

THE CONSTITUTION ON THE SACRED LITURGY

Sacrosanctum Concilium

Promulgated

December 4, 1963

1. This sacred Council has several aims in view:
 - ▣ it desires to impart an ever increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful;
 - ▣ to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change;
 - ▣ to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ;
 - ▣ to strengthen whatever can help to call the whole of mankind into the household of the Church.

The Council therefore sees particularly cogent reasons for undertaking the reform and promotion of the liturgy.

2. For the liturgy,

"through which the work of our redemption is accomplished,"

most of all in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist, is the outstanding means whereby the faithful may express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.

It is of the essence of the Church that
she be both human and divine,
visible and yet invisibly equipped,
eager to act and yet intent on contemplation,
present in this world and yet not at home in it;
and she is all these things in such wise that in her
the human is directed and subordinated to the
divine,
the visible likewise to the invisible,
action to contemplation,
and this present world to that city yet to come,
which we seek.

While the liturgy daily builds up those who are within into a holy temple of the Lord, into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ, at the same time it marvelously strengthens their power to preach Christ, and thus shows forth the Church to those who are outside as a sign lifted up among the nations under which the scattered children of God may be gathered together, until there is one sheepfold and one shepherd.

3. The practical norms which follow should be taken as applying only to the Roman rite,

except for those which,
in the very nature of things,
affect other rites as well.

4. Holy Mother Church holds all lawfully acknowledged rites to be of equal right and dignity;

that she wishes to preserve them in the future and to foster them in every way.

The Council also desires that, where necessary, the rites be revised carefully in the light of sound tradition,

and that they be given new vigor to meet the circumstances and needs of modern times.

Chapter One

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE: RESTORATION AND PROMOTION OF THE SACRED LITURGY

- I. The Nature of the Sacred Liturgy and Its Importance in the Church's Life
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Chapter One

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE: RESTORATION AND PROMOTION OF THE SACRED LITURGY

I. The Nature of the Sacred Liturgy and Its Importance in the Church's Life

5. The wonderful works of God among the people of the Old Testament were but a prelude to the work of Christ the Lord in redeeming mankind and giving perfect glory to God.

- ▣ He achieved His task principally by the paschal mystery of His blessed passion, resurrection from the dead, and the glorious ascension, whereby "dying, he destroyed our death and, rising, he restored our life".

6. Just as Christ was sent by the Father, so also He sent the apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit.

- ▣ By preaching the gospel to every creature, they might proclaim that the Son of God brought us into the kingdom of His Father.
- ▣ His purpose was that they might accomplish the work of salvation by means of sacrifice and sacraments, around which the entire liturgical life revolves.
- ▣ Thus by baptism men are plunged into the paschal mystery of Christ.
- ▣ As they eat the supper of the Lord they proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes.

- ▣ Throughout time The Church has never failed to come together to celebrate the paschal mystery:
- ▣ reading those things "which were in all the scriptures concerning him",
- ▣ celebrating the Eucharist in which "the victory and triumph of his death are again made present",
- ▣ and at the same time giving thanks "to God for his unspeakable gift" in Christ Jesus, "in praise of his glory", through the power of the Holy Spirit.

7. Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations.

- ▣ He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His minister, but especially under the Eucharistic species.
- ▣ By His power He is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes.
- ▣ He is present in His Word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church.
- ▣ He is present, lastly, when the Church prays and sings, for He promised: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" .

- ▣ The liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy sanctification is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs;
- ▣ in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members.
- ▣ From this 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;
- ▣ no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy.

8. In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims.

9. The sacred liturgy does not exhaust the entire activity of the Church.

Before men and women can come to the liturgy they must be called to faith and to conversion.

10. The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed;

at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows.

For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made children of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's supper.

From the liturgy, therefore,
and especially from the Eucharist,
as from a font,
grace is poured forth upon us;

and the sanctification of men and women in Christ and
the glorification of God,
to which all other activities of the Church are directed
as toward their end,
is achieved in the most efficacious possible way.

11. But in order that the liturgy may be able to produce its full effects, it is necessary that the faithful come to it with proper dispositions, that their minds should be attuned to their voices, and that they should cooperate with divine grace lest they receive it in vain.

Pastors of souls must therefore realize that, when the liturgy is celebrated, something more is required than the mere observation of the laws governing valid and licit celebration;

it is their duty also to ensure that the faithful take part fully aware of what they are doing, actively engaged in the rite, and enriched by its effects.

12. The spiritual life, however, is not limited solely to participation in the liturgy.

The Christian is indeed called to pray with his brethren, but he must also enter into his chamber to pray to the Father, in secret.

13. Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly commended, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church.

- ▣ Devotions proper to individual Churches also have a special dignity if they are undertaken by mandate of the bishops.
- ▣ But these devotions should be so drawn up that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some fashion derived from it, and lead the people to it, since, in fact, the liturgy by its very nature far surpasses any of them.

Chapter One

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE: RESTORATION AND PROMOTION OF THE SACRED LITURGY

II. The Promotion of Liturgical Instruction and Active Participation

14. Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.

- ▣ Such participation by the Christian people as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people", is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

- ▣ In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit; and therefore pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it, by means of the necessary instruction, in all their pastoral work.
- ▣ Yet it would be futile to entertain any hopes of realizing this unless the pastors themselves become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy, and undertake to give instruction about it. A prime need, therefore, is that attention be directed, first of all, to the liturgical instruction of the clergy.

16. The study of sacred liturgy is to be ranked among the compulsory and major courses in seminaries and religious houses of studies; in theological faculties it is to rank among the principal courses.

It is to be taught under its theological, historical, spiritual, pastoral, and juridical aspects.

Other professors must clearly bring out the connection between their subjects and the liturgy, as also the unity which underlies all priestly training. This consideration is especially important for professors of dogmatic, spiritual, and pastoral theology and for those of Holy Scripture.

18. Priests who are already working in the Lord's vineyard are to be helped by every suitable means to understand ever more fully what it is that they are doing when they perform sacred rites; they are to be aided to live the liturgical life and to share it with the faithful entrusted to their care.

19. With zeal and patience, pastors of souls must promote the liturgical instruction of the faithful, and also their active participation in the liturgy both internally and externally, taking into account their age and condition, their way of life, and standard of religious culture.

20. Transmissions of the sacred rites by radio and television shall be done with discretion and dignity, especially the Mass.

Chapter One

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE: RESTORATION AND PROMOTION OF THE SACRED LITURGY

III. The Reform of the Sacred Liturgy

A) General norms

21. The liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change.

- ▣ These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become unsuited to it.
- ▣ In this restoration, both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things which they signify;
- ▣ the Christian people, so far as possible, should be enabled to understand them with ease and to take part in them fully, actively, and as befits a community.

22. 1. Regulation of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See and on the bishop.
- ▣ 2. In virtue of power conceded by the law, the regulation of the liturgy within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of competent territorial bodies of bishops legitimately established.
 - ▣ 3. Therefore no other person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority.

23. That sound tradition may be retained, and yet the way remains open to legitimate progress careful investigation is always to be made into each part of the liturgy which is to be revised.
- ▣ This investigation should be theological, historical, and pastoral.
 - ▣ The general laws governing the structure and meaning of the liturgy must be studied in conjunction with the experience derived from recent liturgical reforms and from the indulgences conceded to various places.
 - ▣ There must be no innovations unless the good of the Church genuinely and certainly requires them;
 - ▣ care must be taken that any new forms adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing.
 - ▣ As far as possible, notable differences between the rites used in adjacent regions must be carefully avoided.

24. Sacred scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the liturgy. For it is from scripture that lessons are read and explained in the homily, and psalms are sung;

▣ the prayers, collects, and liturgical songs are scriptural in their inspiration and their force, and it is from the scriptures that actions and signs derive their meaning.

25. The liturgical books are to be revised as soon as possible; experts are to be employed on the task, and bishops are to be consulted, from various parts of the world.

B) Norms drawn from the hierarchic and communal nature of the Liturgy

26. Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the "sacrament of unity," namely, the holy people united and ordered under their bishops.
- ▣ Therefore liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church;
 - ▣ they manifest it and have effects upon it;
 - ▣ but they concern the individual members of the Church in different ways, according to their differing rank, office, and actual participation.

27. It is to be stressed that whenever rites, according to their specific nature, make provision for communal celebration involving the presence and active participation of the faithful, this way of celebrating them is to be preferred, so far as possible, to a celebration that is individual and quasi-private.
- ▣ This applies with especial force to the celebration of Mass and the administration of the sacraments, even though every Mass has of itself a public and social nature.

28. In liturgical celebrations each person, minister or layman, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy.

29. Servers, lectors, commentators, and members of the choir also exercise a genuine liturgical function. They ought, therefore, to discharge their office with the sincere piety and decorum demanded by so exalted a ministry and rightly expected of them by God's people.

30. To promote active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, as well as by actions, gestures, and bodily attitudes.

And at the proper times all should observe a reverent silence.

31. The revision of the liturgical books must carefully attend to the provision of rubrics also for the people's parts.

32. The liturgy makes distinctions between persons according to their liturgical function and sacred Orders, and there are liturgical laws providing for due honors to be given to civil authorities.

▣ Apart from these instances, no special honors are to be paid in the liturgy to any private persons or classes of persons, whether in the ceremonies or by external display.

C) Norms based upon the didactic and pastoral nature of the Liturgy

In the liturgy God speaks to His people and Christ is still proclaiming His gospel. And the people reply to God both by song and prayer.

The prayers addressed to God by the priest who presides over the assembly in the person of Christ are said in the name of the entire holy people and of all present.

The visible signs used by the liturgy to signify invisible divine things have been chosen by Christ or the Church.

34. The rites should be distinguished by a **noble simplicity**; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people's powers of comprehension, and normally should not require much explanation.

35. That the intimate connection between words and rites may be apparent in the liturgy:

- 1) There is to be more reading from Holy Scripture, and it is to be more varied and suitable.
- 2) The ministry of preaching is to be fulfilled with exactitude and fidelity. The homily should draw its content mainly from scriptural and liturgical sources, and its character should be that of a proclamation of God's wonderful works in the history of salvation, the mystery of Christ, ever made present and active within us.
- 3) Instruction which is more explicitly liturgical should also be given in a variety of ways; if necessary, short directives to be spoken by the priest or proper minister should be provided within the rites themselves. But they should occur only at the more suitable moments, and be in prescribed or similar words.
- 4) Bible services should be encouraged, especially on the vigils of the more solemn feasts, on some weekdays in Advent and Lent, and on Sundays and feast days, especially where no priest is available;
- ▣ when this is so, a deacon or some other person authorized by the bishop should preside over the celebration.

36. 1. The use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rites.

- 2. But since the use of the mother tongue, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments, or other parts of the liturgy, frequently may be of great advantage to the people, the limits of its employment may be extended.
- This will apply in the first place to the readings and directives, and to some of the prayers and chants, according to the regulations on this matter to be laid down separately in subsequent chapters.
- 3. These norms being observed, it is for the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority to decide whether, and to what extent, the vernacular language is to be used; their decrees are to be approved, that is, confirmed, by the Apostolic See.
- Whenever it seems to be called for, this authority is to consult with bishops of neighboring regions which have the same language.
- 4. Translations from the Latin text into the mother tongue intended for use in the liturgy must be approved by the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority.

D) Norms for adapting the Liturgy to the culture and traditions of peoples

37. Even in the liturgy, the Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity;
- ▣ rather does she respect and foster the genius and talents of the various races and peoples.
 - ▣ Anything in these peoples' way of life which is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error she studies with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact.
 - ▣ Sometimes in fact she admits such things into the liturgy itself, so long as they harmonize with its true and authentic spirit.
38. Provisions shall also be made, when revising the liturgical books, for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions, and peoples, especially in mission lands, provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite is preserved.
39. Within the limits set by the typical editions of the liturgical books, it shall be for the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority, to specify adaptations, especially in the case of the administration of the sacraments, the sacramentals, processions, liturgical language, sacred music, and the arts.

40. In some places and circumstances, however, an even more radical adaptation of the liturgy is needed, and this entails greater difficulties. Wherefore:

- ▣ 1) The competent territorial ecclesiastical authority must, in this matter, carefully and prudently consider which elements from the traditions and culture of individual peoples might appropriately be admitted into divine worship. Adaptations which are judged to be useful or necessary should then be submitted to the Apostolic See, by whose consent they may be introduced.
- ▣ 2) To ensure that adaptations may be made with all the circumspection which they demand, the Apostolic See will grant power to this same territorial ecclesiastical authority to permit and to direct the necessary preliminary experiments over a determined period of time among certain groups suited for the purpose.
- ▣ 3) Because liturgical laws often involve special difficulties with respect to adaptation, particularly in mission lands, men who are experts in these matters must be employed to formulate them.

E) Promotion of Liturgical Life in Diocese and Parish

41. The bishop is to be considered as the high priest of his flock.

- ▣ Therefore all should hold in great esteem the liturgical life of the diocese centered around the bishop, especially in his cathedral church.

42. Because it is impossible for the bishop always and everywhere to preside over the whole flock in his Church, the parishes, set up locally under a pastor who takes the place of the bishop, are the most important:

- ▣ for in some manner they represent the visible Church constituted throughout the world.
- ▣ And therefore the liturgical life of the parish and its relationship to the bishop must be fostered theoretically and practically among the faithful and clergy;
- ▣ efforts also must be made to encourage a sense of community within the parish, above all in the common celebration of the Sunday Mass.

F) The Promotion of Pastoral-Liturgical Action

44. It is desirable that the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority set up a liturgical commission, to be assisted by experts in liturgical science, sacred music, art and pastoral practice. So far as possible the commission should be aided by some kind of Institute for Pastoral Liturgy, consisting of persons who are eminent in these matters, and including laymen as circumstances suggest. The commission is to regulate pastoral-liturgical action throughout the territory, and to promote studies and necessary experiments whenever there is question of adaptations to be proposed to the Apostolic See.
45. For the same reason every diocese is to have a commission on the sacred liturgy under the direction of the bishop, for promoting the liturgical apostolate.
46. Besides the commission on the sacred liturgy, every diocese, as far as possible, should have commissions for sacred music and sacred art.
 - ▣ These three commissions must work in closest collaboration; indeed it will often be best to fuse the three of them into one single commission.

CHAPTER II

THE MOST SACRED MYSTERY OF THE EUCHARIST

50. The rite of the Mass is to be revised in such a way that the intrinsic nature and purpose of its several parts may be more clearly manifested,
- ▣ and that devout and active participation by the faithful may be more easily achieved.

 - ▣ For this purpose the rites are to be simplified, due care being taken to preserve their substance;
 - ▣ elements which, with the passage of time, came to be duplicated, or were added with but little advantage, are now to be discarded;
 - ▣ other elements which have suffered injury through accidents of history are now to be restored to the vigor which they had in the days of the holy Fathers, as may seem useful or necessary

51. The treasures of the bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word. In this way a more representative portion of the Holy Scriptures will be read to the people in the course of a prescribed number of years.
52. By means of the homily the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of the Christian life are expounded from the sacred text, during the course of the liturgical year;
the homily, therefore, is to be highly esteemed as part of the liturgy itself;
in fact, at those Masses which are celebrated with the assistance of the people on Sundays and feasts of obligation, it should not be omitted except for a serious reason.
53. Especially on Sundays and feasts of obligation there is to be restored, after the Gospel and the homily, "the prayer of the faithful." By this prayer, in which the people are to take part, intercession will be made for holy Church, for the civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all mankind, and for the salvation of the entire world.

54. In Masses which are celebrated with the people, a suitable place may be allotted to their mother tongue. This is to apply in the first place to the readings and "the prayer of the faithful," but also, as local conditions may warrant, to those parts which pertain to the people.

- ▣ Nevertheless steps should be taken so that the faithful may also be able to say or to sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them.
- ▣ And wherever a more extended use of the mother tongue within the Mass appears desirable, the regulation laid down in this Constitution is to be observed.

55. That more perfect form of participation in the Mass whereby the faithful, after the priest's communion, receive the Lord's body from the same sacrifice is strongly commended.

- ▣ The dogmatic principles which were laid down by the Council of Trent remaining intact, [concomitance]
- ▣ communion under both kinds may be granted when the bishops think fit,
- ▣ not only to clerics and religious, but also to the laity, in cases to be determined by the Apostolic See, as, for instance, to the newly ordained in the Mass of their sacred ordination, to the newly professed in the Mass of their religious profession, and to the newly baptized in the Mass which follows their baptism.

56. The two parts which go to make up the Mass, namely, the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the Eucharistic, are so closely connected with each other that they form but one single act of worship.

Accordingly this sacred Synod strongly urges pastors of souls that, when instructing the faithful, they insistently teach them to take their part in the entire Mass, especially on Sundays and feasts of obligation.

57. 1. Concelebration, whereby the unity of the priesthood is appropriately manifested, has remained in use to this day in the Church both in the east and in the west.

- ▣ The regulation, however, of the discipline of Concelebration in the diocese pertains to the bishop.
- ▣ 2. Nevertheless, each priest shall always retain his right to celebrate Mass individually, though not at the same time in the same church as a concelebrated Mass, nor on Thursday of the Lord's Supper.

58. A new rite for Concelebration is to be drawn up and inserted into the Pontifical and into the Roman Missal.

CHAPTER III

THE OTHER SACRAMENTS AND THE SACRAMENTALS

61. Thus, for well-disposed members of the faithful, the liturgy of the sacraments and sacramentals sanctifies almost every event in their lives;

they are given access to the stream of divine grace which flows from the paschal mystery of the passion, death, the resurrection of Christ, the font from which all sacraments and sacramentals draw their power.

There is hardly any proper use of material things which cannot thus be directed toward the sanctification of men and the praise of God.

62. With the passage of time, however, there have crept into the rites of the sacraments and sacramentals certain features which have rendered their nature and purpose far from clear to the people of today; hence some changes have become necessary to adapt them to the needs of our own times.

63. Because of the use of the mother tongue in the administration of the sacraments and sacramentals can often be of considerable help to the people, this use is to be extended.

- ▣ a) The vernacular language may be used in administering the sacraments and sacramentals, according to the norm of Art. 36.
- ▣ b) In harmony with the new edition of the Roman Ritual, particular rituals shall be prepared without delay .

Baptism

64. The catechumenate for adults, comprising several distinct steps, is to be restored.
65. In mission lands it is found that some of the peoples already make use of initiation rites. Elements from these, when capable of being adapted to Christian ritual, may be admitted along with those already found in Christian tradition.
66. Both the rites for the baptism of adults are to be revised. A special Mass "for the conferring of baptism" is to be inserted into the Roman Missal.
67. The rite for the baptism of infants is to be revised, and it should be adapted to the circumstance that those to be baptized are, in fact, infants. The roles of parents and godparents, and also their duties, should be brought out more clearly in the rite itself.
68. The baptismal rite should contain variants.
69. In place of the rite called the "Order of supplying what was omitted in the baptism of an infant," a new rite is to be drawn up. This should manifest more fittingly and clearly that the infant, baptized by the short rite, has already been received into the Church.
 - ▣ And a new rite is to be drawn up for converts who have already been validly baptized; it should indicate that they are now admitted to communion with the Church.
70. Baptismal water may be blessed within the rite of baptism itself by an approved shorter formula.

Confirmation

71. The rite of confirmation is to be revised and the intimate connection which this sacrament has with the whole of Christian initiation is to be more clearly set forth;
- ▣ for this reason it is fitting for candidates to renew their baptismal promises just before they are confirmed.

 - ▣ Confirmation may be given within the Mass when convenient; when it is given outside the Mass, the rite that is used should be introduced by a formula to be drawn up for this purpose.

Penance

72. The rite and formulas for the sacrament of penance are to be revised so that they more clearly express both the nature and effect of the sacrament

Sacrament of the Sick

73. "Extreme unction," which may also and more fittingly be called "anointing of the sick," is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death. Hence, as soon as any one of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the fitting time for him to receive this sacrament has certainly already arrived.
74. In addition to the separate rites for anointing of the sick and for viaticum, a continuous rite shall be prepared according to which the sick man is anointed after he has made his confession and before he receives viaticum.
75. The number of the anointings is to be adapted to the occasion, and the prayers which belong to the rite of anointing are to be revised so as to correspond with the varying conditions of the sick who receive the sacrament.

Holy Orders

76. Both the ceremonies and texts of the ordination rites are to be revised.

- ▣ The address given by the bishop at the beginning of each ordination or consecration may be in the mother tongue.
- ▣ When a bishop is consecrated, the laying of hands may be done by all the bishops present.

Marriage

77. The marriage rite is to be revised and enriched in such a way that the grace of the sacrament is more clearly signified and the duties of the spouses are taught.
- ▣ "If any regions are wont to use other praiseworthy customs and ceremonies when celebrating the sacrament of matrimony, the sacred Synod earnestly desires that these by all means be retained".
 - ▣ Moreover the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority is free to draw up its own rite suited to the usages of place and people. But the rite must always conform to the law that the priest assisting at the marriage must ask for and obtain the consent of the contracting parties.
78. Matrimony is normally to be celebrated within the Mass, after the reading of the gospel and the homily, and before "the prayer of the faithful." The prayer for the bride, duly amended to remind both spouses of their equal obligation to remain faithful to each other, may be said in the mother tongue.
- ▣ But if the sacrament of matrimony is celebrated apart from Mass, the epistle and gospel from the nuptial Mass are to be read at the beginning of the rite, and the blessing should always be given to the spouses.

79. The sacramentals are to undergo a revision which takes into account the primary principle of enabling the faithful to participate intelligently, actively, and easily;

- ▣ the circumstances of our own days must also be considered, new sacramentals may also be added as the need for these becomes apparent.
- ▣ Let provision be made that some sacramentals may be administered by qualified lay persons.

80. The rite for the consecration of virgins at present found in the Roman Pontifical is to be revised.

- ▣ Moreover, a rite of religious profession and renewal of vows shall be drawn up in order to achieve greater unity, sobriety, and dignity.
- ▣ Religious profession should preferably be made within the Mass.

81. The rite for the burial of the dead should express more clearly the paschal character of Christian death, and should correspond more closely to the circumstances and traditions found in various regions.

▣ This holds good also for the liturgical color to be used.

82. The rite for the burial of infants is to be revised, and a special Mass for the occasion should be provided.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIVINE OFFICE

88. Because the purpose of the office is to sanctify the day, the traditional sequence of the hours is to be restored.

- ▣ Moreover, it will be necessary to take into account the modern conditions in which daily life has to be lived, especially by those who are called to labor in apostolic works.
- ▣ 91. So that it may really be possible in practice to observe the course of the hours, the psalms are no longer to be distributed throughout one week, but through some longer period of time.
- ▣ The work of revising the Psalter, already happily begun, is to be finished as soon as possible, and is to take into account the style of Christian Latin, the liturgical use of psalms, also when sung, and the entire tradition of the Latin Church.

92. As regards the readings, the following shall be observed:

- ▣ a) Readings from sacred scripture shall be arranged so that the riches of God's word may be easily accessible in more abundant measure.
- ▣ b) Readings excerpted from the works of the fathers, doctors, and ecclesiastical writers shall be better selected.
- ▣ c) The accounts of martyrdom or the lives of the saints are to accord with the facts of history.

93. To whatever extent may seem desirable, the hymns are to be restored to their original form, and whatever smacks of mythology or ill accords with Christian piety is to be removed or changed.

100. Pastors of souls should see to it that the chief hours, especially Vespers, are celebrated in common in church on Sundays and the more solemn feasts. And the laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office, either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually.

101. 1. In accordance with the centuries-old tradition of the Latin rite, the Latin language is to be retained by clerics in the divine office.

But in individual cases the ordinary has the power of granting the use of a vernacular translation to those clerics for whom the use of Latin constitutes a grave obstacle to their praying the office properly.

- ▣ 2. The competent superior has the power to grant the use of the vernacular in the celebration of the divine office, even in choir, to nuns and to members of institutes dedicated to acquiring perfection, both men who are not clerics and women. The version, however, must be one that is approved.
- ▣ 3. Any cleric bound to the divine office fulfills his obligation if he prays the office in the vernacular together with a group of the faithful.

CHAPTER V

THE LITURGICAL YEAR

102. Holy Mother Church is conscious that she must celebrate the saving work of her divine Spouse by devoutly recalling it on certain days throughout the course of the year.
- ▣ Every week, on the day which she has called the Lord's Day, she keeps the memory of the Lord's resurrection, which she also celebrates once in the year, together with His blessed passion, in the most solemn festival of Easter.
 - ▣ Within the cycle of a year, moreover, she unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, from the incarnation and birth until the ascension, the day of Pentecost, and the expectation of blessed hope and of the coming of the Lord.

103. In celebrating this annual cycle of Christ's mysteries, holy Church honors with especial love the Blessed Mary, Mother of God, who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son.

▣ In her the Church holds up and admires the most excellent fruit of the redemption, and joyfully contemplates, as in a faultless image, which she herself desires and hopes wholly to be.

104. The Church has also included in the annual cycle days devoted to the memory of the martyrs and the other saints.

105. Finally, in the various seasons of the year and according to her traditional discipline, the Church completes the formation of the faithful by means of pious practices for soul and body, by instruction, prayer, and works of penance and of mercy.

CHAPTER

VI SACRED MUSIC

112. The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art.

- ▣ The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.
- ▣ Therefore sacred music is to be considered the more holy in proportion as it is more closely connected with the liturgical action, whether it adds delight to prayer, fosters unity of minds, or confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites.
- ▣ But the Church approves of all forms of true art having the needed qualities, and admits them into divine worship.

114. The treasure of sacred music is to be preserved and fostered with great care. Choirs must be diligently promoted, especially in cathedral churches; but bishops and other pastors of souls must be at pains to ensure that, whenever the sacred action is to be celebrated with song, the whole body of the faithful may be able to contribute that active participation which is rightly theirs.
115. Great importance is to be attached to the teaching and practice of music.
116. The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman liturgy: therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.
- ▣ But other kinds of sacred music, especially polyphony, are by no means excluded from liturgical celebrations, so long as they accord with the spirit of the liturgical action.

118. Religious singing by the people is to be intelligently fostered so that in devotions and sacred exercises, as also during liturgical services, the voices of the faithful may ring out according to the norms and requirements of the rubrics.

119. In certain parts of the world, especially mission lands, there are peoples who have their own musical traditions, and these play a great part in their religious and social life. For this reason due importance is to be attached to their music, and a suitable place is to be given to it, not only in forming their attitude toward religion, but also in adapting worship to their native genius.

▣ Therefore, when missionaries are being given training in music, every effort should be made to see that they become competent in promoting the traditional music of these peoples, both in schools and in sacred services, as far as may be practicable.

120. In the Latin Church the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem.

- ▣ But other instruments also may be admitted for use in divine worship only on condition that the instruments are suitable, or can be made suitable, for sacred use, accord with the dignity of the temple, and truly contribute to the edification of the faithful.

121. Composers, filled with the Christian spirit, should feel that their vocation is to cultivate sacred music and increase its store of treasures.

- ▣ Let them produce compositions which have the qualities proper to genuine sacred music, not confining themselves to works which can be sung only by large choirs, but providing also for the needs of small choirs and for the active participation of the entire assembly of the faithful.
- ▣ The texts intended to be sung must always be in conformity with Catholic doctrine; indeed they should be drawn chiefly from Holy Scripture and from liturgical sources.

CHAPTER VII

SACRED ART AND SACRED FURNISHINGS

122. Very rightly the fine arts are considered to rank among the noblest activities of man's genius, and this applies especially to religious art and to its highest achievement, which is sacred art.

- ▣ Holy Mother Church has therefore always been the friend of the fine arts and has ever sought their noble help, with the special aim that all things set apart for use in divine worship should be truly worthy, becoming, and beautiful, signs and symbols of the supernatural world, and for this purpose she has trained artists.
- ▣ The Church has been particularly careful to see that sacred furnishings should worthily and beautifully serve the dignity of worship, and has admitted changes in materials, style, or ornamentation prompted by the progress of the technical arts with the passage of time.

123. The Church has not adopted any particular style of art as her very own; she has admitted styles from every period according to the natural talents and circumstances of peoples, and the needs of the various rites.

Thus, in the course of the centuries, she has brought into being a treasury of art which must be very carefully preserved.

The art of our own days, coming from every race and region, shall also be given free scope in the Church, provided that it adorns the sacred buildings and holy rites with due reverence and honor;

thereby it is enabled to contribute its own voice to that wonderful chorus of praise in honor of the Catholic faith sung by great men in times gone by.

- ▣ 124. Ordinaries should strive after noble beauty rather than mere sumptuous display. This principle is to apply also in the matter of sacred vestments and ornaments.
- ▣ Let bishops carefully remove from the house of God and from other sacred places those works of artists which are repugnant to faith, morals, and Christian piety, and which offend true religious sense either by depraved forms or by lack of artistic worth, mediocrity and pretense.
- ▣ And when churches are to be built, let great care be taken that they be suitable for the celebration of liturgical services and for the active participation of the faithful.

125. The practice of placing sacred images in churches so that they may be venerated by the faithful is to be maintained.

- ▣ Nevertheless their number should be moderate and their relative positions should reflect right order.
- ▣ For otherwise they may create confusion among the Christian people and foster devotion of doubtful orthodoxy.

126. When passing judgment on works of art, local ordinaries shall give a hearing to the diocesan commission on sacred art and, if needed, also to others who are especially expert.

- ▣ Ordinaries must be very careful to see that sacred furnishings and works of value are not disposed of or dispersed; for they are the ornaments of the house of God.

128. Along with the revision of the liturgical books there is to be an early revision of the canons and ecclesiastical statutes which govern the provision of material things involved in sacred worship.
- ▣ These laws refer especially to the worthy and well planned construction of sacred buildings, the shape and construction of altars, the nobility, placing, and safety of the Eucharistic tabernacle, the dignity and suitability of the baptistery, the proper ordering of sacred images, embellishments, and vestments.
 - ▣ Laws which seem less suited to the reformed liturgy are to be brought into harmony with it, or else abolished; and any which are helpful are to be retained if already in use, or introduced where they are lacking.
 - ▣ The territorial bodies of bishops are empowered to adapt such things to the needs and customs of their different regions; this applies especially to the materials and form of sacred furnishings and vestments

- *A DECLARATION OF THE SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF THE VATICAN ON REVISION OF THE CALENDAR*
- The Second Ecumenical Sacred Council of the Vatican, recognizing the importance of the wishes expressed by many concerning the assignment of the feast of Easter to a fixed Sunday and concerning an unchanging calendar, having carefully considered the effects which could result from the introduction of a new calendar, declares as follows:
 - The Sacred Council would not object if the feast of Easter were assigned to a particular Sunday of the Gregorian Calendar, provided that those whom it may concern, especially the brethren who are not in communion with the Apostolic See, give their assent.
 - The sacred Council likewise declares that it does not oppose efforts designed to introduce a perpetual calendar into civil society.
- But among the various systems which are being suggested to stabilize a perpetual calendar and to introduce it into civil life, the Church has no objection only in the case of those systems which retain and safeguard a seven-day week with Sunday, without the introduction of any days outside the week, so that the succession of weeks may be left intact, unless there is question of the most serious reasons.