



# si si no no

"But let your speech be, 'Yes, yes,' 'No, no', and whatever is beyond these comes from the evil one. (Mt. 5:37)"

January 1999 No. 30

## Concerning the Renewed Debate About Paul VI's Missal

In its Letter to the Editor column, the Paulinian review for "pastoral workers" (*Vita Pastorale*, no.6, 1997), published a letter from a worried reader requesting a "reassuring answer" regarding Cardinal Ratzinger's declarations in his auto-biography (*La mia vie-My Life*)

...on the tragic error made by Paul VI with the proscription of the use of Pope St. Pius V's Missal together with the approval of the "new" Missal which was to prove to be a break in the Church's liturgical tradition (pp.105-116).

Rinaldo Falsini, O.F.M., counsellor to the Congregation of Sacred Rites (Divine Liturgy) writes, amongst other things:

Paul VI had to abolish the use of St. Pius V's Missal..., Pius V's Missal had diminished to the point of becoming an almost dried-up trickle of water, quite unable to water and nourish the faith and piety of the Christian people.

The so-called *Ordo Missae* of St. Pius Vamere dried-up trickle of water? (In that case, what can be said about Paul VI's mini-*Ordo*?) And how 'could the Rite of St. Pius V have ever become "unable to water and nourish the faith and piety of the Christian people," after having watered and nourished it in a truly remarkable manner for so many centuries upon centuries, including so many canonized saints?

Cardinal Ratzinger gives his viewpoint in his autobiography:

I was dumbfounded upon hearing about the interdiction of the old Missal, since such a move had never been seen in the entire history of Catholic liturgy. The impression was given that this was all quite normal. The previous Missal had been realized by Pope St. Pius V, in 1570, immediately following the Council of Trent (1545-1563); it was therefore considered normal that, after 400 years and a new Council, a new Pope should therefore also publish a new Missal. However, the historical truth is another matter altogether. Pius V had limited himself to republishing the Roman Missal then in use just as it had always been down through the centuries of history. Also, many of his successors, following his example, had also had the Missal republished, without ever opposing one Missal to another. It has always been a continuing process of historical growth and purification in which, however, essential continuity had never been destroyed. There does not exist, nor has there ever existed, a Missal completely made up by Pius V. There was only a new elaboration ordered by him, constituting merely a phase in a long process of historical growth.

Following the Council of Trent, the new reality was of a quite different nature: the eruption of the Protestant "reform" had occurred especially under the form of liturgical "reforms" ...; so much so, in fact, that the limits between that which was still Catholic and that which was no longer so, were often difficult to define. In such a confused state of affairs, resulting from a lack of uniform liturgical norms, together with a liturgical plurality inherited from the Middle Ages, the Pope decided that the *Missale Romanum*, that is, the liturgical text then in use in Rome, was to be introduced everywhere that there existed a liturgy dating back to less than 200 years previously. The reason for this was that the timeless Roman liturgy was most assuredly Catholic in every sense of the term. Wherever it could be done, the preceding liturgy (*i.e.*, that dating back 200 years or more) was allowed to be maintained since its truly Catholic character could be considered to be absolutely certain (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *La mia vita*, pp.III,112.).

Pope St. Pius V, therefore, did nothing more than to extend to all western countries the traditional Roman Mass of all times as an in-surmountable barrier to Protestantism. On the contrary, Fr. Falsini falsely writes:

Pius V abolished all Missals dating back to less than 200 years. Paul VI had to abolish the use of Pius V's Missal, because it was totally inadequate for achieving the pastoral ends of the Second Vatican Council, and as well because the content of the Eucholog [*i.e.*, Missal - *Ed.*] as well as the structure of the celebration merge together in the new rite [*i.e.*, the *Novus Ordo Missae* - *Ed.*].

The comparison between what Pope St. Pius V did and Pope Paul VI did does not hold up.

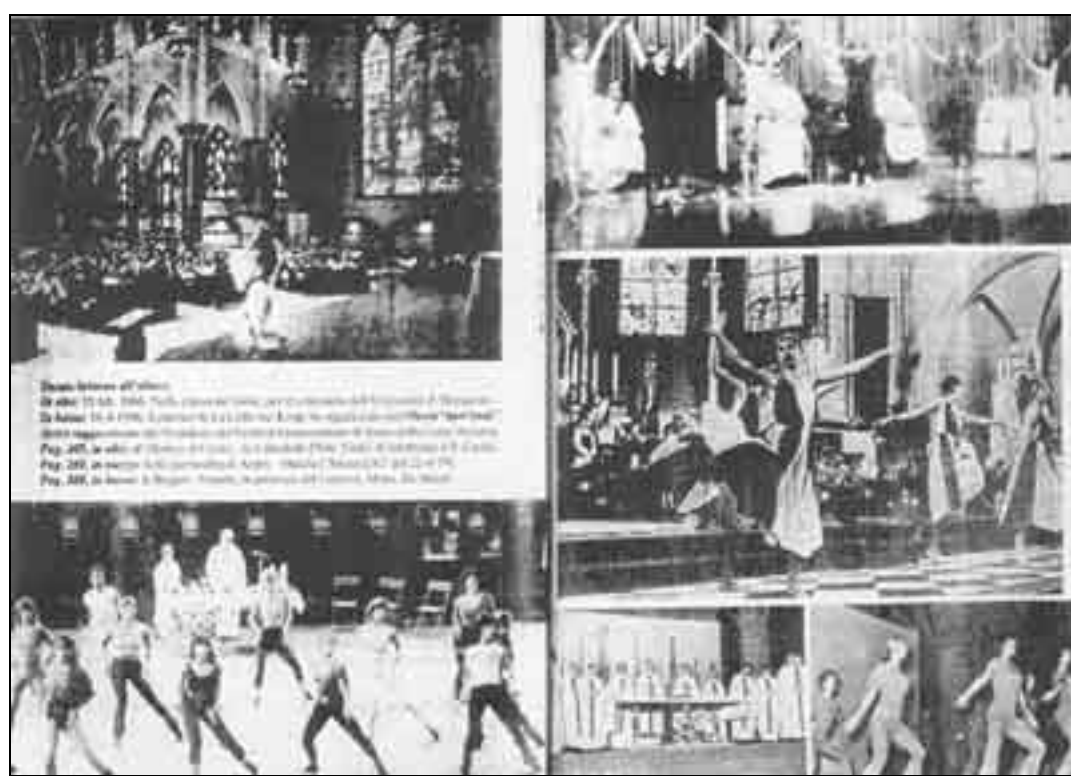
We contend that Pope Paul VI "had to abolish" the traditional Roman Rite because the so-called "pastoral ends" of the Council did not concern Catholics, as they should have done, but Protestants. Although mindful of Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci's *Brief Critical Examination* accurately denouncing Paul VI's *Novus Ordo* for its "impressive departure from the Catholic theology of Holy Mass," we cite a quote from an even more authorized and irrefutable source: "The prayer of the Church must not be seen as a stumbling block for anyone," wrote Mgr. Bugnini in the *Osservatore Romano* (Mar. 17, 1965) . Since it was inevitable that the "prayer of the Church" clashed with those outside the Church, he followed this up by saying that the Catholic Church, therefore, had to:

remove every stone which could represent even a shadow of a risk of a stumbling block or [even] of some displeasure for our separated brethren.

Not quite two years later, *Osservatore Romano* (Oct. 13, 1967) announced that the operation could be considered a success:

The liturgical reform has made a giant step forward and we have drawn quite close to the liturgical forms of the Lutheran Church.

In this, then, it becomes unmistakably clear that Fr. Falsini's comparison is lacking in all validity. Pope St. Pius V never abolished the traditional Roman Rite, but only all of the other rites dating back to less than 200 years, and he did so because these had become suspect of Protestant pollution or accretions. What he did was to extend to all of the western nations the Roman Missal since it was "most assuredly Catholic." Pope Paul VI, however, did quite the contrary by "abolishing" the traditional Roman Rite, and he did so because it was too Catholic, while promulgating a new Protestantized Missal. The difference is momentous.



Liturgical Experimentation in the sanctuary. From *Paolo VI beato?*, sac. Luigi Villa, (Brescia: Editrice Civiltà, 1998), pp. 268-269

Under what pretense is it to be claimed that Pope Paul VI did, indeed, abolish the use of Pope St. Pius V's Missal? This has never been proven. Also, it must be demonstrated beyond doubt that he had any right at all to abolish the most venerable Rite of the Latin Church and this, solely to please Protestants.

In fact, in Paul VI's constitution *Missale Romanum*, nowhere is there to be found a solemn and imperative act of abrogation (*i.e.*, a total repeal of a law} which is recorded in Pope St. Pius V's *Quo Primum* (*SISINONO*, vol. I, No.9, p.5), but merely:

"*Ad extremum ex iis quae hactenus de novo Missali Romano exposuimus quiddam nunc cogere et efficere placet.*" which translates as follows:

Finally, concerning that which we have heretofore exposed regarding the new Missal, we are pleased to draw a few conclusions.

However, self-seeking liberals hastened to translate very liberally (*i.e.*, erroneously) the all-important phrase:

Finally, We wish to give force of law to that which We have heretofore exposed regarding the new Roman Missal.

In addition, the very idea that Pope Paul VI, in promulgating his *Novus Ordo Missae*, also "abolished" the use of Pope St. Pius V's Missal was so vague that inquiries on this matter came pouring in from all over the world to the Holy See, as testified by one of the principal artisans of the *Novus Ordo Missae*, Mgr. Annibale Bugnini, in *La riforma liturgica* ( *CLV-Edizioni Liturgiche*, Rome 1983).

Also, it is even more doubtful that Pope Paul VI was at all authorized to abolish a rite of essentially Apostolic origin and this, for no stronger intention than of simply pleasing non-Catholics. In God's Holy Catholic Church, less than anywhere else, just laws do not depend on a superior's caprice, whims, or fancies. It is on this very account that a question was raised by a liturgical expert (unaffiliated with the Society of Saint Pius X - *Ed.*), Mgr. Klaus Gamber, Director of the Ratisbonne Institute of Liturgical Sciences (1979) and honorary member of the Pontifical Liturgical Academy in Rome: "Is the Pope entitled to change a Rite having its origins in Apostolic Tradition?" (*Die reform der Romischer Liturgie Vorgeschichte und Problematik*). "History," he writes, "teaches us that no pope has ever done such a thing." He continues:

All changes or alterations to the Roman Missal in the course of al most 1400 years have never touched the Rite of Mass: on the contrary, these have always merely constituted an enrichment through the addition of feasts, propers of Masses as well as of simple prayers (*ibid*).

And today Cardinal Ratzinger echoes his words: "Such a state of affairs had never before occurred throughout the entire history of Catholic liturgy" (*La mia vita*).

In order to come across anything similar to Pope Paul VI's "liturgical reform," we must step out of the limits of Catholicism and examine a precedent, scandalously dishonorable for Pope Paul VI, in Martin Luther's "liturgical reform," which "destroyed the Roman Mass while retaining various external forms," including Gregorian Chant (Gamber, *loc. cit.*). Even though "the content and the structure" of the traditional Roman Rite were merged into the new rite, it would still not be sufficient. Mgr. Gamber has written:

That some few parts of the former Missal be incorporated into the new one is not at all sufficient,...in order to be able to speak of a continuity of the Roman Rite" (*op. cit.*).

And now we hear Cardinal Ratzinger echoing those very same words. With Pope Paul VI's "liturgical reform" more than a simple "revision" of the former Missal has happened. Says Cardinal Ratzinger:

They have pulled down our ancient edifice and have replaced it with another one, even though using the old materials as well as the previous projects (*La mia vita*, p.112).

On this point we are in complete agreement with the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Faith.

We are certainly aware that Suarez, along with Cajetan and other outstanding theologians, proposes as an example of malfeasance in office a pope who reaches the point "of changing all of the Church's rites based on and strengthened through Apostolic Tradition" ("*si vellet omnes ecclesiasticas caeremonias apostolica traditione firmatas evertere*" [*De Charitate disput.*, 12, I.]). It is obvious therefore that Suarez, in company with other eminent theologians, refuses to recognize the spurious authority which Pope Paul VI attributed to himself in his "ecumenical" obstinacy. Be that as it may, it remains absolutely certain that the authority entrusted to the pope exists, just as and even more so than any other authority in the Church, for the building up and sanctification of the Mystical Body of Christ, not for its ruin and destruction.

**Gorgonius**

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