



November 4, 2021
Memorial of St. Charles Borromeo

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In his commentary on the Gospel of John, St. Augustine wrote...

O Sacramentum pietatis! O signum unitatis! O vinculum caritatis!
O sacrament of devotion! O sign of unity! O bond of charity!
(IN JOANNIS EVANGELIUM, 26, 13)

These words serve as a reminder of the incredible power of the Eucharist to draw us more deeply into a relationship with God, the Church and one another. At every celebration of the Eucharist, simple elements of bread and wine are consecrated to become the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, His Real Presence. The Eucharistic celebration of the Mass brings us together as God's instruments of love, mercy and peace. Although Mass may be celebrated throughout the world in different languages and according to different rites, we are united in the Real Presence of Christ, who satisfies the hunger of our souls.

On July 16, 2021, Pope Francis issued the motu proprio, *Traditionis custodes*, with an accompanying ecclesiastical letter to address liturgical celebrations according to the norms of the *Roman Missal of 1962*. In the Diocese of Savannah, various churches have celebrated the Mass utilizing this Missal (also referred to as *Mass in the Extraordinary Form* or the *Traditional Latin Mass*) on a regular basis for over 15 years. After reviewing the motu proprio and seeking a better understanding of the spirit of the Holy Father's words, it is evident that Pope Francis is allowing the local Ordinary (Bishop), as custodian of the celebration of liturgy and ritual celebrations, to determine the use of the *Roman Missal of 1962* in his particular Diocese. Therefore, after prayer and discernment, I share with you the following directives for the celebration of the *Mass in the Extraordinary Form* in the Diocese of Savannah as of the First Sunday of Advent, November 28, 2021:

- The public celebration of the Mass utilizing the *Roman Missal of 1962* is to take place only with the designated frequency and in the following locations:
 - Weekly on Sunday at the Cathedral Basilica of St. John the Baptist in Savannah. Mass on Christmas Day may also be celebrated.
 - Monthly on Sunday at Most Holy Trinity Church in Augusta, St. Joseph Church in Macon and St. Anthony of Padua Church in Ray City.
- The faithful attending these Masses must be registered at their local parish (i.e., parish of record).

DIOCESE OF SAVANNAH † OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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- Rev. Allan McDonald is appointed as Bishop's Delegate for *Mass in the Extraordinary Form* to ensure that the pastoral needs of those attending the *Traditional Latin Mass* in the Diocese of Savannah are properly attended to.
- Permission from the Ordinary is necessary for the celebration of Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals in the *Extraordinary Form* and is to be initially addressed to the Bishop's Delegate noted above.
- Families with children who attend *Mass in the Extraordinary Form* in the above-referenced locations are to participate in Sacramental Preparation and Faith Formation at their parish of record.
- Priests who have received proper training to celebrate the Mass according to the *Roman Missal of 1962* must receive written permission from the Ordinary in order to celebrate these liturgies.
- Those ordained after the issuance of *Traditionis custodes* must first request in writing permission from the Ordinary to pursue the necessary training to celebrate the liturgy using the *Roman Missal of 1962*. If local permission is granted, the Ordinary will subsequently petition the Apostolic See for approval.

Since my Episcopal Ordination and Installation as the Fifteenth Bishop of Savannah just over one year ago, I have attended the celebration of the Mass according to the *Roman Missal of 1962* and appreciate the reverence exhibited at these celebrations. As your Bishop, it is my hope that all liturgies, regardless of the Missal used, are celebrated with the dignity and reverence that draw the faithful deeper into the mysteries of our faith. I am grateful to our Priests for the diligence and care with which they celebrate and pray the liturgical rituals of our Church.

Today our liturgical calendar honors St. Charles Borromeo, who dedicated his life to leadership, catechesis and formation. I pray that through his intercession, our Diocesan family will be united in our desire to know, love and serve God and one another through our full, active and conscious participation at the celebration of the Eucharist. May our efforts to grow together in devotion, unity and charity be a beautiful public witness of the Kingdom here on earth.

Be assured of my prayers for you, your loved ones and your intentions. I appreciate your prayers for me as your Shepherd. May we meet each day in our prayers and *Rejoice in the Lord always!*

In Christ,

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Most Reverend Stephen D. Parkes
Bishop of Savannah