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Pope Francis Adds Saint Paul VI to General Roman Calendar

Pope Francis has ordered the inscription of Pope Saint Paul VI in the General Roman Calendar, as an Optional Memorial to be celebrated on May 29. His decision was promulgated in a decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments dated January 25, 2019 (Prot. n. 29/19) and publicly released on February 6. The decree was accompanied by new proper liturgical texts in Latin, and a commentary by the Congregation’s Prefect, Robert Cardinal Sarah.

The Prefect wrote that St. Paul VI responded to the universal call to holiness “as a Baptized Christian, as a priest, as a Bishop, and Pope, and he now contemplates the face of God.” Remarking on an unofficial translation of the new Collect prayer for the memorial, Cardinal Sarah noted that the text “resonates with all that God accomplished in his faithful servant: ‘who entrusted your Church to the leadership of Pope Saint Paul VI, a courageous apostle of your Son’s Gospel,’ and it asks: ‘grant that, illuminated by his teachings, we may work with you to expand the civilization of love.’ Here is synthesized the principal characteristics of his pontificate and his teaching: a Church, which belongs to the Lord (*Ecclesiam Suam*), dedicated to the proclamation of the Gospel, as recalled in *Evangelii nuntiandi*, and called to bear witness that God is love.”

English and Spanish translations of the proper texts must be prepared, followed by their approval by the USCCB and confirmation by the Holy See. The process will take some time to complete; until then the Mass formularies available in the *Roman Missal* and *Misal Romano* under the Common of Pastors: For a Pope are to be used. Further information on the inscription of St. Paul VI may be found at USCCB.org/paulvi.

Finally, in light of this new optional memorial, the 2019 and 2020 editions of the *Liturgical Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States of America* are emended as follows:

May 2019

29 Wed Easter Weekday white/white
 [Saint Paul VI, Pope]
 Acts 17:15, 22—18:1/Jn 16:12-15 (293)

May 2020

29 Fri Easter Weekday white/white
 [Saint Paul VI, Pope]
 Acts 25:13b-21/Jn 21:15-19 (301)

Chants for Blessing of the Holy Oils and Parish Reception of the Holy Oils

As reported in the November-December 2018 *Newsletter*, the *Order of Blessing the Oil of Catechumens and of the Sick and of Consecrating the Chrism* will be implemented on Ash Wednesday, March 6, 2019, and thus be used at the Chrism Mass from this year forward. To aid bishops, pastoral musicians, and others, the Secretariat of Divine Worship has posted free PDF downloads of the chant settings found in the ritual book, along with basic catechesis on the rite. (The PDF of the hymn *O Redemptor* might be especially useful for inclusion in worship aids.) The webpage is found at USCCB.org/holyoils. The ritual edition itself will be sold exclusively by USCCB Communications and be released in early March 2019.

After the holy oils are blessed at the Chrism Mass, they are distributed to the parishes of the diocese. According to the *Roman Missal*, “[t]he reception of the Holy Oils may take place in individual parishes either before the celebration of the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper or at another time that seems more appropriate” (Chrism Mass, no. 15). This rubric does not specify how a “reception of the Holy Oils” would take place. The Church, therefore, permits pastors some latitude in determining the best way for it to be carried out in their parishes, should they wish to do so. A simple ceremony that is sober yet joyful, consistent with the style of the Roman liturgy, and emphasizing the grace of the sacraments and unity with the bishop, would seem to be the most appropriate way to receive the oils in a parish.

One possible model is found in the *Order for the Reception of the Holy Oils*, which was approved by the Holy See for optional use in the dioceses of the United States in 1989 as part of its *ad interim* confirmation of the *Book of Blessings*. A revised version of this rite, with a suggested move of the reception to the offertory procession and introducing dialogue between the priest and the congregation, was drafted and approved by the NCCB during the 1990s revision of the *Sacramentary*. In anticipation of its confirmation, the text was published in the *Sacramentary Supplement* (1994, reprinted 2004) and appeared on the USCCB website for a number of years. However, that revised *Sacramentary* – and the proposed revision for the reception of the holy oils – was never confirmed by the Holy See. No version of the ritual was proposed when the *Roman Missal, Third Edition* was approved, but given the flexibility of the current Missal, either of these earlier versions of the reception might be taken as a template for a parish celebration. Since the 1989 version once had the approval of the Holy See, it is posted on the USCCB website via the link above and is reprinted below for the benefit of our readers:

Introduction

1. It is appropriate that the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens, and the holy Chrism which are blessed by the Bishop during the Chrism Mass be presented to and received by the local parish community.
2. The presentation of the holy Oils may take place at the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday or, if the Oils are not blessed on Holy Thursday, on another day.
3. The oils should be reserved in a suitable repository in the presbyterium or near the baptismal font.

Reception of the Holy Oils

4. The Oils, in suitable vessels, are carried in the Entrance Procession by ministers or other persons. The vessels of oil are placed on a table which has been prepared for them in the sanctuary. The Priest may incense the Oils after he has incensed the altar.
5. After the Greeting of the Mass the Priest may briefly explain the significance of the blessing of the Oils and their use. The Oils are then placed in the repository where they are to be reserved and the Mass continues in the usual manner.
6. The following, or other words, may be used to explain the significance of the Oils:

Oil of the Sick

This Oil of the Sick has been blessed by our Bishop for the healing of body, mind, and soul. May the sick, who are anointed with it, experience the compassion of Christ and his saving love.

Oil of Catechumens

This Oil of Catechumens has been blessed by our Bishop for the anointing of those preparing for Baptism. Through this anointing they are strengthened by Christ to resist the power of Satan and reject evil in all its forms, as they prepare for the saving waters of Baptism.

Holy Chrism

This holy Chrism, a mixture of olive oil and perfume, has been consecrated by our Bishop and the Priests of our Diocese. It will be used to anoint infants after Baptism, those who are to be confirmed, Bishops and Priests at their Ordination, and altars and churches at the time of their dedication.

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The Order of Blessing the Oil of Catechumens and of the Sick and of Consecrating the Chrism

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THE ORDER OF BLESSING THE
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AND OF THE SICK AND OF
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Pope Francis Suppresses Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*

In an Apostolic Letter given *motu proprio* issued January 17, 2019, Pope Francis has decommissioned the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* and transferred its duties to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). The commission was established in 1988 by Saint John Paul II to facilitate reconciliation between the Church and the members of the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X; its mandate was later expanded to oversee the development of the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite liturgy.

Entitled *Da oltre trent'anni (For Over Thirty Years)*, the Holy Father recounts the history of the efforts made since 1988 to reconcile the followers of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre with the Church and more amply provide for the celebration of the liturgical rites promulgated before the Second Vatican Council, especially the 1962 *Missale Romanum* – known in various terms as the Tridentine (or Traditional Latin) Mass, the Mass of Saint John XXIII, and now the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite.

The prelude to this most recent decision began in 2009, when Pope Benedict XVI lifted the excommunications of the four bishops of the Priestly Fraternity consecrated without a pontifical mandate, placed the commission under the auspices of the CDF, and established that the Congregation's prefect would also serve as president of the commission. Dialogue between the Holy See and the Priestly Fraternity is now primarily doctrinal in nature, and so the CDF requested that it directly lead those discussions. Pope Francis has thus decreed that a separate section within the Congregation take on the duties and budget of the now-former Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*. Released on January 19, the Holy See's English translation of the *motu proprio* is provided here for the benefit of our readers:

Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio* by the Supreme Pontiff Francis on the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*

For over thirty years the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, instituted with the *Motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei Adflicta* of July 2, 1988, has carried out with sincere solicitude and praiseworthy concern the task of collaborating with the Bishops and the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia, in facilitating the full ecclesial communion of priests, seminarians, communities or individual men and women religious connected with the Fraternity founded by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who wished to remain united to the Successor of Peter in the Catholic Church, preserving their own spiritual and liturgical traditions.¹

In this way, it was able to exercise its own authority and competence in the name of the Holy See over these societies and associations, until otherwise provided.²

Subsequently, by virtue of the *Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum* of July 7, 2007, the Pontifical Commission extended the authority of the Holy See to those Institutes and Religious Communities which had adhered to the extraordinary form of the Roman Rite and had assumed the precedent traditions of religious life, supervising the observance and application of the provisions established.³

Two years later, my Venerable Predecessor Benedict XVI, with the *Motu Proprio Ecclesiae unitatem* of July 2, 2009, reorganized the structure of the Pontifical Commission, in order to make it more suited to the new situation created by the remission of the excommunication of the four Bishops consecrated without Pontifical mandate. And, furthermore, considering that after this act of grace, the questions addressed by the same Pontifical

¹ Cf. POPE JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter given *motu proprio Ecclesia Dei adflicta* (July 2, 1988), 6a: AAS 80 (1988), 1495-1498.

² Cf. *Rescriptum ex Audientia Sanctissimi* (October 18, 1988), 6: AAS 82 (1990), 533-534.

³ Cf. POPE BENEDICT XVI, Apostolic Letter given *motu proprio Summorum Pontificum* (July 7, 2007), 12: AAS 99 (2007), 777-781.

Commission were of a primarily doctrinal nature, he connected it more systematically to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, while maintaining its initial aims, but modifying its structure.⁴

Now, as the *Feria IV* of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of November 15, 2017 formulated the request that dialogue between the Holy See and the Priestly Fraternity of Saint Pius X be conducted directly by the aforementioned Congregation, as the matters being addressed are of a doctrinal nature, to which request I gave my approval *in Audientia* with the Prefect on November 24, 2017 and this proposal was accepted by the Plenary Session of the same Congregation celebrated from January 23 to 26, 2018, after ample reflection, I have arrived at the following decision.

Considering that today the conditions which led the holy Pontiff John Paul II to institute the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* have changed;

noting that the Institutes and Religious Communities which customarily celebrate the extraordinary form have today found proper stability of number and of life;

recognizing that the aims and questions addressed by the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* are of a predominantly doctrinal order;

and wishing that these aims be made ever more evident to the conscience of the ecclesial communities,

with this Apostolic Letter *motu proprio data*,

I decree that

1. The Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, instituted on July 2, 1988 with the Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei Adflicta*, is decommissioned.
2. The tasks of the Commission in question are assigned entirely to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, within which will be established a special Section committed to continue the work of supervision, promotion and conducted thus far by the decommissioned Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*.
3. The financial report of the Pontifical Commission returns to the ordinary accounting of the aforementioned Congregation.

Furthermore, I establish that this *motu proprio* – to be observed notwithstanding anything to the contrary, even if worthy of specific mention – be promulgated by publication in the January 19, 2019 issue of *L'Osservatore Romano*, entering immediately into force, and that it be inserted thereafter into the official register of the Holy See, the *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on January 17, 2019, sixth year of my Pontificate.

FRANCIS

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⁴ Cf. POPE BENEDICT XVI, Apostolic Letter given *motu proprio Ecclesiae unitatem* (July 2, 2009), 5: AAS 101 (2009), 710-711.

CDWDS Plenary Session Addresses Liturgical Formation of the Laity

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments held its plenary session in Rome from February 12-15, 2019, reflecting on the topic “The Liturgical Formation of the People of God.” At an audience with Pope Francis on February 14, the Holy Father added his own reflections on the subject, which is reprinted for the benefit of our readers:

Cardinals, dear brothers in the episcopate and in the priesthood, dear brothers and sisters!

I am pleased to meet you on the occasion of your Plenary Assembly. I thank the Cardinal Prefect for the words he has addressed to me and I greet you all, members, collaborators and consultants of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

This Plenary comes at a significant time. Fifty years have passed since, on May 8, 1969, Saint Paul VI wished to establish the then *Congregatio pro Cultu Divino*, in order to give shape to the renewal desired by Vatican Council II. It was a matter of publishing the liturgical books according to the criteria and decisions of the Council Fathers, with a view to fostering, in the People of God, “active, conscious and pious” participation in the mysteries of Christ (cf. Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 48). The praying tradition of the Church needed renewed expressions, without losing anything of its millennial wealth, even rediscovering the treasures of its origins. In the first months of that year the first fruits of the reform accomplished by the Apostolic See flourished for the benefit of the People of God. On precisely this date the Motu proprio *Mysterii Paschalis* was promulgated regarding the Roman calendar and the liturgical year (February 14, 1969); then, the important Apostolic Constitution *Missale Romanum* (April 3, 1969), with which the Holy Pope promulgated the Roman Missal. In the same year the *Ordo Missae* and various other *Ordo* were issued, including those relating to the baptism of the children, marriage and funerals. They were the first steps of a journey, to be continued with wise constancy.

We know that it is not enough to change the liturgical books to improve the quality of the liturgy. To do this alone would be a deception. For life to be truly a praise pleasing to God, it is indeed necessary to change the heart. Christian conversion is oriented to this conversion, which is an encounter of life with the “God of the living” (Mt 22:32). This is also the purpose of your work today, aimed at helping the Pope to carry out his ministry for the benefit of the Church in prayer all over the earth. In ecclesial communion both the Apostolic See and the Bishops’ Conferences operate in a spirit of cooperation, dialogue and synodality. In fact, the Holy See does not replace the bishops, but works with them to serve, in the richness of the various languages and cultures, the prayerful vocation of the Church in the world. The Motu proprio *Magnum principium* (September 3, 2017) follows in this line; in it, I intended to promote, among other things, the need for “a constant collaboration filled with mutual trust, vigilant and creative, between the Episcopal Conferences and the dicastery of the Apostolic See which performs the task of promoting the sacred liturgy.” The hope is to continue on the path of mutual collaboration, aware of the responsibilities involved in ecclesial communion, in which unity and variety are united. It is a question of harmony.

Here we find also the challenge of formation, the specific object of your reflection. Speaking of formation, we cannot forget, first of all, that the liturgy is life that forms, not an idea to be learned. It is useful in this regard to remember that reality is more important than the idea (see Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, 231-233). And it is good therefore, in the liturgy as in other areas of ecclesial life, not to end up favoring sterile ideological polarizations, which often arise when, considering our own ideas valid for all contexts, we tend to adopt an attitude of perennial dialectic towards who does not share them. Thus, starting perhaps from the desire to react to some insecurities in the current context, we risk then falling back into a past that no longer exists or of escaping into a presumed future. The starting point is instead to recognize the reality of the sacred liturgy, a living treasure that cannot be reduced to tastes, recipes and currents, but which should be welcomed with docility and promoted with love, as irreplaceable nourishment for the organic growth of the People of God. The liturgy is not “the field of do-it-yourself,” but the epiphany of ecclesial communion. Therefore, “we,” and not “I,” resounds in prayers and gestures; the real community, not the ideal subject. When we look back to nostalgic past tendencies or wish

to impose them again, there is the risk of placing the part before the whole, the “I” before the People of God, the abstract before the concrete, ideology before communion and, fundamentally, the worldly before the spiritual.

In this sense, the title of your assembly is valuable: *The liturgical formation of the People of God*. The task that awaits us is indeed essentially that of spreading among the *People of God* the splendor of the *living mystery* of the Lord, Who makes Himself manifest in the liturgy. Speaking of liturgical formation in the People of God means first and foremost being aware of the indispensable role the liturgy holds in the Church and for the Church. And then, concretely helping the People of God to interiorize better the prayer of the Church, to love it as an experience of encounter with the Lord and with brothers who, in the light of this, rediscover its content and observe its rites.

Since the liturgy is an experience extended to the conversion of life through the assimilation of the Lord’s way of thinking and behaving, liturgical formation cannot be limited to simply offering knowledge – this is a mistake – though necessary, on liturgical books, nor even to protect the dutiful fulfillment of the ritual disciplines. In order for the liturgy to fulfill its formative and transforming function, it is necessary that the pastors and the laity be introduced to their meaning and symbolic language, including art, song and music in the service of the mystery celebrated, even silence. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* itself adopts the mystagogical way to illustrate the liturgy, valuing its prayers and signs. *Mystagogy*: this is a suitable way to enter the mystery of the liturgy, in the living encounter with the crucified and risen Lord. *Mystagogy* means discovering the new life we have received in the People of God through the Sacraments, and continually rediscovering the beauty of renewing it.

Regarding the stages of formation, we know from experience that, in addition to the initial phase, it is necessary to cultivate the ongoing formation of the clergy and laity, especially those who are involved in the ministries serving the liturgy. Formation not once, but continuing. As for the ordained ministers, also in view of a healthy *ars celebrandi*, the Council’s appeal is valid: “A prime need, therefore, is that attention be directed, first of all, to the liturgical instruction of the clergy” (Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 14). First of all. The educational responsibilities are shared, even if the individual dioceses are more closely involved in the operational phase. Your reflection will help the dicastery to develop guidelines and indications to offer, in a spirit of service, to those – episcopal conferences, dioceses, training institutes, journals – who have the responsibility of taking care of and accompanying the liturgical formation of the People of God.

Dear brothers and sisters, we are all called to deepen and revive our liturgical formation. The liturgy is in fact the main road through which Christian life passes through every phase of its growth. You therefore have before you a great and beautiful task: to work so that the People of God may rediscover the beauty of meeting the Lord in the celebration of His mysteries and, by meeting Him, have life in His name. I thank you for your efforts and I bless you, asking you to always reserve for me a place – a large one! – in your prayer. Thank you.

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50th Anniversary of *Mysterii Paschalis* and the Reform of the Liturgical Year and Calendar

Fifty years ago, on February 14, 1969, Pope Saint Paul VI issued the Apostolic Letter *motu proprio Mysterii Paschalis*, by which he promulgated new norms on the liturgical year and a new General Roman Calendar. Responding to the desires of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, the *motu proprio* articulated principles that have shaped the unfolding of the liturgical year over these past five decades.

Chapter five of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, titled simply “The Liturgical Year,” is composed of two parts: the first (nos. 102-105) describes the importance of the liturgical year in the lives of the faithful, and the second (nos. 106-111) lays out in broad terms the kinds of revisions the Council Fathers wished to see. The main concerns expressed by *Sacrosanctum Concilium* focused on the need to make the Paschal Mystery the heart of all liturgical celebrations, on a shift in emphasis in the observance of Lent, and on ensuring that the celebrations of saints not be exaggerated.

Mysterii Paschalis is a short document that describes the main objectives of the reform of the liturgical year and calendar. The central purpose of the revisions, as is made clear in the opening paragraph, is that the “Paschal Mystery of Christ be placed in clearer light.” St. Paul VI divided the body of the *motu proprio* into two sections. The first is a reminder of the tremendous impact that the cycle of liturgical celebrations can leave on those who participate in them. At the same time, the Holy Father asserted that the evolution of the liturgical year over the course of many centuries had introduced elements that he felt were a distraction from the more important mysteries of our salvation. His predecessors St. Pius X, Venerable Pius XII, and St. John XXIII had undertaken initial steps in addressing these issues. This new comprehensive reform was undertaken in continuity with those earlier efforts, and St. Paul VI hoped that a refocusing of the liturgical year would help the People of God be transformed more and more by divine grace, after the image of Christ.

The second section of the *motu proprio* concerns the revision of the General Roman Calendar. The Pope reaffirmed the Church’s conviction that the celebrations of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints point us toward the Paschal Mystery. Over time, however, as the Second Vatican Council observed in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the number of feasts in the calendar had increased to a level that tended to obscure certain aspects of the liturgical year. At the same time, the selection of saints in the calendar did not adequately reflect the catholicity of the Church. Thus, the reformed calendar removed some saints, made the observance of others optional, and added some newer saints from various parts of the world. The Holy Father regarded the new General Roman Calendar as “more in keeping with the spiritual attitudes and sentiments of these times and... a clearer reflection of that characteristic of the Church which is her universality.”

A month after St. Paul VI issued *Mysterii Paschalis*, the Sacred Congregation for Rites promulgated the revised General Roman Calendar – including an interim calendar that was in effect from January 1, 1970 until the *Roman Missal* and *Liturgy of the Hours* were implemented – along with new long and short forms of the Litany of the Saints. The first wave of the Second Vatican Council’s liturgical reforms began in earnest, led by a saintly Pope who has now been inscribed in the very calendar he promulgated fifty years ago.



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