



**DECREE  
CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
*TRADITIONIS CUSTODES***

On the Use of the Roman Liturgy Prior to the Reform of 1970  
Within the Diocese of Bridgeport

On July 16, 2021, the Supreme Pontiff, Pope Francis issued an apostolic letter given *motu proprio* regarding the use of the Roman Liturgy prior to the reform of 1970 in the particular Churches of the Roman Rite. In obedience to the universal law that the Supreme Pontiff has set forth, I, the Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano, fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Bridgeport, decree what follows as particular law for the Diocese of Bridgeport.

**Preamble**

1. Recognizing that there are several groups of the faithful (*cœtus fidelium*) throughout the diocese composed of those rooted in the form of Christian worship which employs the more ancient use (*usus antiquior*) of the Roman Liturgy experienced prior to the reform of 1970, and that certain groups have been attached to such worship for a significant period of time; and
2. Confirming that there is neither widespread dissension nor denial of the validity and the legitimacy of the liturgical reform as established by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council either within these groups of faithful or within the diocese as a whole; and
3. Mindful of the Supreme Pontiff's desire to reaffirm that the bishops are "the principal dispensers of the mysteries of God, as well as being the moderators, promoters, and guardians of the entire liturgical life in the church entrusted to their care"<sup>1</sup>; and
4. Desiring to care for the spiritual welfare and good of the *cœtus fidelium*; and
5. Understanding that it is my exclusive competence to authorize the use of the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 and to regulate all liturgical celebrations in my diocese, as stated in *Traditionis Custodes*

**I hereby determine the following:**

1. In accordance with canon 87, the Parish of Saints Cyril and Methodius, Bridgeport, and the Parish of Saint Mary in Norwalk are dispensed from the restriction of location found in *Traditionis Custodes*, permitting them to celebrate the Mass according to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962, following their respective schedules as established before the issuance of *Traditionis Custodes*. The pastors of these parishes also have permission to celebrate the other sacraments of the Church in the *usus antiquior* of the Roman Rite within their parishes, without any further needed permission

---

<sup>1</sup> PAUL VI, Decree «On the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church *Christus Dominus*» 12; *Ceremonial of Bishops* 9.

2. Outside of these two parishes, and concerning all other celebrations of the *usus antiquior* of the Roman Rite which would occur throughout the Diocese of Bridgeport, the following applies:
- a. All celebrations of Mass using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 will be sponsored as a direct service of my episcopal ministry and remain under my direct supervision. These Masses will be hosted by those parishes in which the *usus antiquior* of the Roman Rite was celebrated prior to the issuance of *Traditionis Custodes*.
    - i. The schedule of such Masses will remain as existed before the issuance of *Traditionis Custodes*.
    - ii. If a pastor determines that his parish no longer wishes or needs to host the celebration of Mass using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962, the pastor must inform the Bishop of his decision in writing before the change is finalized.
  - b. In cases where the pastor of the parish hosting the celebration of Mass using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 neither has nor wants delegation to celebrate in the *usus antiquior*, the Vicar for Liturgy and Worship will take on the responsibility to ensure that these Masses are properly and reverently celebrated in accordance with the rubrics, employing a rotation of the priests who have been determined by me as qualified (*idoneus*) to celebrate in the *usus antiquior*.
  - c. Priests who seek delegation to celebrate Mass using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 shall seek the faculty to do so in writing directly to me. A priest will be granted this faculty provided he has been determined to be *idoneus*, or qualified to celebrate in the *usus antiquior*.
    - i. In order to be deemed as *idoneus*, a priest must:
      1. Not be impeded by Canon Law;
      2. Possess and evidence a basic knowledge of the Latin language so as to pronounce words correctly while understanding their meaning;
      3. Demonstrate facility and competency in the celebration of the *usus antiquior* of the Mass according to the rubrical directives.
  - d. The faculty to celebrate Mass using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 includes:
    - i. Permission to celebrate such a Mass privately at any time;
    - ii. Permission to celebrate such a Mass for the faithful at any approved times;
    - iii. Permission to pray the *Breviarum Romanum* (the Divine Office in the *usus antiquior*) as a means of fulfilling a cleric's obligation to pray the Liturgy of the Hours.
    - iv. Permission to celebrate the *Ordo Ministrandi Sacramentum Pœnitentiæ* (the Sacrament of Penance in the *usus antiquior*) to the faithful who request it.
  - e. Priests ordained after July 16, 2021 who wish to celebrate Mass using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 must make a request in writing to me outlining the reasons for his desire to celebrate Mass in the *usus antiquior* of the Roman Rite.
    - i. Such priests must first be determined to be *idoneus* (cf. Article 2c) as per diocesan guidelines.
    - ii. In accordance with the requirements of *Traditionis Custodes*, I will consult the *Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments* before granting any such requests.
  - f. If a pastor discovers that there is a stable community within his parish that desires to celebrate in the *usus antiquior* of the Roman Rite, he must make a written petition to me

requesting the ability to have such celebrations in his parish, outlining the pastoral considerations that led to the request. If I grant such permission, it will be given in writing.

- g. Concerning the celebration of all other sacraments of the Church in the *usus antiquior* of the Roman Rite other than the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Penance: with the exception of those parishes that have received the dispensation of restriction of location as stipulated in Article 1, each celebration will require permission from me to celebrate.
- h. Likewise, deacons ordained after July 16, 2021 who wish to assist as either deacon or subdeacon at Masses celebrated in the *usus antiquior* of the Roman Rite must first obtain permission from me to assist at such Masses. They must also be determined to be *idoneus* in accordance with the prescriptions of Article 2c in order to exercise their ministry.

Given the importance of this period of transition, I will be working directly with the priests who wish to celebrate the Mass using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962. In accordance with the desires of *Traditionis Custodes*, a priest delegate will be assigned to moderate all such activities at a future date.

In order that everything I have decreed be observed in all its parts, anything else to the contrary notwithstanding, even if worthy of particular mention, I establish that it be promulgated by way of publication in the *Fairfield County Catholic*, the official newspaper of the Diocese of Bridgeport; entering in force on September 29, 2021, the Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels.

Given at the Catholic Center on September 29, 2021.



Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano  
Bishop of Bridgeport



Reverend Robert M. Kinnally  
Chancellor