

Catechism on the Liturgy II, 13

The Roman Rite

It is not a single, homogenous rite, but a historical family of rites that all developed from the ancient diocese of Rome. Some of these rites such as the Dominican, Carthusian, Cistercian, Carmelite rites are Roman, but with other influences and particularities unique to that rite. Some dioceses had their own rite of Mass – such as the Sarum (Diocese of Salisbury) or Braga (Diocese of Budapest). All showed a high degree of congruence. All used the Roman Canon.

The 1962 Missal we use at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is the last of a series of revisions to the Missal issued after the Council of Trent by Pope St. Pius V in 1570, by the Papal decree called *Quo Primum*. It was revised by Clement VIII in 1604, Urban VIII in 1634, Leo XIII in 1884, St. Pius X (though his revision was not promulgated until Benedict the XV in 1920), Pius XII in 1955 and Blessed John XXIII in 1962. The great majority of the changes to the missal concerned the calendar of saints.

A popular error concerning *Quo Primum* is that it forbade anyone from ever changing the missal until the end of time. Since no pope can bind his successors in matters of discipline, a well catechized Catholic should be able to see the error in this position. The problem St. Pius V was addressing had to do with printing presses at the time, which would regularly change texts in order to make them fit more easily on a page, or just to save some money. The pope was forbidding this kind of usurpation of the texts.

But a pope does have the legal right or authority to make a change in the Mass, such as adding St. Joseph's name to the Canon (this was done by Blessed John XXIII). Whether Pope Paul VI should have promulgated a new order of Mass is another question. That he had the right and authority to do so cannot be ques-

tioned.

The temporal and sanctoral cycles.

The temporal cycle refers to the liturgical season, such as Lent. The sanctoral cycle refers to an individual holy day, such as the feast of St. Thomas of Becket. These two cycles make up the liturgical calendar of the Roman Rite.

The octave day of Christmas (temporal) is at the same time as the Circumcision (sanctoral). Various octaves overlapped, such as those of St. Stephen, The Holy Innocents, and St. Thomas of Canterbury. These would be celebrated especially in the Divine Office, so that not only the extra prayer at Mass, but an antiphon, versicle and collect were added at the Office of Lauds. The feasts do not crowd each other out; they overlap. So Lauds becomes Lauds in miniature here on St. Becket's Day, but in the Cathedral at Canterbury it is Lauds in full. The sanctoral cycle is not grounded in an abstract recollection of saints or holy events. It is founded at the ground where the saints' bones are kept, or where the event occurred. That place is brought here if you will, by a commemoration.

The simplification of the calendar with the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite had many consequences for the sanctoral and temporal cycles. For example, the Feast of St. Agnes had two dates in the old calendar, eight days apart. At the age of 10 she consecrated herself to Christ. Her martyrdom occurred because the Prefect of Rome asked for her hand in marriage, which she refused. Surviving an attempted rape, she was beheaded. The legend about her reports her saying to the executioner, "Strike without fear, for the bride does her spouse an injury if she makes him wait." Her anti-

phon at Vespers has her addressing Christ; “Behold I hurry toward you, whom I have loved, whom I have sought, whom I have held in the highest.” She appeared to her parents one week after her martyrdom, who had come to pray at her tomb. This is the basis for the second feast, which connects her to the appearance of the risen Christ to His apostles (eight days). She represents all Christians who will be reunited with their spouse, their sacrificial lamb, their true high priest. To eliminate this feast in the name of simplicity is to drop a wonderful connection for the faithful to the resurrection of the Lord. I can remember at my seminary being told by a good priest that “One feast day for her is enough.” This misses the point entirely.

But again, the Pope had the authority to change the calendar. There are still many misperceptions about the new calendar however. For example, St. Christopher was removed from the liturgical calendar under Paul VI. This was not a matter of the Pope forbidding someone to pray to St. Christopher. It was instead a disciplinary decision; based on the paucity of information we have about St. Christopher. The pope wanted devotion to go to saints about whom we knew a great deal. Whether this was a good or prudent decision is one question. But it is not questionable that a pope has the authority to change the calendar.

Thurible

From the Latin *thus* meaning “incense”, it is also called the censor. It has a bowl at its base in which is put lit charcoal, and when the charcoal is red hot the incense is placed on it. The Thurifer is the sacred minister who carries the thurible.

Tract

The Psalm or verses of a Psalm sung or recited immediately after the Gradual in Masses from Septuagesima to Easter, and in Masses for the Dead. It replaces the Alleluia versicle at these times. The word comes from the Latin *trahere*, meaning “to draw”, and refers to the drawing out of select verses from a Psalm.

Tradition

From the Latin *tradere*, “to hand down,” it refers to the Word of God given to the Apostles by Christ and the Holy Ghost, and handed down to their successors through the Church by such things as prayer, Creeds, liturgical practices, authoritative writings (such as Papal encyclicals or Councils). The Sacred Liturgy is an essential means to pass down tradition.