Body and Blood of Christ, properly called “transubstantiation.”
5. The Eucharist, because it contains the Real Presence, is owed special veneration and solemnity.
6. The practice of reserving the Eucharist and bearing it to the Sick is an ancient and worthy observance and should be retained.
7. Faith alone is insufficient preparation to receive the Eucharist. It is of the utmost importance that anyone who would receive Him is worthy to do so. That is, they must not be aware of any mortal sin, and should make use of sacramental confession if necessary.
8. Christ, in the Eucharist, can be consumed both sacramentally, spiritually, and (ideally) both. The custom of priests communicating to themselves should be retained.

The second was Session 21, which was smaller in scope, keeping to the subject of communion under both species (bread and wine) and on the communion of infants:

1. It is not necessary for the laity, or clergy when not consecrating, to receive under both species, as God is fully present under both.
2. Children who are not yet at the age of reason are not obligated to receive sacramental communion.

The third and final was Session 22, which treated deeply on the Sacrifice of the Mass:

1. At the Last Supper, anticipating His sacrifice on the cross, Christ instituted the new Passover, Himself, to be represented and immolated in an unbloody manner. In other words, within the Mass, the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ, is offered as a true and proper sacrifice to God.
2. Through the words “Do this in memory of me,”³¹ Christ instituted the apostles as priests to offer said sacrifice.
3. More than a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, the Sacrifice of the Mass is also propitiatory in that, by offering it, it obtains for both the living dead mercy and grace.
4. In no way could the Sacrifice of the Mass be considered blasphemy.
5. While the Mass is offered in honor of the Saints, it is not offered to them, but to God alone. Nevertheless, the patronage of the Saints is requested that they may intercede for us in Heaven.
6. The Canon of the Mass, composed as it is out of the traditions of the apostles, the pious institutions of the holy pontiffs, and even the very words of the Lord, is free of error.

³¹ Luke 22:19.

7. The Church makes use of low and loud tones, as well as ceremonies, such as benedictions, lights, incense, vestments, etc., to lift the mind up to Heaven, and cannot in themselves be considered incentives to impiety.
8. Desirable as it is that the faithful should communicate spiritually and sacramentally at every Mass, it does not follow that Masses wherein the priest celebrates alone should be considered invalid.
9. The practice of reciting the words of consecration in a low tone, mixing wine with water, or celebrating the Mass in Latin, should not be condemned. It did not seem prudent to the Tridentine Fathers to permit Mass to be celebrated in the vernacular, but that priests ought to explain the mystery of the sacrifice, or the readings, especially on Sundays or festivals.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, arising in part from the works of Dom Prosper Guéranger, what became known as the Liturgical Movement began to gain traction, encouraging the laity to live the liturgy, and to participate more fully. The movement had a profound influence on the Church beginning with St. Pius X, who undertook to begin a revision of the liturgical books. His successor, Pope Pius XII, continued to encourage these reforms, while reaffirming that the right to make any addition, subtraction, or modification to the liturgy is reserved to the Church's ordinary authority, in his November 20, 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei*:

“From time immemorial the ecclesiastical hierarchy has exercised this right in matters liturgical. It has organized and regulated divine worship, enriching it constantly with new splendor and beauty, to the glory of God and the spiritual profit of Christians. What is more, it has not been slow - keeping the substance of the Mass and sacraments carefully intact - to modify what it deemed not altogether fitting, and to add what appeared more likely to increase the honor paid to Jesus Christ and the august Trinity, and to instruct and stimulate the Christian people to greater advantage.”³²

“The sacred liturgy does, in fact, include divine as well as human elements. The former, instituted as they have been by God, cannot be changed in any way by men. ***But the human components admit of various modifications, as the needs of the age, circumstance and the good of souls may require, and as the ecclesiastical hierarchy, under guidance of the Holy Spirit, may have authorized.*** This will explain the marvelous variety of Eastern and Western rites. Here is the reason for the gradual addition, through successive development, of particular religious customs and practices of piety only faintly discernible in earlier times. Hence likewise it happens from time to time that certain devotions long since forgotten are revived and practiced anew. All these developments attest the abiding life of the immaculate Spouse

³² Cf. Constitution *Divini cultus*, December 20, 1928.

of Jesus Christ through these many centuries. They are the sacred language she uses, as the ages run their course, to profess to her divine Spouse her own faith along with that of the nations committed to her charge, and her own unflinching love. They furnish proof, besides, of the wisdom of the teaching method she employs to arouse and nourish constantly the ‘Christian instinct.’ (§ 49-50).

“The Church has further used her right of control over liturgical observance to protect the purity of divine worship against abuse from dangerous and imprudent innovations introduced by private individuals and particular churches. Thus it came about - during the 16th century, when usages and customs of this sort had become increasingly prevalent and exaggerated, and when private initiative in matters liturgical threatened to compromise the integrity of faith and devotion, to the great advantage of heretics and further spread of their errors - that in the year 1588, Our predecessor Sixtus V of immortal memory established the Sacred Congregation of Rites, charged with the defense of the legitimate rites of the Church and with the prohibition of any spurious innovation.³³ This body fulfills even today the official function of supervision and legislation with regard to all matters touching the sacred liturgy.³⁴ (§ 57).

“It follows from this that ***the Sovereign Pontiff alone enjoys the right to recognize and establish any practice touching the worship of God, to introduce and approve new rites, as also to modify those he judges to require modification.***³⁵ Bishops, for their part, have the right and duty carefully to watch over the exact observance of the prescriptions of the sacred canons respecting divine worship.³⁶ ***Private individuals, therefore, even though they be clerics, may not be left to decide for themselves in these holy and venerable matters, involving as they do the religious life of Christian society along with the exercise of the priesthood of Jesus Christ and worship of God; concerned as they are with the honor due to the Blessed Trinity, the Word Incarnate and His august mother and the other saints, and with the salvation of souls as well. For the same reason no private person has any***

³³ Constitution *Immensa*, January 22, 1588.

³⁴ Code of Canon Law, can. 253.

³⁵ Cf. Code of Canon Law, can. 1257. This declaration cuts against the claim that the Pope has no right to modify the liturgy in the least. While the substance of the Mass cannot change, its expression clearly falls under the Pope’s power of governance and church discipline, as spelled out in Vatican I’s constitution *Pastor Aeternus*: “Wherefore we teach and declare that, by divine ordinance, the Roman Church possesses a pre-eminence of ordinary power over every other Church, and that this jurisdictional power of the Roman Pontiff is both episcopal and immediate. ***Both clergy and faithful, of whatever rite and dignity, both singly and collectively, are bound to submit to this power by the duty of hierarchical subordination and true obedience, and this not only in matters concerning faith and morals, but also in those which regard the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world.***” (Ch. 3, §1-4, 18 July, 1870)

³⁶ Cf. Code of Canon Law, can. 1261.

authority to regulate external practices of this kind, which are intimately bound up with Church discipline and with the order, unity and concord of the Mystical Body and frequently even with the integrity of Catholic faith itself. (§ 58).

“In every measure taken, then, let proper contact with the ecclesiastical hierarchy be maintained. Let no one arrogate to himself the right to make regulations and impose them on others at will. ***Only the Sovereign Pontiff, as the successor of Saint Peter, charged by the divine Redeemer with the feeding of His entire flock,³⁷ and with him, in obedience to the Apostolic See, the bishops ‘whom the Holy Ghost has placed . . . to rule the Church of God,’³⁸ have the right and the duty to govern the Christian people.*** Consequently, Venerable Brethren, whenever you assert your authority - even on occasion with wholesome severity – you are not merely acquitting yourselves of your duty; you are defending the very will of the Founder of the Church.” (§ 65).

Many of Pope Pius XII’s observations and assertions would feature heavily in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

5b. Post-Conciliar Teaching:

POPE ST. PAUL VI

In determining whether Vatican II, and the liturgical reform that followed, was a break from the previous understanding of the Mass, it seems necessary to start with the Pope who promulgated the Missal that bears his name, beginning with his 1965 encyclical *Mysterium Fidei*, which soundly affirmed the propositions at the Council of Trent. While many passages from this encyclical could be referenced, three come readily that confirm both the doctrines on the Mass as Sacrifice and the Real Presence:

“It is a good idea to recall at the very outset what may be termed the heart and core of the doctrine, namely that, ***by means of the Mystery of the Eucharist, the Sacrifice of the Cross which was once carried out on Calvary is re-enacted in wonderful fashion and is constantly recalled, and its salvific power is applied to the forgiving of the sins we commit each day***”³⁹ (§ 27).

“Just as Moses made the Old Testament sacred with the blood of calves,⁴⁰ so too Christ the Lord took the New Testament, of which He is the

³⁷ Cf. John, 21:15-17.

³⁸ Acts, 20:28.

³⁹ Cf. Council of Trent, *Teaching on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, c. I.

⁴⁰ Cf. Ex 24.8.

Mediator, and made it sacred through His own blood, in instituting the mystery of the Eucharist. For, as the Evangelists narrate, at the Last Supper "he took bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, This is my body, given for you; do this for a commemoration of me. And so with the cup, when supper was ended, This cup, he said, is the new testament, in my Blood which is to be shed for you."⁴¹ And by bidding the Apostles to do this in memory of Him, He made clear that He wanted it to be forever repeated. ***This intention of Christ was faithfully carried out by the primitive Church through her adherence to the teaching of the Apostles and through her gatherings to celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice.*** As St. Luke is careful to point out, 'They occupied themselves continually with the Apostles' teaching, their fellowship in the breaking of bread, and the fixed times of prayer.'⁴² The faithful used to derive such spiritual fervor from this practice that it was said of them that 'there was one heart and soul in all the company of the believers'⁴³ (§ 28).

"We will pass over the other citations and rest content with recalling the testimony offered by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who wrote the following memorable words for the neophytes whom he was instructing in the Christian faith: '***After the spiritual sacrifice, the un-bloody act of worship, has been completed, we bend over this propitiatory offering and beg God to grant peace to all the Churches, to give harmony to the whole world, to bless our rulers, our soldiers and our companions, to aid the sick and afflicted, and in general to assist all those who stand in need; we all pray for all these intentions and we offer this victim for them...***and last of all for our deceased holy forefathers and bishops and for all those who have lived among us. For we have a deep conviction that great help will be afforded those souls for whom prayers are offered while this holy and awesome victim is present.' In support of this, this holy Doctor offers the example of a crown made for an emperor in order to win a pardon for some exiles, and he concludes his talk with these words: 'In the same fashion, when we offer our prayers to God for the dead, even those who are sinners, we are not just making a crown but instead are offering Christ who was slaughtered for our sins, and thus begging the merciful God to take pity both on them and on ourselves.'⁴⁴ St. Augustine attests that this custom of offering the 'sacrifice which ransomed us' also for the dead was observed in the Church at Rome,⁴⁵ and he mentions at the same

⁴¹ Lk 22.19-20; cf. Mt 26.26-28; Mk 14.22-24.

⁴² Acts 2.42.

⁴³ Acts 4.32.

⁴⁴ *Catecheses*, 23 [*myst.* 5]. 8-18; PG 33.1115-1118.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Confessions* IX, 12.32; PL 32.777; cf. *ibid.* IX 11, 27; PL 32.775.

time that the universal Church observed this custom as something handed down from the Fathers.”⁴⁶ (§ 30).

Five years after convening the Concilium to implement *Sacrosanctum Concilium*,⁴⁷ Pope St. Paul VI issued the apostolic constitution, adopting the finalized revision of the Roman Missal and promulgating it effective the First Sunday of Advent in 1969. Among the most notable changes to the rubrics that find their origin in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* include:⁴⁸

- The Ordinary was simplified, “due care being taken to preserve [its] substance,” with the removal of “elements which, with the passage of time, came to be duplicated, or were added with but little advantage,”⁴⁹ accomplished by (1) suppressing the Prayers at the Foot of the Altar and Ascending the Altar and the *Suscipe sancta Trinitas* (Prayer to the Holy Trinity),⁵⁰ (2) reducing the redundant occurrences of both the *Confiteor* and the *Domine Non Sum Dignus* (“Lord, I am not worthy...”), and (3) reformulating the Offertory Prayers.
- Elements that “suffered injury through accidents of history are now to be restored to the earlier norm of the Holy Fathers”⁵¹ were reintroduced, including the Sign of Peace,⁵² the Penitential Rite at the beginning of Mass, and the Universal Prayer.⁵³
- The introduction of three additional Canons, or Eucharistic Prayers (based on the Apostolic Tradition of Hyppolitus (II), the 4th Century Anaphora of St. Basil (III), and the Apostolic Constitutions of Antioch and St. Basil’s Byzantine Liturgy (IV)), all with the same words of consecration.
- The Lectionary was massively expanded to a 3-year reading cycle, resulting in a larger selection of Bible readings, as well as three readings on Sunday (a Lesson, Epistle and Gospel reading) compared to two previously.⁵⁴
- Communion under both species was reintroduced,⁵⁵ while leaving the Tridentine canons concerning the reception of under either form intact.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Serm* 172.2.; PL 38.936; cf. *On the care to be taken of the dead*, 13, PL 40.593.

⁴⁷ *Sacram Liturgiam*, 25 January, 1964.

⁴⁸ A more detailed comparison of both the 1962 and current rubrics is attached as EXHIBIT A

⁴⁹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, § 50 (4 December, 1963).

⁵⁰ The “Last Gospel” (John 1:1-14) had already been suppressed by Pope Pius XII by this point.

⁵¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, § 50 (4 December, 1963).

⁵² The Sign of Peace is present in the Mass of St. Pius V, albeit limited to the Priests and Deacons in the Sanctuary during a Solemn High Mass.

⁵³ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, § 53 (4 December, 1963).

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, § 51.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, § 55.

- Greater involvement by the laity, which included reciting responses formerly reserved to altar servers during High Masses.⁵⁶
- The use of the vernacular was permitted and later expanded to the entire liturgy, although the base text of the Missal was still in Latin.⁵⁷

In various quarters following its promulgation, the revised Missal was criticized, usually due to unauthorized experimentation with its celebration. Other, more serious critiques were leveled at some of the authorized changes to various liturgical practices, such as the relocation of the Tabernacle from the Altar,⁵⁸ and the use of the *versus populum* orientation.⁵⁹ In extreme cases, such as with the Short Critical Study used by the Society, the revised Missal itself was criticized for being too “protestantized”, downplaying its sacrificial dimension and distinctly Catholic elements in favor of a false-ecumenical meal.

Having heard these critiques, Pope St. Paul VI gave multiple addresses leading up to the promulgation of the revised Missal. Two of these were given on November 19, 1969, which discussed the rationale for the revised liturgy:

“In what does the change consist? You will see that it consists in many new ritual instructions which will require, especially in the beginning, a certain amount of attention and care. Personal devotion and a communal sense will make these instructions easy and pleasing to observe. ***But let us be clear: nothing has changed in the substance of our traditional Mass.*** Someone might be upset by a certain ceremony, or an attached rubric, as if it were—or as if it concealed—an alteration or a weakening of perennial and authoritatively sanctioned truths of the Catholic Faith; almost as if the equation between the law of prayer, *lex orandi*, and the law of faith, *lex credendi*, were compromised.

“But it is not so. Absolutely not. ***First of all because a rite and its associated rubrics do not belong per se to the category of a dogmatic definition, but rather can vary in their theological standing according to the***

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, § 30.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, § 36 & 54, cf. *Mediator Dei*, § 60 (20 November, 1947).

⁵⁸ *Inter Oecumenici*, § 95, GIRM § 314-317. “It is more in keeping with the meaning of the sign that the tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved not be on an altar on which Mass is celebrated.” In other words, having the Real Presence already on the altar during Mass would detract from the Consecration. Indeed, the presence of the Tabernacle on the altar was a recent development, during the reign of Pope Paul V (in 1614), as a means of making the tabernacle more visible and countering the Protestant denial of the Real Presence.

⁵⁹ *Inter Oecumenici*, § 91, GIRM § 299. “The altar should be built apart from the wall, in such a way that it is possible to walk around it easily and that Mass can be celebrated at it facing the people, which is desirable wherever possible. The altar should, moreover, be so placed as to be truly the center toward which the attention of the whole congregation of the faithful naturally turns. The altar is usually fixed and is dedicated.” Regardless of how one interprets this instruction, it should still be noted that (1) the Missal still presumes an *ad orientem* posture, and (2) the priest, while technically facing the people in a *versus populum* posture, still faces the altar.

liturgical context to which they refer; these words and gestures refer to a lived religious action, one which springs from an ineffable mystery of the Divine presence which is not always realized in an univocal form. This religious action can be analyzed and expressed in logically satisfying doctrinal formulas only by means of a theological critique. Furthermore, *the Mass of the new order is and remains—if anything more strongly evident in certain respects—the perennial Mass. The unity between the Lord’s Supper and the sacrifice of the cross, and the re-presentation of the one and of the other in the Mass, is inviolably affirmed and celebrated in the new order as in the preceding one. The Mass is and remains the memorial of Christ’s Last Supper in which the Lord, transforming the bread and wine into his Body and Blood, instituted the sacrifice of the new Testament and willed that that sacrifice— through the power of his Priesthood conferred on the Apostles—be renewed in its identity, but offered in an unbloody and sacramental way, in perennial memory of him, until his final coming.*⁶⁰

“If in the new rite you find more clearly placed the relationship between the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharistic Liturgy proper – the latter being in a sense the fulfillment of the former (cfr. BOUYER) – or if you observe the degree to which the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice reclaims the participation of the assembled faithful, who in the Mass are and fully experience themselves as “Church,” or if you see expressed other marvelous characteristics of our Mass, do not think that this is intended to alter its genuine and traditional essence. Appreciate, rather, the way in which, through this new and diffuse language, the Church wishes to render her liturgical message more effective and to draw near to each of her children and to the whole People of God in a more direct and pastoral manner.”

And on November 26, on which he reflected on the uncertainty surrounding the revision, and while acknowledging the upheaval the revision was certain to cause, he also offered reassurance that the substance had not changed, and expressed hope that the revised rite would be given its due care and respect:

“[I]f we look at the matter properly, *we shall see that the fundamental outline of the Mass is still the traditional one, not only theologically but also spiritually. Indeed, if the rite is carried out as it ought to be, the spiritual aspect will be found to have greater richness.* The greater simplicity of the ceremonies, the variety and abundance of scriptural texts, the joint acts of the ministers, the silences which will mark various deeper moments in the rite, will all help to bring this out.”⁶¹

⁶⁰ cfr. DE LA TAILLE, *Mysterium Fidei*, Elucid. IX

⁶¹ It was these series of addresses that satisfied Cardinal Ottaviani that the revised liturgy was not the departure from traditional Catholic teaching some feared it would be. See Footnote #6.

POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, promulgated by Pope St. John Paul II in 1992, gives an extensive treatment on the Liturgy (Pt. 2, §1 “The Sacramental Economy”) and the Eucharist (Pt. 2, §2, Ch. 1, Art. 3, ¶1-7: “The Sacrament of the Eucharist”). It suffices to quote from the Summary offered at the end of the Catechism’s teaching on the Eucharist to establish that the Church, even today, upholds its traditional teachings, particularly from Trent, on the Real Presence, the sacrificial nature and propitiatory purpose of the Mass, the concept of Transubstantiation, the unique role of the sacramental priesthood, the necessity to be in a state of grace to receive Holy Communion, and the adoration due to the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

1406. Jesus said: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; . . . he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and . . . abides in me, and I in him" (Jn 6:51, 54, 56).

1407. The Eucharist is the heart and the summit of the Church's life, for in it Christ associates his Church and all her members with his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered once for all on the cross to his Father; by this sacrifice he pours out the graces of salvation on his Body which is the Church.

1408. The Eucharistic celebration always includes: the proclamation of the Word of God; thanksgiving to God the Father for all his benefits, above all the gift of his Son; the consecration of bread and wine; and participation in the liturgical banquet by receiving the Lord's body and blood. These elements constitute one single act of worship.

1409. The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's Passover, that is, of the work of salvation accomplished by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, a work made present by the liturgical action.

1410. It is Christ himself, the eternal high priest of the New Covenant who, acting through the ministry of the priests, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice. and it is the same Christ, really present under the species of bread and wine, who is the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

1411. ***Only validly ordained priests can preside at the Eucharist and consecrate the bread and the wine so that they become the Body and Blood of the Lord.***

1412. The essential signs of the Eucharistic sacrament are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus during the Last

Supper: "This is my body which will be given up for you.... This is the cup of my blood...."

1413. *By the consecration the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is brought about. Under the consecrated species of bread and wine Christ himself, living and glorious, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner: his Body and his Blood, with his soul and his divinity* (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1640; 1651).

1414. *As sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God.*

1415. *Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the sacrament of penance.*

1416. Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord, forgives his venial sins, and preserves him from grave sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.

1417. The Church warmly recommends that the faithful receive Holy Communion each time they participate in the celebration of the Eucharist; she obliges them to do so at least once a year.

1418. *Because Christ himself is present in the sacrament of the altar, he is to be honored with the worship of adoration.* "To visit the Blessed Sacrament is . . . a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration toward Christ our Lord" (Paul VI, MF 66).

1419. Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints. (Pt. 2, §2, Ch. 1, Art. 3, "IN BRIEF").

St. John Paul II also touched on the liturgy and Eucharist in various letters. First, in *Dominicae Cena*e (On the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist, February 24, 1980) in which he not only reaffirmed the sacrificial nature of the Mass, but also unambiguously condemned liturgical abuses:

“The Eucharist is above all else a sacrifice. It is the sacrifice of the Redemption and also the sacrifice of the New Covenant,⁶² as we believe and as the Eastern Churches clearly profess: ‘Today’s sacrifice, the Greek Church stated centuries ago, ‘is like that offered once by the Only-begotten Incarnate Word; it is offered by Him (now as then), since it is one and the same sacrifice.’”⁶³ ***Accordingly, precisely by making this single sacrifice of our salvation present, men and the world are restored to God through the paschal newness of Redemption.*** This restoration cannot cease to be: it is the foundation of the ‘new and eternal covenant’ of God with man and of man with God. If it were missing, one would have to question both the excellence of the sacrifice of the Redemption, which in fact was perfect and definitive, and also the sacrificial value of the Mass. In fact, the Eucharist, being a true sacrifice, brings about this restoration to God. (§ 9)

...

“Upon all of us who, through the grace of God, are ministers of the Eucharist, there weighs a particular responsibility for the ideas and attitudes of our brothers and sisters who have been entrusted to our pastoral care. It is our vocation to nurture, above all by personal example, every healthy manifestation of worship towards Christ present and operative in that sacrament of love. May God preserve us from acting otherwise and weakening that worship by ‘becoming unaccustomed’ to various manifestations and forms of eucharistic worship which express a perhaps ‘traditional’ but healthy piety, and which express above all that “sense of the faith” possessed by the whole People of God, as the Second Vatican Council recalled.⁶⁴

“...I would like to ask forgiveness – in my own name and in the name of all of you, venerable and dear brothers in the episcopate – ***for everything which, for whatever reason, through whatever human weakness, impatience or negligence, and also through the at times partial, one-sided and erroneous application of the directives of the Second Vatican Council, may have caused scandal and disturbance concerning the interpretation of the doctrine and the veneration due to this great sacrament.*** And I pray the Lord

⁶² Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 2, 47: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 83f.; 113; Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 3 and 28: AAS 57 (1965), pp. 6. 33f.; Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio* 2: AAS 57 (1965), p. 91; Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 13: AAS 58 (1966), pp.1011f., Ecumenical Council of Trent, Session XXII, chap. I and II: *Conciliorum Oecumenorum Decreta*, ed. 3, Bologna 1973, pp. 732f. especially: una eademque est hostia, idem nunc offerens sacerdotum ministerio, qui se ipsum tunc in cruce obtulit, sola offerendi ratione diversa (ibid., p. 733).

⁶³ Synodus Constantinopolitana adversus Sotericum (January 1156 and May 1157): Angelo Mai, *Spicilegium romanum*, t. X, Rome 1844, p. 77; PG 140, 190; cf. Martin Jugie, *Dict. Theol. Cath.*, t. X, 1338; *Theologia dogmatica christianorum orientalium*, Paris, 1930, pp. 317-320.

⁶⁴ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 12: AAS 57 (1965), pp.16f.

Jesus that in the future we may avoid in our manner of dealing with this sacred mystery anything which could weaken or disorient in any way the sense of reverence and love that exists in our faithful people.” (§ 12)

Second, in the encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (On the Eucharist and its Relationship to the Church), promulgated on April 17, 2003, the Pope reaffirmed the importance of the Eucharist in the life of the Church, and again called for an end to abuses:

“The Second Vatican Council rightly proclaimed that *the Eucharistic sacrifice is ‘the source and summit of the Christian life.’*⁶⁵ ‘For the most holy Eucharist contains the Church's entire spiritual wealth: Christ himself, our passover and living bread. Through his own flesh, now made living and life-giving by the Holy Spirit, he offers life to men.’⁶⁶ Consequently the gaze of the Church is constantly turned to her Lord, present in the Sacrament of the Altar, in which she discovers the full manifestation of his boundless love. (Introduction, § 1).

“Unfortunately, alongside these lights, there are also shadows. In some places the practice of Eucharistic adoration has been almost completely abandoned. In various parts of the Church abuses have occurred, leading to confusion with regard to sound faith and Catholic doctrine concerning this wonderful sacrament. At times one encounters an extremely reductive understanding of the Eucharistic mystery. *Stripped of its sacrificial meaning, it is celebrated as if it were simply a fraternal banquet. Furthermore, the necessity of the ministerial priesthood, grounded in apostolic succession, is at times obscured and the sacramental nature of the Eucharist is reduced to its mere effectiveness as a form of proclamation. This has led here and there to ecumenical initiatives which, albeit well-intentioned, indulge in Eucharistic practices contrary to the discipline by which the Church expresses her faith. How can we not express profound grief at all this? The Eucharist is too great a gift to tolerate ambiguity and depreciation.* (Introduction, § 10).

“It must be lamented that, especially in the years following the post-conciliar liturgical reform, as a result of a misguided sense of creativity and adaptation there have been a number of abuses which have been a source of suffering for many. A certain reaction against ‘formalism’ has led some, especially in certain regions, to consider the ‘forms’ chosen by the Church's great liturgical tradition and her Magisterium as non-binding and to introduce unauthorized innovations which are often completely inappropriate.

⁶⁵ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 11.

⁶⁶ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 5.

“I consider it my duty, therefore to appeal urgently *that the liturgical norms for the celebration of the Eucharist be observed with great fidelity. These norms are a concrete expression of the authentically ecclesial nature of the Eucharist; this is their deepest meaning. Liturgy is never anyone's private property, be it of the celebrant or of the community in which the mysteries are celebrated.* The Apostle Paul had to address fiery words to the community of Corinth because of grave shortcomings in their celebration of the Eucharist resulting in divisions (schismata) and the emergence of factions (haireseis).⁶⁷ Our time, too, calls for a renewed awareness and appreciation of liturgical norms as a reflection of, and a witness to, the one universal Church made present in every celebration of the Eucharist. Priests who faithfully celebrate Mass according to the liturgical norms, and communities which conform to those norms, quietly but eloquently demonstrate their love for the Church. Precisely to bring out more clearly this deeper meaning of liturgical norms, I have asked the competent offices of the Roman Curia to prepare a more specific document, including prescriptions of a juridical nature, on this very important subject. *No one is permitted to undervalue the mystery entrusted to our hands: it is too great for anyone to feel free to treat it lightly and with disregard for its sacredness and its universality.*” (Ch. 5, § 52).

POPE BENEDICT XVI

Building on the efforts of the previous papacies, Pope Benedict XVI, following a Synod on the Eucharist, issued the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis* (On the Eucharist as the Source and Summit of The Church's Life and Mission, February 22, 2007), which reaffirmed and expanded on the sacrificial element of the Mass and its connection to Hebrew passover:

“This leads us to reflect on the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. It took place within a ritual meal commemorating the foundational event of the people of Israel: their deliverance from slavery in Egypt. This ritual meal, which called for the sacrifice of lambs,⁶⁸ was a remembrance of the past, but at the same time a prophetic remembrance, the proclamation of a deliverance yet to come. The people had come to realize that their earlier liberation was not definitive, for their history continued to be marked by slavery and sin. The remembrance of their ancient liberation thus expanded to the invocation and expectation of a yet more profound, radical, universal and definitive salvation. This is the context in which Jesus introduces the newness of his gift. In the prayer of praise, the Berakah, he does not simply thank the Father for the great events of past history, but also for his own ‘exaltation.’ *In instituting the sacrament of the Eucharist, Jesus anticipates and makes*

⁶⁷ cf. 1 Cor 11:17-34

⁶⁸ cf. Ex 12:1-28, 43-51

*present the sacrifice of the Cross and the victory of the resurrection. At the same time, he reveals that he himself is the true sacrificial lamb, destined in the Father's plan from the foundation of the world, as we read in The First Letter of Peter.*⁶⁹ By placing his gift in this context, Jesus shows the salvific meaning of his death and resurrection, a mystery which renews history and the whole cosmos. The institution of the Eucharist demonstrates how Jesus' death, for all its violence and absurdity, became in him a supreme act of love and mankind's definitive deliverance from evil.” (§ 10)

5c. The Teaching of the Current Pontificate:

The sacrificial element of the Mass is resoundingly affirmed throughout the current pontificate of Pope Francis. Three ready instances come to mind: (1) during an ongoing catechesis on the Mass on July 3, 2018:

“The action of the Holy Spirit and the efficacy of Christ’s own words uttered by the priest *make truly present, in the form of bread and wine, His Body and His Blood, His sacrifice offered on the cross once and for all.* (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1375).” (General Audience, *Catechesis of the Holy Father*, ¶ 4).

...during a June 14, 2020 homily:

“‘Do this in remembrance of me’ (1 Cor 11:24). Do! *The Eucharist is not simply an act of remembrance; it is a fact: the Lord’s Passover is made present once again for us. In Mass the death and resurrection of Jesus are set before us.* Do this in remembrance of me: come together and celebrate the Eucharist as a community, as a people, as a family, in order to remember me. We cannot do without the Eucharist, for it is God’s memorial. And it heals our wounded memory. The Eucharist first heals our orphaned memory. We are living at a time of great orphanage. The Eucharist heals orphaned memory.” (Homily, June 14, 2020).

...and in the apostolic letter *Desiderio Desideravi* (June 29, 2022), written as a reflective follow-up to the motu proprio *Traditionis Custodes*:

“*The content of the bread broken is the cross of Jesus, his sacrifice of obedience out of love for the Father.* If we had not had the Last Supper, that is to say, if we had not had the ritual anticipation of his death, we would have never been able to grasp how the carrying out of his being condemned to death could have been in fact the act of perfect worship, pleasing to the Father, the only true act of worship, the only true liturgy. *Only a few hours after the Supper, the apostles could have seen in the cross of Jesus, if they*

⁶⁹ cf. 1:18-20

could have borne the weight of it, what it meant for Jesus to say, “body offered,” “blood poured out.” It is this of which we make memorial in every Eucharist. When the Risen One returns from the dead to break the bread for the disciples at Emmaus, and for his disciples who had gone back to fishing for fish and not for people on the Sea of Galilee, that gesture of breaking the bread opens their eyes. It heals them from the blindness inflicted by the horror of the cross, and it renders them capable of “seeing” the Risen One, of believing in the Resurrection.” (*Desiderio Desideravi*, §7).

6. Observations:

Because a teaching of the Church isn't considered authentic unless made in communion with her magisterium, this analysis will not consider the misrepresentations of those acting in the name of some nebulous “spirit” of the council; indeed, the “spirit of Vatican II” is an unreliable authority principle given the varied and often contradictory forms it tends to take. Therefore, only the words of the document itself, in concert with the promulgated teachings of the Popes, and bishops in communion with him, regarding said document, should be considered when judging the document's intentions, since that interpretation alone is preserved from error by the Holy Spirit. The political or ideological leanings or motivations of those who wrote it, or who claim to represent it, are therefore irrelevant.

In reviewing the Ottaviani Intervention (‘the Study’), the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith concluded, on November 12, 1969, that the study contained affirmations and statements that were, none too bluntly, “superficial, exaggerated, inexact, emotional and false.” The same could be readily said of many of the Society's arguments against the revised Liturgy. To explain why, each of the Study's, and therefore the Society's, allegations will be addressed in sequence:

“The New Mass places the emphasis on ‘supper’ and ‘memorial,’ rather than on the representation of the Sacrifice of Calvary.”

Considering the sheer volume of teachings incorporated above from the Council, the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (‘GIRM’), and papal magisterium, this allegation dies long before arrival. To make this claim, the Society relies on an outdated version of what became the GIRM. Whatever the former version's alleged shortcomings, these were clearly considered in subsequent editions (the bolded phrases from the current edition are not considered in the Study):

“At Mass; that is, the Lord's Supper, the People of God is called together, with a priest presiding *and acting in the person of Christ*, to celebrate the memorial of the Lord, *the Eucharistic Sacrifice*. For this reason Christ's promise applies in an outstanding way to such a local gathering of the holy Church: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in

their midst” (Mt 18:20). For in the celebration of Mass, *in which the Sacrifice of the Cross is perpetuated*, Christ is really present in the very liturgical assembly gathered in his name, in the person of the minister, in his word, *and indeed substantially and continuously under the Eucharistic species.*” (§ 27)

It is scarcely necessary to repeat here the occasions that the Church in the post-conciliar period reaffirmed that the Mass represents the Sacrifice of the Cross. In the GIRM alone, the word “sacrifice” appears far more often than “supper” and “meal” combined (38 mentions to eighteen combined mentions respectively), belying the idea that the instruction downplays the sacrificial nature of the Mass. As for the rubrics themselves, the sacrificial purpose of the Mass is evident by the mere presence of the Offertory. While it was reformulated, the new form models the Hebrew Berakhahs, or “Blessings” made before meals,⁷⁰ drawing the connection between the Mass and its Hebrew origin as the sacrificial Passover meal. In addition, the Blessings are expanded to include “the Bread of Life” and “spiritual drink,”⁷¹ both clear references to John 6, when Christ referred to Himself as such.⁷²

The Missal also retains the Roman Canon, and with it its references to sacrifice. But even the additional Eucharistic Prayers contain multiple sacrificial references as well:

From Eucharistic Prayer II:

“Therefore, as we celebrate *the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you, Lord, the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation*, giving thanks that you have held us worthy to be in your presence and minister to you.”

From Eucharistic Prayer III:

“You are indeed Holy, O Lord, and all you have created rightly gives you praise, for through your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, by the power and working of the Holy Spirit, you give life to all things and make them holy, and you never cease to gather a people to yourself, so that from the rising of the sun to its setting *a pure sacrifice may be offered to your name*.

“Therefore, O Lord, we celebrate the memorial *of the saving Passion of your Son*, his wondrous Resurrection and Ascension into heaven, and as we

⁷⁰ In particular, the Blessings for Bread (“Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu, melekh ha'olam, hamotzi lehem min ha'aretz.” / “Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.”) and Wine (“Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu, Melekh ha'olam, bo're p'ri hagefen.” / “Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.”).

⁷¹ In this context, the term “spiritual” is not used to refer to God being only “spiritually present,” but rather to indicate that the Blood of Christ is true drink for our spirit or souls. The doctrine of transubstantiation, as defined by Trent, is not refuted, or even diminished here.

⁷² John 6:35, 48-51 & 53-56.

look forward to his second coming, we offer you in thanksgiving ***this holy and living sacrifice.***

“Look, we pray, upon the oblation of your Church, and, ***recognizing the sacrificial Victim by whose death you willed to reconcile us to yourself,*** grant that we, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit, may become one body, one spirit in Christ.”

From Eucharistic Prayer IV:

“Therefore, O Lord, as we now celebrate the memorial of our redemption, we remember Christ’s death and his descent to the realm of the dead; we proclaim his Resurrection and his Ascension to your right hand; and as we await his coming in glory, ***we offer you his Body and Blood, the sacrifice acceptable to you which brings salvation to the whole world.***

“***Look, O Lord, upon the Sacrifice which you yourself have provided for your Church,*** and grant in your loving kindness to all who partake of this one Bread and one Chalice that, gathered into one body by the Holy Spirit, they may truly become a living sacrifice in Christ to the praise of your glory.

“Therefore, Lord, remember now all ***for whom we make this sacrifice:*** especially your servant, N. our Pope, N. our Bishop, and the whole Order of Bishops, all the clergy, those who take part in this offering, those gathered here before you, your entire people, and all who seek you with a sincere heart.”

This contrasts with the Society’s allegation, which misinterprets the GIRM’s use of the phrase “supper” to mean a mere callback to the Last Supper only, as some Protestants believe. Instead, in this (entirely Catholic) context, “supper” does not simply refer to the last supper on Holy Thursday, but also, among other things, the sacrificial Passover meal meant to prefigure it, as well as the supper of the Lamb that features predominantly in Revelation.⁷³

“The New Mass, in its changes in prayers and rubrics, either compromises or completely obscures the ultimate (the sacrifice of praise rendered to the Most Holy Trinity), ordinary (the propitiatory sacrifice, making satisfaction to God for sin), and immanent (sacrificial) purposes of the Mass.”

It is not necessary to repeat the numerous references to sacrifice already cited to demonstrate that the immanent purposes of the Mass are not obscured in the slightest. As to the ultimate and ordinary ends, these will be addressed here.

⁷³ Revelation 19:9, “Blessed are those who are invited to the supper of the Lamb.” Indeed, this exact phrase was appended to the “Ecce Agnus Dei” prayer in the new Missal to make clear the sort of meal we are participating in at Mass.

It is difficult, in the face of so much evidence in the rubrics to the contrary, to believe that the ultimate end as a sacrifice of praise to the Holy Trinity is in any way compromised, given that, at the very beginning of the Mass, the Sign of the Cross, a prayer in and of itself to the Holy Trinity, is made to inform the entire act that follows. While it is true that the *Suscipe Sancta Trinitas* and *Placet tibi Sancta Trinitas* were suppressed in the revised Missal, it does not follow that their absence is necessarily a refutation of the Trinitarian dogma, given the many other references to it throughout the Mass, as well as the mere presence of the Feast of the Trinity (and its preface).

References to the ordinary end of the Mass as a propitiatory sacrifice also abound in the revised Missal, including but not limited to (1) the Confiteor, still present among the Penitential prayers that open the Mass, (2) the references to remission of sins and prayers for the dead in all four Canons, and (3) the requests for God's mercy throughout.

Regarding the claims that the economy of salvation is lost by the suppression of certain prayers, it is sufficient to point out their continuing references in the Canons, especially in Canon IV:

“We give you praise, Father most holy, for you are great, and you have fashioned all your works in wisdom and in love. You formed man in your own image and entrusted the whole world to his care, so that in serving you alone, the Creator, he might have dominion over all creatures.

“And when through disobedience he had lost your friendship, you did not abandon him to the domain of death. For you came in mercy to the aid of all, so that those who seek might find you. Time and again you offered them covenants and through the prophets taught them to look forward to salvation.

“And you so loved the world, Father most holy, that in the fullness of time you sent your Only Begotten Son to be our Savior. Made incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, he shared our human nature in all things but sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation, to prisoners, freedom, and to the sorrowful of heart, joy.

“To accomplish your plan, he gave himself up to death, and, rising from the dead, he destroyed death and restored life. And that we might live no longer for ourselves but for him who died and rose again for us, he sent the Holy Spirit from you, Father, as the first fruits for those who believe, so that, bringing to perfection his work in the world, he might sanctify creation to the full.”

Finally, the implication that the revised Missal suppresses the continual references to God in the Eucharistic Prayers is not supported by even a casual reading of these Canons.

It is here we see two (among many) recurring problems in the Study's reasoning.

First, we see the recurring use of false cause fallacy. While it is true that the revised Missal returns obscured elements of the Mass to the foreground (one example cited by the Study is the nourishment and sanctification of those present) it does not logically follow that, by bringing elements from the background into the fore, the elements already in the fore necessarily suffer. While the removal of certain prayers might, at most, remove some contrast from the elements in the foreground, the numerous remaining references prove that they remain in the foreground.

Second, and related to the first, is also a false dichotomy to pit elements of the Mass against each other. As a religion of "both/and," one should not see a loss of any crucial element of the Mass by the mere reintroduction of other, equally crucial elements. On the contrary, these elements complement each other and form a symphony of doctrines and meanings that deepen the Mass even as it simplifies it, perfectly in keeping with what *Sacrosanctum Concilium* called for.

"The New Mass implicitly repudiates belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist through suppression or reduction of various signs, gestures, and prayers."

This section of the Study illustrates an additional logical problem that poisons the entire document. Multiple examples cited as evidence for the Study's allegations are yanked out of crucial context that would solve the problems being alleged, and thus present a misleading picture. In tandem with the previous logical problems identified above, it is apparent that the Study's method of reasoning is entirely backwards. Rather than examining evidence and then drawing a conclusion, the author presents a claim to be true *prima facie*, and then cherry picks, if not creates out of thin air, whatever arguments or evidence can be found as, to borrow a phrase from the Study, "scaffolding" to prop these claims up.

Nowhere is this backward reasoning more evident than in this argument.

As one example, the Study claims that the instruction ignores the word "transubstantiation," proving that the Real Presence have been removed from its central position in the liturgy. This point only works if one proof-texts the GIRM for the phrase "Real Presence." If you include other words or phrases (i.e., present, presence, etc.), one could find numerous, unambiguous references to the real presence:

“[T]he wondrous mystery of the Lord’s real presence under the Eucharistic species, reaffirmed by the Second Vatican Council⁷⁴ and other documents of the Church’s Magisterium⁷⁵ in the same sense and with the same words that the Council of Trent had proposed as a matter of faith,⁷⁶ is proclaimed in the celebration of Mass not only by means of the very words of consecration, by which Christ becomes present through transubstantiation, but also by that interior disposition and outward expression of supreme reverence and adoration in which the Eucharistic Liturgy is carried out. For the same reason the Christian people is drawn on Holy Thursday of the Lord’s Supper, and on the solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, to venerate this wonderful Sacrament by a special form of adoration. (¶ 3).

“At Mass; that is, the Lord’s Supper, the People of God is called together, with a priest presiding and acting in the person of Christ, to celebrate the memorial of the Lord, the Eucharistic Sacrifice. For this reason Christ’s promise applies in an outstanding way to such a local gathering of the holy Church: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst” (Mt 18:20). For in the celebration of Mass, in which the Sacrifice of the Cross is perpetuated, Christ is really present in the very liturgical assembly gathered in his name, in the person of the minister, in his word, **and indeed substantially and continuously under the Eucharistic species.**” (¶ 27).

Other references to the Real Presence exist in the rubrics themselves (see above), even in the reformulated prayers. As stated above, the references to John 6 in the revised Offertory alone cuts against the idea that the dogma of the Real Presence is deemphasized in the revised Missal.

In another example, from within the consecration formula, the Study criticizes the move of the phrase “Mysterium Fidei” and creation of the new responses as introducing ambiguities into the underlying meaning of the consecration. The author then seemingly draws out these ambiguities on the fly, complaining that one would confuse the Real Presence recently effected with the eschatological meaning (i.e., the Second Coming). It is never sufficiently established how, considering that these

⁷⁴ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, nos. 7, 47; Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum ordinis*, nos. 5, 18.

⁷⁵ Cf. Pius XII, Encyclical Letter *Humani generis*, 12 August 1950: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis, Commentarium Officiale* (Vatican City; hereafter, AAS), 42 (1950), pp. 570-571; Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Mysterium fidei*, On the doctrine and worship of the Eucharist, 3 September 1965: AAS 57(1965), pp. 762-769; Paul VI, Solemn Profession of Faith, 30 June 1968, nos. 24-26: AAS 60 (1968), pp. 442-443; Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, On the worship of the Eucharist, 25 May 1967, nos. 3f, 9: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 543, 547.

⁷⁶ Cf. Council of Trent, session 13, *Decretum de ss. Eucharistia*, 11 October 1551: Denz-Schön, 1635-1661.

two realities do not contradict each other, however close in proximity they happen to be in the rubrics.

“The New Mass erroneously blurs the relationship between the priest and the faithful, reducing the role of the priest to mere presider while exaggerating the role of the faithful.”

This is one of the more nonsensical and exaggerated claims made by the Study. Even in Masses celebrated by the priest alone, he is doing so in union with the whole Church around the world, hence the communal element of the Mass. The “We” in the Roman Canon obviously refers to more than just the priest, even though the priest is still the one who obviously consecrates, and this is the formula even in the 1962 rubrics.

From a purely observational perspective, in every celebration according to revised Missal that adheres to the rubrics (even the ones that come close), there is an obvious and clear line of distinction between the priest and the people. As examples, (1) the GIRM mandates that the Sacrifice still cannot be affected without the Priest, (2) the priest still wears the attire of a temple priest and (3) without the priest, even Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers would have no purpose. The hysterical prediction that it would only be a matter of time before the faithful join in pronouncing the consecration formula is scarcely more than a slippery slope argument. One that has not been proved true in over 50 years since this study was published.

“The New Mass, by its adaptive and flexible nature, destroys the unity of the rite.”

Much ado is made about the loss of Latin and the flexibility of the revised Missal, to the point where the Study decries an alleged sweeping away of unity of worship. Such a complaint betrays a misunderstanding of the concept. It is the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Communion, and adherence to the Church and liturgical norms, which ensures unity of faith and worship, not whatever liturgical language is employed.⁷⁷ One could convincingly counter with the idea that, though many speak in different languages, they nonetheless offer the same prayer, a much more powerful expression of both unity and diversity across time and space than the Study appreciates.

By contrast, using the author's logic, one could level the (incorrect) accusation that, by insisting on Latin in cultures with languages that have no connection to the Latin language, the Tridentine Missal is bound to European culture and sensibilities, implicitly denying the universal character of the church.

⁷⁷ It is worth noting that Latin was, at one point, itself a vernacular language.

“While the New Mass purports to draw from the riches of Eastern liturgies, it ends up, in doing so, sacrificing its unique Roman character and bringing it more in line with Protestant, rather than Eastern, liturgies.”

Little can be said about this claim other than the observation that it is not backed by a convincing argument, let alone evidence. It amounts to little more than a slippery slope prediction that, like the prediction of the laity consecrating the Bread and Wine at Mass, has failed to transpire with the passage of time.

“The New Mass does away with many of the defenses against error built into the Traditional rite.”

This argument is entirely self-defeating, primarily because it begs the question: if the Mass had so many defenses built into it, then how can the Study explain how over 2,000 Catholic bishops, all of whom were raised in and formed by this Mass, could consistently vote in favor of the Vatican II documents and almost universally accept a revised Missal (all of which were then promulgated by the Pope, thus enshrining them in the ordinary magisterium), both of which supposedly contain error? In any case, Pope Pius XII made it quite clear in *Mediator Dei* that the Liturgy, “...does not decide and determine independently and of itself what is of Catholic faith.” (§ 46-48).

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Finally, regarding liturgical abuses, it granted that an abuse of the Mass, whether the old or new form, is profoundly disrespectful both toward God and the Church. One of the worst ways one can abuse the Liturgy or the Eucharist is to employ both as a weapon. Whether it’s done by women priests trying to unilaterally change the Church’s discipline on the priesthood, or traditionalists trying to restore a pre-Vatican II church, or royalists trying to restore the Catholic monarchy, or by conservative/liberal priests using the Mass as a forum to promote political party platforms or candidates, the result is the same: a corrupted, sacrilegious, self-serving ceremony celebrating man rather than God, fostering political divisions rather than the Mystical Body of Christ, and doing the will of charismatic personalities over the Holy Spirit. This can be done with either the old or the new Roman Rite.

Numerous genuflection repetitions, beautiful vestments, and clouds of incense are praiseworthy in and of themselves; indeed, the Church has always promoted them as ways of evangelization through beauty. But when these things no longer point to God, and instead toward worldly ideologies or self-proclaimed political messiahs, “teaching as doctrines the precepts of men,”⁷⁸ they no longer fulfill their function. And if these aspects tend toward pride (i.e., a way of proving one is more Catholic than the next person), then it would be better to cut those things out and

⁷⁸ Matthew 15:9

throw them away than for one to end up in Hell because of them.⁷⁹ “For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? ...the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?”⁸⁰

In embracing ideas and doctrines completely at odds with Catholic ecclesiology, and in weaponizing the Mass as a flag of resistance against the authority of the Church, and finally, Christ as its head, the Society has lost sight of that warning.

7. Conclusion

It is impossible to exhaust the well of responses one could make to the Society’s claims about the revised Missal. Entire books and articles have been written on the subject, even from the highest level of the Church’s teaching authority, as has been demonstrated above.

When reviewing those works, along with the Society’s arguments, it becomes abundantly clear that the Society cannot rely on anything to make its case. At no point in the Study, or in the Society’s other writings, can the presence of “manifest errors” in the revised Missal be proven with substantial facts or evidence. Faced with this absence, the Society is forced to rely on misleading statements, manufactured claims of ambiguity, fallacious arguments (i.e., arguments from silence, false cause, false dichotomy, slippery slope, etc.), and polemical assumptions, insinuations, and exaggerations.

As if that were not enough, the Society compounds its baseless arguments with perhaps its most spiritually dangerous position of all: The New Mass is an offense to God, and that Catholics are not obliged to attend it; indeed, it should be avoided. All because the revised Missal, “does not profess the Catholic Faith as clearly as the old *Ordo Missae* did and consequently it may promote heresy.”⁸¹

The dangers and problems with this advice are evident and cannot be understated.

First, it presumes that the Church promulgated a rite that offends God, and that the Church can therefore bind the faithful to a liturgy that promotes heresy, which goes against Christ’s promise to be with His Church to the end of time.⁸² It renders the divine guarantee of assistance meaningless, and sows doubt in the mind of the faithful that God is indeed with His Church. One could reasonably conclude that the real Church has been reduced to a priestly society that lacks all the marks

⁷⁹ Matthew 18:8-9

⁸⁰ Matthew 23-17, 19

⁸¹ “Mgr Lefebvre et le St. Office,” *Itinéraires*, 233 (May 1979): pp. 146-147.

⁸² Matthew 28:20.

associated with the Catholic Church, in particular its apostolic mark, given its lack of unity with the Pope and bishops in communion with him.

Second, while the Society stops short of claiming that the revised Missal is invalid, it claims that it could be because of ambiguities. Even setting aside that the Society has proved no such thing, the implications are obvious. If indeed the revised Missal is valid, then it means that Christ is becoming fully present in the Eucharist celebrated at these Masses. The Society would then be deliberately advising the faithful to stay away from the Real Presence of God, encouraging scrupulosity in the choice of where to go to Church, forcing people to needlessly drive for hours to find a Society Mass, and at worse, encouraging the faithful to violate the Third Commandment and avoid participating at their local Mass in favor of staying home, saying the rosary, and offering a spiritual communion.

The Society cannot have it both ways. Either the Mass of the Roman Rite, under its current rubrics promulgated by the Successor of Peter, is invalid, in which case the Catholic Church is denying its faithful the sacraments and has embraced heresy. Or it is valid, in which case the Society is committing a grave evil by advising Catholics to stay away from valid sacraments, especially the Eucharist, without which one cannot live,⁸³ and away from the Church, outside of which there is no salvation. It is enough to cite the warnings of Pope Gregory XVI...

“The Church is the pillar and foundation of truth – all of which truth is taught by the Holy Spirit. *Should the church be able to order, yield to, or permit those things which tend toward the destruction of souls and the disgrace and detriment of the sacrament instituted by Christ? Those proponents of new ideas who are eager to foster true piety in the people should consider that, with the frequency of the sacraments diminished or entirely eliminated, religion slowly languishes and finally perishes.*”⁸⁴

And of Cardinal Ottaviani:

“The beauty of the Church is equally resplendent in the variety of the liturgical rites which enrich her divine cult – when they are legitimate and conform to the faith. *Precisely the legitimacy of their origin protects and guards them against the infiltration of errors (...) The purity and unity of the faith is in this manner also upheld by the supreme Magisterium of the pope through the liturgical laws.*”⁸⁵

Conversely, the Church has proven that the liturgical reform conformed to the express desires of the Council. It simplified the rite while preserving its essence, restored elements and meanings lost to time (particularly its Hebrew roots and

⁸³ John 6:53.

⁸⁴ *Quo Graviora*, § 10.

⁸⁵ From *Cruzado Espagnol*, 25 May, 1970.

eschatological undercurrent), expanded its use of scripture, and helped promote the full, conscious, and active participation of the faithful. While there is always room to improve and develop, further reforms can be promoted while confident that the revised Missal's continuity with tradition remains intact.⁸⁶

The Society's arguments against the Missal of St. Paul VI are baseless and without support, and its advice based on those arguments is not only erroneous, but actively dangerous to souls. They should be rejected.

⁸⁶ cf. Pope Benedict XVI, "Address to the Roman Curia" (22 December, 2005).

EXHIBIT A

ORDO MISSAE COMPARISON (1962 & 2002)

Mass of St. Pius V/St. John XXIII (1962)

Mass of Catechumens

1	Sign of the Cross
2	Judica Me
3	Confiteor (Priest, then Servers/People)
4	Deus tu conversus
5	Prayers Ascending the Altar
6	Introit
7	Kyrie
8	Gloria
9	Collect
10	Epistle/Lesson
11	Gradual (Psalm)
12	Alleluia/Tract
13	Gospel
14	Homily
15	Credo

Mass of the Faithful

16	Offertory Verse/Chant
17	Offertory Prayers
18	Veni Sanctificator
19	Washing of the Hands
20	Suscipe sancta Trinitas
21	Orate Fratres
22	Secret
23	Preface
24	Sanctus
25	Canon*
26	Pater Noster
27	Libera Nos
28	Fractioning of the Host
29	Commingleing of the Body and Blood
30	Agnus Dei
31	Prayer for Peace
32	Sign of Peace (Sanctuary Only)**
33	Prayer for Sanctification
34	Prayer for Grace
35	Panem coelestem
36	Domine Non Sum Dignus (Priest)
37	Corpus Domine
38	Quid Retribuam
39	Sanguis Domine
40	Ecce Agnus Dei
41	Domine Non Sum Dignus (Servers/People)
42	People's Communion
43	Quod Ore Sumpsimus
44	Corpus Tuum
45	Communion Verse/Chant
46	Post-Communion Verse

Conclusion of the Mass

47	Ite Missa Est
48	Blessing
49	Last Gospel

Mass of St. Paul VI (2002)

Introductory Rites

1	Introit
2	Sign of the Cross
3	Confiteor (Combined) or Miserere Nostri or Qui missus es sanare
4	Kyrie
5	Gloria
6	Collect

Liturgy of the Word

9	Epistle/Lesson*
10	Gradual (Psalm)
11	Epistle*
12	Alleluia/Tract
13	Gospel
14	Homily
15	Credo
16	Universal Prayer**

Liturgy of the Eucharist

17	Offertory Verse/Chant
18	Offertory Prayers
19	Washing of the Hands
20	Orate Fratres
21	Secret
22	Preface
23	Sanctus
24	Canons I, II, III & IV***
25	Pater Noster
26	Libera Nos
27	Prayer for Peace
28	Sign of Peace**
29	Fractioning of the Host
30	Commingleing of the Body and Blood
31	Agnus Dei
32	Prayer for Sanctification or Prayer for Grace
34	Ecce Agnus Dei
35	Domine Non Sum Dignus (Combined)
36	Corpus Christi
37	Sanguis Christi
38	People's Communion
39	Quod Ore Sumpsimus
40	Communion Verse/Chant
41	Post-Communion Verse

The Concluding Rites

42	Blessing
43	Ite Missa Est

Key/Notes

- Identical Elements
- Modified Elements
- Unique Elements

*The presence of a 2nd reading is found only during Sunday Mass and significant Feast Days. For all other times, the structure between the Kyrie and the Creed are identical (although the Gradual is done slightly differently in the Ordinary Form).

**Both the Universal Prayer and the Sign of Peace are elements of the early Mass that were restored in the Mass of St. Paul VI. It's worth noting that the Sign of Peace is present in the Mass of St. Pius V, albeit limited to the members in the Sanctuary during a Solemn High Mass.

***While the Canon itself is unchanged (save for the words of consecration and acclamation), the only difference is down to the fact that there are three additional Eucharistic Prayers (not including the circumstantial ones for reconciliation and for various needs).