

## For a General Liturgical Reform<sup>†</sup>

Annibale Bugnini

For some time now, there have been frequent discussions about the possible reform of liturgical books, especially the Roman Breviary. These honest intentions are desires that appear to be favoured by the most recent studies and editions of the liturgical books. Now, in reality, rather than any particular reform (i.e., mainly of the Breviary), one must more correctly speak of a *general reform* [of the liturgy], at which also Pope Pius X aimed.

As far as “the defence of the ancient codices and monuments” is concerned, although there is still a long way to go, some progress has nevertheless been made, so that now it does not seem that one can charge with audacious presumption those who, in their turn, undertook the beginning of this same [general] reform.

*Ephemerides Liturgicae* published in 1929, with the benign approval of those to whom it pertained, R. D. Schmid’s dissertation on a rationale for reforming the Roman Breviary. The Supreme Pontiff Pius XII seemed once again to encourage liturgical scholars to make the Roman Breviary their study (cf. *Ephem. lit.* 60 [1946]: 2 and 61 [1947]: 99).

And so, this wish was transmitted by the moderators of *Ephemerides*, at the beginning of last year, to their collaborators and to friends of the liturgy, so as diligently to collect amendments, wishes, and intentions, and to put them in writing. We are now collecting these responses together, making a selection, and publishing them.<sup>1</sup>

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Last year, the editors of our Review, making some remarks on recent events concerning the liturgy, hoped that the reform begun by Pius X would be resumed in order to continue and complete it in line with the programme given to it by the Holy Pontiff (cf. *Ephem. lit.* 62 [1948]: 3–4). Certain clues, such as the new [Bea] translation of the Psalter ordered by the Holy Father Pius XII happily reigning, and authorised for use in the public and private recitation of the Divine Office, as well as the repeatedly expressed

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<sup>†</sup> NLM is grateful to Carlo Schena for translating a text of crucial importance in understanding the history of the twentieth-century liturgical reforms that has apparently never been translated into English before. It is Annibale Bugnini’s programmatic article “Per una riforma liturgica generale,” published in the year 1949 (!) in *Ephemerides Liturgicae* vol. 63, pp. 166–84. The Italian text may be found transcribed (not without typographical errors) [here](#). Mr. Schena worked from the original article, a facsimile of which may be found [here](#). It goes without saying that this article is nothing less than a manifesto in favor of a massive overhaul of the entire liturgical life of the Church, the steps of which were to follow in due sequence from the experimental Easter Vigil of 1951 through the Holy Week and rubrical overhauls of 1955, the new code of rubrics in 1960, the 1962 editio typica missal, the postconciliar adaptations of 1965 and 1967, the *Novus Ordo Missae* of 1969, and so forth, through all the other liturgical books. The principles behind all of this were given here by Bugnini in 1949.

<sup>1</sup> This portion of the article is in Latin, while the remainder is in Italian: “Inde a brevi tempore crebrae disceptationes editae sunt super eventuali reformatione librorum liturgicorum, praesertim Breviarii Romani. Iusta proposita sunt desideria, cui studia recentiora et textuum liturgicorum editiones favere videntur. Nunc vero magis quam cuiusdam reformationis, praecipue pro Breviario, rectius loqui necesse est de *reformatione generali*, quam etiam Pius Papa X intendebat. Ad ‘praesidium optimorum codicum et veterum monumentorum’ quod attinet, etsi adhuc longa restat via, aliquod tamen iter factum est, ita ut nunc de audaci praesumptione reprehendendi non videantur qui eiusdem reformationis incoeptus rursus aggressi fuerint. *Ephemerides Liturgicae* a. 1929 publici iuris fecerunt (illis, ad quos spectabat, benigne annuentibus) dissertationem R. D. Schmid de ratione reformandi Breviarium Romanum. Summus Pontifex Pius XII liturgiae cultores ad studium Breviarii Romani iterum impellere visus est (cf. *Ephem. lit.* 60 [1946] 2 et 61 [1947] 99). Hoc itaque optatum *Ephemeridum* moderatores ad suos adlaboratores et ad amicos liturgiae initio anni preteriti transmiserunt, ut emendationes, desiderata ac proposita sedulo colligerent a scriptis significarent. Quas responsiones nunc in unum seligendo colligimus, et publici juris facimus.”

encouragements, gave good hope for a resumption of the work, which would have to possess *a more distinctly pastoral tendency* (as one could gather from the several concessions and indulgences of recent times) in view of a lightening up of the liturgical apparatus and a more realistic adjustment to the concrete needs of clergy and faithful in the changed conditions of today. Such reasons led the editors of the journal to invite their collaborators and friends to express their thoughts on the matter.

The invitation was extended, in a wholly private and confidential manner, so that a fairly exact idea of the real aspirations of the clergy of various categories could be gained: university professors, seminary teachers, priests in care of souls, directors of [charitable] institutions, brothers of different orders and congregations, missionaries, etc. In particular, we invited people who, because of their ministry—such as preaching to the clergy, serving as lecturers, directing houses of [spiritual] exercises, etc.—are often in contact with many clerics. Consideration was also given to the individual nations, so that all, roughly speaking, would be represented.

The proposals ranged from the most traditionalist to the most advanced positions. Some simply stuck to the submitted questionnaire, while others elaborated veritable dissertations. Some tried to establish a reform on a set of principles, others focused on details while neglecting the whole. For evident and obvious reasons, as the invitation letter expressly noted, we cannot publish the answers in full. We would have to print a massive volume, with the disadvantage of seeing the same things repeated dozens of times in different terms. We will attempt to give as succinct a report as possible, trying not to leave out anything that has been proposed, even if more than one suggestion shows weak, defective, and unacceptable aspects. We will then draw some conclusions, modestly expressing our own personal thoughts.

We would also like to warn that we shall, for the time being, only give the results of the referendum on questions regarding the approach to a presumable general reform and a reform of the Breviary, leaving for a later date those concerning the other liturgical books.

First of all, a word on the title of this report: “general reform.” In the present state of affairs, indeed, can one think of an only *partial* reform—for instance, of the Breviary alone, to mention the most discussed point—without considering the other parts of the liturgy: the Missal, the Ritual, the Pontifical, the ecclesiastical year, etc.? We don’t think so.

Nor does an excellent liturgist, who writes:

A desirable reform of the Roman Breviary—or, more precisely, *a revision* of the liturgical celebration of feasts and mysteries by means of the Mass and the Divine Office, *fully adapted* to the spiritual needs of modern Christianity, to the day’s public and private conditions—could not be fruitfully achieved in the present state of uncertainty with regard to liturgical legislation as such. Since the nineteenth century at least, we have been living on a compromise, inappropriately called the “Roman Rite,” between the pontifical rite personally celebrated by the Pope in the Vatican or at the Lateran, the basilican rite of the great Roman churches, the episcopal rite of the Latin cathedrals of the West, the monastic conventual uses and the uses of chapters of canons, the needs of the parish ministry in urban or rural areas, and the needs of the private devotion of isolated priests or missionaries.

Thus, in its present state, the liturgy is a mosaic, or, if you like, an old building, built up little by little, at different times, with different materials and by different hands. If now one wants to remove or change (“modernize”) one or the other part, all the rest begins to crumble or no longer fits in with the restored part.

Indeed, even Pius X had the idea of gradually attaining a general reform. It must be added that certain pastoral problems, which at the time were only just beginning to be felt, have now taken on such proportions and have become so pressing that any failure to recognise them, to take them into account or to attempt a solution, would be the same as condemning the liturgy, the Church’s living prayer, to sterility or to an ineffective archaeologism. That is why we think that a liturgical reform will either be general or end up pleasing no one, as it would leave things as they are with their deficiencies, inconsistencies, and difficulties.

## I. PRINCIPLES

The purported reform, in order to be organic and unitary, and thus lasting, should start from clear and well-defined *principles*. One contributor formulates them as follows:

- a) thetical principle: “*melior est conditio possidentis*” [the better condition, the one to be favoured, is that of the possessor], i.e., of tradition, which is to be presumed good, until it is proven bad, that is to say, less useful;
- b) antithetical principle: one must keep to the brevity and simplicity of the divine command: “*Sic orabitur: Pater noster...*” [Thus shall you pray: Our Father...];
- c) synthetic principle: one must do the one and not omit the other, i.e., preserve tradition and do not fear simplification.

Others state that “the reform must be conceived as a return to the primitive tradition of the celebration of the Christian mystery rather than as a compromise between this celebration [placed] in a subordinate position and the devotional superfetations<sup>2</sup> that have disarticulated it over the centuries.”

Hence the following principles [are to be followed]:

- 1) the predominance of the Temporal cycle over the Sanctoral;
- 2) the typical office *infra hebdomadam* [is to be] the 3-lesson weekday;
- 3) preservation of the strictly local character of the cultus of saints;
- 4) avoidance of the multiplication of “idea feasts”;<sup>3</sup>
- 5) avoiding the continual repetition of “commons.”<sup>4</sup>

There were those who, impressed “by the body of the general rubrics, burdened by the subsequent and often contradictory commentaries of the *probati auctores* [approved authors], so much so as to represent a whole that is more complicated than the ancient *Corpus Iuris*,” felt that a general reform must necessarily be preceded by a “methodical codification.”

But one should bear in mind that, genetically speaking, the rubric follows the text and not vice versa, and that, out of the principles on which the reform is to be based, laws may be deduced that will fix for the future every movement, addition, or suppression in the already-fixed body of the liturgical prayer Ordinary. Fundamentally, it seems to me that the question should be more of [arriving at] a few clear principles, to inspire and dictate the broad lines of the reform, instead of [elaborating] particular norms regulating one or another point of the various parts of the liturgy. Once the broad outlines have been established, the new rubrics can gradually be proposed, thus becoming automatically an integral part of the “methodical codification.”

## II. RANKING OF FEASTS

The general complaint is that the ranking of feasts, as it currently stands, is too complicated and painstaking. But when it comes to providing a solution, either no solution at all is offered, or one is which is

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<sup>2</sup> Superfetation (also spelled superfoetation) is the simultaneous occurrence of more than one stage of developing offspring in the same animal. Here, it seems to be a pejorative term that means the ongoing insertion of elements in the liturgy that are foreign to the original “conception.”

<sup>3</sup> The so-called *Ideenfeste*: relatively newer feasts centered on dogmas or other doctrinal and devotional themes (e.g. Corpus Christi, the Immaculate Conception, Christ the King, Sacred Heart, the Most Precious Blood, the Holy Family), as opposed to the more ancient feasts recalling the principal events of salvation history.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., the Common of Martyrs, the Common of Doctors, the Common of Virgins, etc.

clearly inadequate to the purpose. Most are content to say that the “doubles” are too many and must be reduced; that the “semi-doubles,” in practice, have no other effect than to burden the office with the addition to the normal nine-lessons office, of the “preces” at Prime and of the common commemorations, and that, therefore, it must be abolished, reducing these feasts to the simple rite, while raising the Sundays to the double rite, or to the major double, or to second-class feasts.

Furthermore, we have the semi-festive office (St. Agatha, St. Cecilia, etc.), which would also need a transformation as it forces an illogical division and, in some cases, a capricious interweaving of parts that are inseparable by nature. Overall, the proposed remedies only solve the problem to a minimal extent. How to reach a real and definitive simplification?

Not far from the truth, perhaps, are those who describe as “excessive and *arbitrary* the current nomenclature of the rites of the Office,” and even suggest the development of a new ideal scale for the ranking of feasts, one that is not merely intentional and fictitious, but has a real and concrete basis in the intrinsic value of the feasts themselves, and that can meet the reasonable demands of the liturgy. Such a scale should take into account first of all the fundamental feasts of the mysteries of the Lord (Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost), which regulate the entire annual cycle of the Redemption and should therefore be given special treatment, then the other more recent but particularly important feasts of the Lord, namely Corpus Christi, Sacred Heart and Christ the King, and then, proportionally, the other feasts of the year, distributed, of course, in very limited gradations.

### III. CALENDAR

#### A. *Temporal [Cycle]*

We have already mentioned that with the two cycles of Christmas and Easter the *proprium de tempore* should regain, in the reformed liturgy, an absolute pre-eminence over the *proprium sanctorum*. This desire is universal. Here too, however, no one has addressed the problem on the whole, but rather limited themselves to particular remarks, which can be summarised as follows:

a) A proper Preface for Advent;

b) Suppression of commemorations in *Advent*;

c) In the *Christmas cycle*, concordance between the historical succession of events and the liturgical calendar. Currently, it is noted, there is a very capricious intertwining of the two things, as can be seen from the following chart:

| <i>Historical succession</i> | <i>[Feast Date]</i> | <i>Liturgical Calendar</i>         |
|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Nativitas                    | 25 Dec.             | Nativitas                          |
| Circumcisio                  | 28 Dec.             | Innocentium Passio                 |
| Praesentatio                 | Dom. Infra Oct.     | Praesentatio (1 <sup>a</sup> pars) |
| Magorum adventus             | [Idem]              | Reditus in Nazareth                |
| Fuga in Ægyptum              | 1 Jan.              | Circumcisio (die 8)                |
| Innocentium Passio           | 5 Jan.              | De Ægypto in Nazareth              |
| Reditus de Ægypto            | 6 Jan.              | Magorum adventus                   |
| Vita in Nazareth             | Dom. i. Oct.        | Jesus in Tempo                     |
| Jesus in Tempo               | 13 Jan.             | Baptismus in Jordane               |
| Baptismus in Jordane         | Dom. II             | Nuptiae in Cana                    |
| Nuptiae in Cana              | 2 Febr.             | Praesentatio (2 <sup>a</sup> pars) |

If one were to trace the lines connecting historical facts with the corresponding liturgical feast, the result would be a veritable labyrinth. The proposal would aim to bring the two ideal successions together.

d) The *octave of Christmas* should deal entirely with the Christmas mystery and therefore the feasts of the saints should be eliminated or reduced to a simple commemoration. St John the Evangelist and St Stephen are already celebrated at other times and can disappear here; the Holy Innocents, on the other hand, can remain, as they are related to Christmas. Lessons for other days can be taken from the feast of the Holy Family, the Maternity, etc.

e) On the Feast of the *Epiphany*, a second Mass should be celebrated to commemorate the Baptism of Jesus (the Mass of the Magi in the morning, and of the Baptism after Terce).

Greater prominence should be given to the Feast of the *Epiphany* with its octave. Somewhat curious in this regard is a project that would pile up around this solemnity several others, currently celebrated throughout the year. Namely, with this arrangement:

|                                       |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sabbato post kalendas Januarii        | Vigilia Epiphanie                   |
| Dominica prima post Circumc.          | Epiphania (Bapt. J. C. in Jordane)  |
| Feria secunda post Epiphaniam         | Magorum adventus                    |
| Feria tertia post Epiphaniam          | Jesus in Templo                     |
| Feria quarta post Epiphaniam          | Nuptia in Cana                      |
| Feria quinta post Epiphaniam          | Transfiguratio Christi              |
| Feria sexta post Epiphaniam           | Cor Jesu (sine octava)              |
| Sabbato post Epiphaniam               | Assumptio B. M. V.                  |
| Dominica prima post Epiphaniam        | Festum Christi Regis                |
| Dominica secunda post Epiphaniam      | Festum Sancta Familie               |
| Dominica tertia, quarta, quinta p. E. | ut nunc                             |
| Dominica ultima post Epiphaniam       | Festum Præsentationis (Purificatio) |

The proponent adds to the scheme ample explanations justifying the individual allocations and transpositions, but the proposal seems on the whole rather peculiar and not easy to implement, assuming, of course, that it really deserves, as it stands, to be taken into consideration.

f) *Easter*. Some want it fixed, others mobile (either leaving it as it is, or setting it on the first Sunday in April or in the first half of the same month). The supporters of a fixed Easter claim that it “would bring in all fields of activity and of prayer a considerable advantage, which would far outweigh the various standpoints of the traditionalists.” These, in turn, note that “the mobility of Easter is one of the most precious elements in the poetry of an already too monotonous life.” On the other hand, they add, the desired fixedness could not be ensured without sacrificing, in order to achieve it artificially, the traditional lunar computation and the regular succession of the seven weekdays.”

The issue, as is well known, has been dealt with in all sorts of ways even outside, indeed especially outside, the purely ecclesiastical field. Yet for the purposes of a possible liturgical reform, this is of secondary importance. The attitude of the Holy See in this regard is also well known, an attitude which remains to this day the guiding principle.

g) *Pentecost*. Return to the most ancient practice of closing the Easter season with the fiftieth day, i.e. with Pentecost Sunday, without an octave.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> [It is with some astonishment that one reads “*return to*” Pentecost without an octave, since the octave in this case is extremely ancient, going back at least to the sixth century (and probably more ancient given its universal practice in East and West), putting it squarely within the age of antiquity recognized by the Liturgical Movement as “uncorrupted” by medieval influence. Even the Jews celebrate Pentecost (*Shavuot*) for two days instead of just one.—PAK]

## B. Sanctoral [Cycle]

A lightening of the Sanctoral was a desideratum of many respondents, wishing for a greater development of laetare worship and feria offices. It is a matter of elimination and limitation. Thus, what is called for is not just a reduction of the current calendar, but also some fixed and peremptory norms to prevent the indiscreet clustering of new feasts of saints, later on. Here is how one contributor puts it:

The devotional prevalence must be brought to an end by reducing to the one type of simple feast and ferial psalter all the feasts of saints for which no *local* reason for greater solemnity exists. Purely devotional reasons are inadmissible. All that should be taken into account are: the birth of the saint, his dwelling place, his tomb or the actual presence of prominent relics in a specific place, not for the whole diocese.

The simplified feasts should include, out of their proper or from the common, nothing but the Collect, the antiphon to the Magnificat and the verse at Vespers, the antiphon of the Benedictus with the verse at Lauds. Everything else should be taken from the psalter and the ordinary. Only the most solemn feasts should have the nine-lesson office and double rite, as in current use. The actual patrons, local apostles and major saints of the universal Church should have their proper office or the common one with double major or 2nd class rite. The 1st class, especially with an octave, should be very rare.

An excellent way to cut down on the irritating multiplication of commemorations would be to incorporate into the Breviary the reading of the Martyrology at Prime...

The public celebration must be freed of all the elements that have crept in by fortuitous circumstances (findings of relics, translations of relics, etc.). History tells us that the cult of saints was only celebrated around their burial site, the tomb or 'cathedra'. The unsafe position of "extra muros" cemeteries at the time of the invasions led to the bringing of the saints' bodies into the city, giving rise to the development of their cult to the detriment of the celebration of the mysteries of Redemption. A return to the ancient state of affairs could have the beneficial effect of revitalising pilgrimages, something that no one thinks about any more since the saints' feasts are celebrated everywhere.

To these general observations another scholar gives a more traditionalist and detailed emphasis, while still upholding the principle of simplification:

1. It is by now common consensus (he says), and admitted by all that the office 'de tempore' must resume a preponderant place without sacrificing the cult of saints. This can be achieved by keeping only these feasts in the calendar of the universal Church:

- a) the two feasts of St John the Baptist, and that of St Michael the Archangel on 29 September;
- b) a single feast of St Joseph to be celebrated at Christmastide (others suggest the 3rd Sunday after Easter or in the month of May);
- c) the feasts of the Apostles;
- d) the main feasts of the martyrs, retaining just the ancient Roman martyrs, but also a few martyrs of the universal Church, e.g. St. Potinus and St. Dionysius, St. Boniface, St. Josaphat, St. Wenceslas, the Dominican and Franciscan Martyrs of Morocco, the Japanese Martyrs, a few missionary martyrs of the last centuries;
- e) the feasts of the Doctors of the Church (if necessary, by grouping them together);
- f) the feasts of some major Popes: St. Gregory VII, St. Pius V, etc.;
- g) the feasts of the founders of great Orders or Congregations of truly universal importance and scattered throughout the world, such as St. Benedict, St. Bernard, St. Brunel, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Dominic, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Jeanne de Chantal, St. Theresa of Avila, etc.;
- h) a few other feasts of saints that are truly universal and chosen somewhat from all countries.

Obviously, this choice would require a great deal of tact!

2. Within the same vein, several saints who have had the same or related activities should be grouped together (something that is already the case in the Benedictine Order). Why not bring together Saints Barnabas, Titus, Timothy and Silas, with the office of the Apostles? Likewise St. Joachim and St. Anne (with their own office, taking into account that they are Old Testament saints); groups of holy Popes, etc.; of holy Patriarchs and Prophets, instituting a collective feast.

3. As a mere suggestion, the following feasts could be eliminated from the universal calendar: St Martina, St Andrew Corsini, St Romuald, the Seven Holy Founders of the Servants of Mary, St Symeon of Jerusalem, St Casimir, St Frances of Rome, the fourty Martyrs [of Sebaste], St Francis of Paola, Sts Sotere and Caius, St George, St Paul of the Cross, St Peter of Verona. On the contrary, one could combine St. Thomas Becket and St. Stanislaus, St. Athanasius of Alexandria and St. Hilary of Poitiers, St. Cyril of Jerusalem and St. John Damascene, St. Albert the Great and St. Bonaventure, St. Peter Canisius and St. Robert Bellarmine, St. Felix of Valois and St. John of Matha, St. John of God and St. Camillus de Lellis. In this case the common “pro aliquibus locis” of multiple confessors and holy women could be generalised. On the other hand, suppressed saints’ feasts could be integrated into the diocesan, national or congregational propers.

4. As for the feasts of Our Lord and Our Lady, some are certainly duplicates and should be simplified. For instance: the Circumcision and the Holy Name of Jesus, the Precious Blood to be merged with the Octave of the Sacred Heart, the Transfiguration and the 2nd Sunday of Lent, the two feasts of the Holy Cross, the two feasts of Our Lady of Sorrows, the Holy Name of Mary, to be merged with the Octave of the Birth of the Virgin, the two feasts of the Cathedra Petri.

Other proposals of lesser importance concerning the Sanctoral are: that the feast of Christ the King be transferred to the Sunday within the octave of the Ascension, and the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary to 3rd January; or that the name of St. Joseph enter into the Canon<sup>6</sup> and the Confiteor; that a “festum Annuntiationis S. Ioannis Baptistae” to September 23rd, as this day would constitute “primordia Evangelii” [the primordial events of the gospel]; that the “Commune Sanctorum” be completely reordered; (the so-called “Confessorum” is practically a refuge for all the most disparate saints: priests, monks, laymen, young, old, of all classes and ranks, so that even the formulary has become schematic, without life and property). At least the “Commune Confessoris non Pontificis” should be split in two: a “Comm. Confessoris Presbyteri” and a “Comm. Conf. non Presbyteri,” assigning to the former some texts drawn even from the Roman Pontifical, so that they “rememorent pristinos dies” and “resuscitent gratiam quae data est per impositionem manuum” [“may remember the ancient days” and “reawaken the grace once given through the imposition of the hands”].

What to say about all these proposals? There is undoubtedly much good in them, and they appear to be driven by a fairly concrete vision of the problem. However, it seems to us that they must be set within an even broader framework, and flow from distinct and clear principles, providing the backbone for the reformed calendar and serving as a norm for the future. For the days in a year are limited (365), while the saints are many and ever increasing. On what principles could an agreement be reached? We think these should be the same as those that inspired the Commission of St. Pius V when it carried out the reform named after him, as it was exactly then that the Roman calendar took on a truly “catholic” character with its extension to the universal Church. If one looks closely, the Pian calendar has an embryonic twofold orientation: a sense of Romanity and a beginning of Catholic universality. These two concepts could provide the founding principles of the new calendar.

*Romanitas*, thus giving a place of privilege to authentic Roman martyrs, ancient saints that are not Roman but with ancient cult in Rome, saints associated to the titular churches of Rome, popes, the

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<sup>6</sup> [Which occurred in John XXIII’s revision of the Missal.—CS]

dedication of Roman churches.

*Catholic universality*: the Doctors, the holy Fathers and later ecclesiastical authors, the saints representative of monasticism and ancient asceticism, of the Eastern Churches, the national saints (the evangelisers of the different nations, saints and princes, other “national” saints), the founders (depending on the importance of the saint and of his Order in the universal Church), patron saints, the feasts of the most famous world shrines. There is then a heap of questions about the minor feasts of Our Lord and Our Lady, the feasts of ideas, the Offices of the Passion, etc., which must be carefully examined, so that the liturgy can truly meet all the demands (as far as humanly possible) of today’s liturgical piety. But how can the introduction or retention of all these feasts be reconciled with the desired lightening of the calendar from the feasts of the saints? Everything depends on the rank they will possess and, thereby, the manner of celebrating them.

#### 4. THE BREVIARY

This was the point that met with the most interest and the one that, indeed, in terms of a reform, would have the greatest practical significance for the clergy. The Breviary was also, one must admit, the starting point and the benchmark for all previous reforms and, on closer scrutiny, the constant tendency was always to lighten (never to increase) the daily *pensum* of the Divine Office. It is in this direction, as was to be expected, that all of our contributors’ suggestions are oriented, having in common yet another particularity: [the wish] to bring the Divine Office back to the centre of priestly piety by making it appealing, and also to bring it back, as far as possible, into the hands of the people.

And here we come to the proposals.

1) Some observe that the “rhythm” of the Hours of the Breviary, which animated the life of the monks with frequent prayer, even during the night, no longer corresponds, today, to the rhythm of life of the clergy assigned to pastoral ministry, which is the vast majority. The parish work, made more burdensome by the shortage of priests, the social and religious works that multiply, gravitating around the parish, the natural cell of Christian life, the most elementary evangelisation that requires a great deal of time, and finally, the human organism that is much weaker now than in the past, to fulfil these tasks; all this, according to them, would necessarily require a lightening and an adaptation. What is needed, they say, is a Breviary in which the prayers are distributed differently, for example in the morning and in the evening. Such is a natural rhythm of human life, which would correspond better to our present conditions. If one were to forget these sociological reflections, they conclude, the Breviary would become more and more of a burden for the pastoral clergy, and the all-together recitation of Hours composed to be distributed throughout the day would only increase the malaise that is already so severe.

2) Others, on the contrary, conceive the reform not in the spirit of a quantitative reduction, but rather of a better overall balance of the *opus Dei* through the year, the week and the day. The reform, they say, must preserve the Breviary’s choral and “communitarian” character. And this should be fostered by the movement, already seen among the clergy in several countries, of gathering together in common life and prayer based precisely on the recitation of the Divine Office.

3) Some note that the current Breviary “cannot be considered very burdensome,” that its recitation is varied and appreciated and better reflects the secular tradition, that it is devout in content and that therefore a reform should be inspired by these two principles:

a) *simplicity*, above all in the rubrics which are today fantastically complicated (suppression of the “lectio IX,” commemorations, octaves, transferred offices, etc.). The breviary should be an agile and brief “devotionary” that can be recited without needing calendars or epacts;

b) *variety* that facilitates devotion and education. The ideal, again in their opinion, would be for each feast to have its own lessons, homilies, hymns, etc.; the “commons” are the fossilisation of piety.

## 5. THE PSALMODY

The psalter constitutes the basis of liturgical prayer.

The unintelligibility of some parts constituted, until recently, the first and greatest difficulty to a pious and devout recitation. A great step forward, on this point, was achieved with the recent new translation of the psalms, about which, while we can note a general satisfaction and no mince of praise is spared for its unexpected and unhopèd-for realisation, there has also been, (we mention it for the sake of accuracy) those who have expressed the wish that “Gregorianists and medieval-Latinists may still be able to examine a few points” and carry out, before the “nova interpretatio” is definitively adopted for the whole Church, some minor modifications, in those points where the text still presents difficulties for liturgical use. An old parish priest is alarmed for fear that one day he will be forbidden to use the old psalter; he knows almost all 150 psalms by heart, and during his visits to the sick, which are often very long, he can recite the Breviary by heart, something that would be impossible if the new psalter were to be imposed by completely excluding the use of the old one.

Intelligibility is not the sole problem regarding the psalter. Since the reform proposals are decidedly oriented towards a reduction of the daily *pensum* [burden], they generally focus exactly on the psalter to achieve this goal.

1) Some would like to reduce the Matins, as in the octave of Easter and Pentecost, to three psalms and three lessons, thus thinking to have ipso facto found the desired solution. In such case, the following scheme is proposed: Invitatory, hymn, three psalms with three lessons, Dominus vobiscum, oration of the day (the “Te Deum” should be reserved for major solemnities).

2) Others, on the other hand, find that the current weekly recitation of the entire psalter should remain intact, and call for a more rigorous approach, as only the most important feasts should abandon the weekly psalter scheme; the others should have their own psalms only at Vespers, Matins and Lauds; at the minor Hours and Compline one should use the corresponding weekly psalter.

3) On feasts adopting the Sunday psalms, some would recommend using the gradual psalms [119–133] for the minor hours, reserving Psalm 118 for Sunday only.<sup>7</sup> (Still others find Psalm 118 ever more beautiful and rich, and would want it even more often).

4) Some suggest that the distribution and division of the psalms be revised, shortening certain arrangements, like those of Sunday.

5) Other specific proposals are: to avoid repeating the same psalm twice in slightly different forms, such as 13 and 52, 39 iii and 69; that Psalms 41–42 be grouped together; that each psalm be accompanied by a brief explanation, or a title clarifying its meaning; that the “Athanasian” symbol be reserved for the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, or be divided into parts [to be recited] as Prime psalms on Sundays;<sup>8</sup> that Lauds be returned to the old arrangement in use before Pius X; that at Vespers sung with the people, the option be given to replace the last proper psalm with the *Laudate Dominum* (Psalm 116).

6) Finally, there was no shortage of those who would see in the distribution of the Psalter over a fortnight the one and most effective way of achieving a real lightening of the Divine Office. “One could think,” says one of the proponents, “of a more profound reform of the Divine Office, retaining the daily recitation and correlatively enabling the reading of Sacred Scripture. This wouldn’t imply any *substantial* change to the liturgical year nor to the basic order of the canonical Hours. But the psalter would be divided into two weeks with the following scheme:

*Vespers*: four antiphons and four psalms or parts of psalms, a Scripture lesson (some twenty verses) in relation to the liturgical season (or to the feast, but only for major feasts) and followed by a

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<sup>7</sup> This proposal bears a likeness to the monastic Office, where the gradual psalms are prayed at minor hours from Tuesday to Saturday, and where Psalm 118 is divided over Sunday and Monday.

<sup>8</sup> “si divida in parti come salmi di Prima della domenica”... if I understood correctly, the proposal would be that of using the Athanasian Creed as a substitute of the psalmody (!) at Prime on Sundays. Another reading could be: “divided into parts just like the Sunday Prime psalms” [i.e. Psalm 118, I guess]. But I think in this case Bugnini would have written “si divida in parti come *i* salmi di Prima della domenica.”

responsory, hymn, verse, Magnificat.

*Compline*: current pattern.

*Matins*: Invitatory, hymn, then one nocturne of three antiphons and three psalms (or three groups of psalms with one Gloria), three lessons (one from Scripture, one historical or patristic, and a homily) on Sundays and feasts; one lesson on the ferias per annum, two lessons on ferias that have their own gospel (a biblical lesson and a homily).

*Lauds*: current pattern, but with the daily recitation of Psalms 148-150 in accordance with the ancient tradition.

*Minor Hours*: current pattern.

There follows a detailed scheme of psalmodic distribution over the two weeks and an indication of the canticles for the ordinary and festive “cursus.”

The proposal is undoubtedly fascinating, much more than it might seem at first sight. After all, the idea would not be entirely new. The Ambrosian rite, *ab antico* [since ancient times], has a psalter divided into two weeks. Then there is the issue of breaking with the one-week Roman tradition, which prompted even Fr Parsch to resolutely discard the project.

However, all things considered, it seems to us that the “vale” [goodbye] to a venerable tradition is amply offset by the advantages that would ensue, should the project really move towards a realisation; in other words, it seems to us that this would be the most simple and most serious way to reach a reasonable and convenient reduction of the *onus canonicum*. Of course a trend towards this solution could not fail to meet with much approval, especially from the pastoral clergy. But this evidently remains in the realm of pure desire, and our reporting has no other purpose than to show one of the most successful and feasible solutions to this thorny problem.

## 6. ANTIPHONS

Antiphons are intimately connected to the psalmody, and there is no lack of proposals of various kinds for them as well.

It is asked: 1) that the antiphons both before and after the psalm be said always in their entirety, and not in the current manner of using a reduced form at the start;<sup>9</sup>

2) that the Breviary and the Antiphonary be harmonised, where differences exist both in the text and in the position of the intonation asterisk;

3) that a better choice of the antiphons be made, that they be more useful, better reflecting the sense of the psalm, of which they should be like the title, being preferably drawn from the New Testament so as to set the psalm in the light of Redemption;

4) that the alleluia be removed from certain antiphons that do not call for it, e.g. “Quomodo cantabimus canticum Domini in terra aliena, alleluia, alleluia” (Second Sunday after Easter, resp.; “Consolantem me quaesivi et non inveni, alleluia” (Feast of the Sacred Heart), etc.;

5) that on the Feast of the Most Sacred Rosary the antiphons of the 1st Nocturne be taken from the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and those at Lauds be taken from Vespers, for these antiphons have been applied to the psalms too mechanically, the joyful mysteries are celebrated twice, in the hymn at First Vespers and in the antiphons of the 1st and 2nd Nocturnes. Likewise, with much incongruity, the joyful mysteries are lumped together with the sorrowful ones (2nd Nocturne), and the 4th and 5th sorrowful mysteries are poorly contracted into one.

## 7. THE READING

Another point of paramount importance for all proposers was the reading. A qualitative and quantitative increase was unanimously called for. This is undoubtedly a good sign. However, when it comes to the concrete formulation of the proposals, the opinions are no longer convergent.

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<sup>9</sup> This was implemented in the 1960 revisions, where antiphons are always “doubled.”

Let us note this at once: on the one hand, it is asked that the reading be increased; on the other hand, there is a desire to shorten Matins by reducing them to a single Nocturne and to three lessons that are not too long and one taken from the O.T., the next historical, the third from the N.T. (this is, after all, the old scheme of the “Breviarium S. Crucis”).

But three lessons alone reduce the reading to a minimum, assuming of course that the lessons should not be longer than the current average length. As for the *biblical* lesson, there are many calls for it to be “continuous,” even during Lent and the Ember Days. It is desired that the most practical books be chosen and read in full, especially the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. When, then, occasionally the readers were impeded, they should certainly be omitted. It is also suggested that the distribution of the books of Kings be reviewed, as the first takes up too much space at the expense of the others, and more room be given to Jeremiah, the Minor Prophets, and Job.

A widespread request would want the lessons of the 1st Nocturne (biblical) be longer, as Holy Scripture should have a more important place in the new Breviary.

Some would realise this as follows: an obligation to read the Bible for ten minutes, but at the priest’s free discretion. This way he would be able to read what is most beneficial and attractive to him. Others would like to see a reduction in the O.T. readings and more emphasis on the N.T.

The lessons of the 2nd nocturne, on the other hand, should be shortened, both to eliminate pomposities of little or no spiritual value, as well as to bring about a certain balance between the offices in terms of length.

The *hagiographic* lessons, it is further observed, should be seriously revised, eliminating legends, which discredit the piety of the Church, and accounts of miracles, even authentic ones, in order to give more prominence to the proper character of each saint’s work and holiness, “not omitting to properly frame” in two or three sentences, the historical, geographical, social and spiritual environment in which the saint lived. This is of great importance for a correct evaluation and appreciation of their virtues. If the saint has left writings, it would be desirable to have some of them read, instead of the often ordinary or schematic life. As for the *patristic* lessons, they should first of all be given in the critical text, citing the source from which they are taken; then, as far as possible and according to the findings of the most recent studies, make sure of their genuine authorship. It is also requested that a more “eclectic” choice of texts be made (from the Greek Church, from recent Doctors, and even if they have written in modern languages). Possibly on the feast day of a Doctor, a text by him should be given.

The discourses and *sermons* de tempore should also be thoroughly revised, and the sermons of the Commons be more varied.

Indeed, were it possible, the homilies should be read in full, and not just the beginning, on a number of days or feasts (as is the case with the Office of the Octave of the Dedication of the Church), so that over several occasions they could be read in full. Furthermore, it would be necessary to decisively remove those passages, such as certain interpretations and allegories (e.g. the 38 years of the paralytic at the pool of Bethsaida), which reflect the fashion and taste of a bygone era, and replace them with texts of true spiritual nourishment.

Finally, a practical issue that affects the entire reading (biblical, patristic, historical, homiletic) is that it be done in “the vernacular” in a pure and simple style, or at least alternating one month in Latin and the other in the vernacular (a proposal that extends to the entire Breviary).

## 8. CHAPTERS AND RESPONSORIES

Related to the question of the reading is that of *chapters*. It is wished to extend to all Sundays of the year the distribution, in chapters, of the occurring epistle to remedy the monotony of the chapters at Vespers, the only hour celebrated in parishes.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The phrase in Italian—“la distribuzione in capitoli dell’epistola *occorrente* per rimediare alla monotonia”—can be translated two ways. It could mean either that the proposed change in chapter would be “[needed] in order to remedy,” or it could be the Latinism “occurring,” i.e. the Epistle falling on that Sunday would be used for the chapter at

As for the *responsories*, their fresh introduction under Pius X was certainly an improvement for the Breviary and to deprive it of them now would be an impoverishment. The responsory has no small spiritual function insofar as after the reading it is like a meditation, a recollection of what has been read, an elevation of the soul to God in meditated praise. It is not, therefore, a simple piece of singing and so good only for the office sung in choir.

## 9. HYMNS

The proposals for hymns can be summarised as follows:

- 1) to go back to the ancient texts and be inspired by them for the new compositions;
- 2) to increase the number of hymns by taking them from classical hymnody (Prudentius, Fortunatus, Sedulius, etc.) and from the very rich medieval hymnody;
- 3) to more widely diversify the hymns on the feasts of the Blessed Virgin (also taking them from the eastern hymnody) and of the saints so as not to have to repeat quite so often the same hymns as in the Common (“Iste confessor,” “Ave maris stella,” “Deus tuorum militum” etc.);
- 4) of the modern hymns, several are incomprehensible and should be replaced or modified;
- 5) so as to increase the variety and appeal of the hymns, could one not, someone asks, assign proper hymns to Compline according to times and certain major feasts?

And here are some particular remarks for a revision of the existing hymns:

1. In the hymn of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, we find the word *pabulum*, (also found in the Comm. Mart.: “et blanda fraudum pabula”), which in good Latin, even classical and patristic Latin, means *fodder*, a term that is truly unbecoming to indicate the nourishment of men. The frequent elisions, as in the verse *Hoc ostium arcae in latere est* (feast of the Sacred Heart) make for an unpronounceable and un-singable hymn, and slightly less so does the hymn for Christ the King: *Tutus stat ordo civicus*, and the word “imagine” of the same hymn, instead of “specie” in the verse “Vini dapisque imagine,” is improper.

2. The doxology of the hymn “Ave, maris stella”:

Sit laus Deo Patri, - Summo Christo decus,  
Spiritui Sancto, - Tribus honor unus.

should be changed to:

Sit laus Deo Patri, - Summo Christo decus,  
Spiritui Sancto - honor, tribus unus.

since the current formulation is found in later codices (cf. Clemens BLUME, S. I., *Unsere liturgischen Lieder*, Regensburg 1932, p. 205), and according to the current doxology, to the Father befits the *laus*, to Christ the *decus*, while the corresponding attribute for the Holy Spirit is missing.

3. “Iesu corona celsior” (Lauds of the Commune Conf. non Pont.) should undergo a general recast. The 3rd stanza, recalling the saint’s dying day, stands in contrast to the 1st stanza of the *Iste confessor*, which changes the 3rd verse when it refers to the dies natalis.<sup>11</sup> It is also pointed out that the threefold victory over the world, the devil, and the flesh in the 4th verse is utterly elusive.<sup>12</sup> According to the same

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Vespers.

<sup>11</sup> Since the revisions of Urban VIII, the first stanza of the hymn *Iste Confessor* had had an alternative when it came to the 3rd and 4th verses, so that when the saint’s feast coincided with the confessor’s death day, it would sound as: *Iste confessor Domini colentes / Quem pie laudant populi per orbem: / Hac die lætus meruit beatas / Scandere sedes*; otherwise, the last two verses were replaced with: *Hac die lætus meruit supremos / Laudis honores*. In the 1955 pian revisions, this solution was dropped in favour of the latter alternative for all cases.

<sup>12</sup> “*Hic vana terræ gaudia, / Et luculenta prædia, / Polluta sorde deputans, / Ovans tenet cælestia*”—Considering the vain joys and lavish goods of the world as defiled with filth, he now in triumph possesses those that are heavenly.

proponent, the first three stanzas should be completely suppressed and the remaining ones be arranged as follows: *Te Christe, Hic vana, Virtute*, etc.

4. In the hymn of Lauds for St Martina (30 Jan.) in the first stanza one would like to change “Thracios” (too reminiscent of the Horatian hater of enemies) to “Tartaros.”<sup>13</sup>

5. On the feast of the martyrs Saints Perpetua and Felicitas (6 March) the hymns, unless new ones are made, should be taken from the “Commune plurium non Virginum pro aliquibus locis”: “Nobiles Christi famulas” and “Si lege prisca,” as those in the singular form of the “Commune unius non Virginis” are not fitting.

## 10. THE PRECES

It is called for either their suppression, or a decisive reduction in the wording of the text, or a limitation in their use. Some would want to retain only the ferial preces, others would reserve the preces dominicales for the ferias “per annum” and the Sundays of Septuagesima and Lent, and the ferial preces for the ferias of Lent and the Ember Days.—In the *℞.* for the Supreme Pontiff, who is also referred to as the “Most Holy,” it is pointed out that the word “blessed” the *℞.* is incongruous, whereas the *℣.* already used the word “most blessed.”<sup>14</sup>

## 11. BEGINNING AND END OF THE HOURS

There is a general request for the abolition of the *Pater, Ave* and *Credo* with certain prayers immediately preceding and following (such as the *Confiteor*, which would be reserved for Compline only), of the *Iube, domne, benedicere*, at the lessons, of the *Benedicite, Deus*, at Prime. Some would go even further, up to the suppression of the major antiphons of Our Lady, keeping them at most for the end of Compline. For the minor Hours some propose the dropping of the short responsories. Be that as it may, a simplification in this area is certainly needed.<sup>15</sup> There are currently some formulas that suppose the starting of the Hour and not the continuation of prayer,<sup>16</sup> which is usually the case now. A whole encrustation has developed around the original canonical prayer under the impulse of private and individual piety. Most pious and holy things, no doubt, but which no one, we believe, would regret to see judiciously and wisely eliminated, so that the liturgical prayer would then shine in its native beauty, in the simplicity of its lines and the spontaneity of its expression.

Two “desiderata” will meet with general approval:

1) placing the Lord’s Prayer (*Pater*) not as an appendix after the Hours, but at the climax, as in the monastic rite (and in the Mass): Kyrie... *Pater*... oration;

2) revision of the orations: return to classical sobriety, eliminating some that are very long, with a heap of disparate ideas, containing the whole life of the saint, etc.

## 12. OBSERVATIONS ON CERTAIN PARTS OF THE OFFICE

We have made a few remarks on the different parts of the Divine Office, discussing the matter systematically. Let us now complete this with a few specific annotations.

Some would like to give each Hour an explanatory title: a “theme,” an “idea” as a guide, and also assign for each day and for the individual Hours an official “prayer intention” of the Church. Furthermore, according to the same proponents, each feria could have its own, more explicit particular meaning.

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<sup>13</sup> “Tu natále solum prótege, tu bonæ / Da pacis réquiem Christiádam plagis; / Armórum strépitus, et fera prælia / In fines age Thrácios,” where the proposed amendment would have “In fines age Tartaros”; thus, we might add, the emphasis would be shifted from the saint’s protection from human foes to spiritual ones.

<sup>14</sup> *℣.* Orémus pro beatíssimo Papa nostro [...] *℞.* Dóminus [...] beátum fáciat eum [...]

<sup>15</sup> And it was realised, with the adoption of many of the aforementioned proposals, in the 1955 and 1960 revisions.

<sup>16</sup> That is, the continuous recitation of multiple Hours, as by a cleric reading by himself.

For example: Sunday: the Trinity; Monday: thanksgiving; Tuesday: high praise to God; Wednesday: universal prayer; Thursday: glorification of the God-Man; Friday: general Satisfaction to Christ who is sacrificed for us; Saturday: Mary and the saints.

Some would ask for the faculty to say *ad libitum*, in Lent, the Office *de tempore*, instead of that of the day's saint, as is already done for the Mass.

Let us just mention the proposal that "parish priests be authorised to anticipate at noon, at least on Sundays and Feasts, the *Matins* of the following day." The proposal denotes the good spirit and the piety of those who advanced it, but betrays an erroneous conception of the Divine Office, which by its very nature is an "hourly" prayer, to be distributed in the various proper times to sanctify all the hours of the day.

To compensate for the loss of the hagiographic lessons, it is asked for the introduction at *Prime* of the reading of the Martyrology (either in full, or reduced to some eulogies more important to the universal and local Church). This would also resolve, according to the contributors, the issue of commemorations, which would be abolished *per se*, as the memory done at *Prime* with the Martyrology should suffice.

As for the *Minor Hours*, a pastoral suggestion is that at least on Sundays and feast days, parish priests and others with care of souls should be dispensed from them.

Some would like greater protection of the standing of First and Second Vespers on Sunday, particularly during Lent and Advent, even when First and Second Class feasts clash against it.

For *Compline* there are those who would want every day, except Sunday, Psalm 50 ("Miserere"). Others would prefer to return to the old invariable arrangement, that is, the current Sunday scheme, as it was before Pius X. Some think that for *Compline* too, parish priests and clergy who sing Vespers with the people could be exempted.

For a fair solution it is necessary to bear in mind the proper character of each Hour and particularly of *Compline*, to which Psalms 90 and 133 are really well suited, and therefore a return to the status quo antea would please anyone. All the more so since the ever more frequent use, among certain groups of faithful, of *Prime* and *Compline* as morning and evening prayers, compels the clergy to say these Hours with them, and a simplification of the arrangements for practical use would be desirable.

### 13. THE OCTAVES

These have taken on enormous development, "exaggerated," says one of the contributors. And for the octaves too, the "unanimous consensus" is that they should be simplified. Some would like them all to be abolished, with the exception of Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Pentecost, Ascension and Corpus Christi, raising the office *infra octavam* to the rank of duplex. Others argue as follows: "The octaves of Easter and Pentecost should undoubtedly be retained because of their antiquity, and also that of Christmas because of its entirely special character: it is in fact an integral part of Christmastide, and endows the week from 25th to 31st December with singularly attractive features.

The octave of the Ascension, of recent institution, could certainly disappear, and the same goes for that of the Sacred Heart and all the non-privileged octaves. Besides, they could all be reduced to the rank of simple octaves, with a proper office only on the eighth day and with a special privilege enabling this to be preferred to feasts of double or inferior rite. One could also give the Sundays "*infra octavam*" an office inspired by the feast: this would seem almost indispensable for the majority of countries where these feasts are no longer celebrated by the people on the assigned day, but postponed to the following Sunday.

For Epiphany and Corpus Christi, the octave might be retained, but reducing all the days *infra octavam* to the simple rite, with ferial psalter. Wouldn't it be a good idea to go a step further and rearrange all the festive offices, if not by reducing them to the simple rite, at least by referring them to the principle of a three-lesson office? In that case, the responsories that were suppressed could be used at Vespers, Lauds, and the *Minor Hours* after the chapter, so as not to deplete the liturgical prayer of these items, which are often magnificent."

To recap, the octave system, in the opinion of a contributor, could be modified as follows:

1. Easter, Pentecost, Christmas: no change.

2. *Octaves of the Temporal:*

Epiphany: on the days *infra octavam*, 3-lessons office with ferial psalter, commemoration only on the feasts of St Joseph and the Holy Family; on the eighth day, double office as on the feast day, but with proper texts, referring to the Baptism of Jesus.

Ascension: octave suppressed, but maintaining the “Ascensiontide.”

Corpus Christi: on the days *infra octavam*, 3-lessons office, yielding only before a double with simple commemoration; on the eighth day, feast of Christ the High Priest.

Sacred Heart: simple octave, to be merged with the feast of the Precious Blood of Our Lord.

3. *Octaves of the Sanctoral:*

Immaculate Conception, simple octave.

S. Joseph (to be celebrated at Christmastide), simple octave.

S. John the Baptist, simple octave.

Ss. Peter and Paul, simple octave (on 4th July, feast of all the Holy Popes).

S. Lawrence, simple octave.

Assumption, simple octave, to be merged with the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, simple octave, to be merged with the feast of the Name of Mary, which would take the office of the Nativity with proper parts from the current office.

All Saints’ Day, simple octave, to be merged with the feast of the Holy Relics.

Patron and Titular Saint, Dedication of a church, simple octave.

4. *Office of the Sundays infra octavam:*

Preserve intact the current offices for the Sundays within the octaves of Christmas, Ascension, Corpus Christi and Sacred Heart. Restore the Sunday within the Octave of the Epiphany and set the Feast of the Holy Family on another day *infra octavam*.

For Sundays *infra octavam* of the feasts of the Assumption and the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, Saints Peter and Paul, All Saints, the Dedication, the Feast of the Patron and of the Titular, the office could be composed as follows: Psalms and antiphons, chapter and hymn, short responsories and verses, from the Feast; Matins lessons and oration, from the occurring Sunday. At Mass, commemoration (the first one) and preface of the octave.

## 14. COMMEMORATIONS

It is said that by inserting the Martyrology at Prime, all the commemorations may as well be suppressed. This is, frankly, a somewhat simplistic way of solving the problem. Others call for its suppression at Matins, Lauds and Vespers, but not at Mass. All the commemorations should be reduced to two and all the rest be omitted, some propose. And again: the saints of the simple or double rite, when occurring on a Sunday, should only be commemorated at Lauds. We will not linger over other proposals as the simplified system for the octaves would also bring about this simplification, which ultimately is a logical consequence of the foregoing.

## 15. THE RUBRICS

Among the various proposals, here are the main ones:

1. Brief notes, both historical and exegetical, should be provided before the various rites and their parts, or else be merged with the general rubrics of both the Breviary and the Missal. Naturally the current “*Rubricae generales*” should be combined with the “*Additiones et Variationes*.” These should be numbered progressively, emulating in brevity and clarity the canons of the C.I.C. The new prolegomena of the liturgical books should also serve as the school text (or as a substantial part of the text) of practical liturgy

in seminaries.

2. The rubric or rubrics referring to the canonical Hours in relation to the Conventual Mass should be revised or deleted. Thus the rule prescribing the recitation of Vespers before midday (i.e. before lunch) in Lent is a patent error of interpretation, which should be corrected.

3. A few specific notes: in order to dispel any doubt as to whether one should genuflect with one or both knees, the rubric at the Invitatory: “In sequenti Psalmi versu, ad verba: venite, adoremus, et procidamus, genuflectitur,” should be changed to: “In sequenti Psalmi versu verba: venite, adoremus, et procidamus dicuntur flexis genibus.”

On the feast of the Holy Angels, at each Hour and at the end of First Vespers on 24 March, 8 May, 29 September, 2 October, 24 October, the following rubric should be added: “Conclusio hymnorum ad omnes Horas”:

Deo Patri sit gloria, - Qui, quos redemit Filius

Et Sanctus unxit Spiritus, - Per Angelos custodiat. Amen.

The first stanza of the *Iste Confessor* should always say: “Hac die laetus meruit supremos - Laudis honores.” Thus many particular rubrics on the feasts of the saints would drop by themselves.

4. “There is urgent need,” says a collaborator, “for a methodical compilation, for the use of the whole Church, not of a detailed guide to the slightest gestures of choir or officiants, but of a collection of the general principles, a true *Codex iuris liturgici*, enunciating in clear and systematic terms what individuals and the different categories are to do, according to the times, places and circumstances of the celebration of liturgical feasts and ceremonies. The order should be parallel to that of the Code of Canon Law, and the subject matter should be provided by the methodical sifting of the rubrics - those that have not fallen into disuse or become obsolete - of the Missal, the Breviary, the Pontificale and the Cerimoniale, together with the appendix for minor churches, and the Rituale. The selection should be made not on the basis of the uses that are legally in force, but on that of the abundant and serious studies that have shed light on the origin, meaning and historical evolution of each rite or ceremony. Such work should later serve as a starting point for synodal and diocesan commissions for liturgy to adjust, according to the spiritual needs of the different places, the celebrations required of each priest in his parish and to put an end to the arbitrary practices that are occurring more and more every day.”

## CONCLUSION

We have sifted here and there through an abundant harvest. Proposals and projects, in their manifold variety, reflect one identical light: the intimate desire for renewal and adaptation of the “*laus perennis*” to the current spiritual needs of the clergy and the “*plebs Dei*.” We have wanted to report with absolute fidelity, often in their own words, the thoughts of our collaborators, so that their voice may reach our readers without distortion or misrepresentation, but in its genuine integrity. While we warmly thank all those who have joined us in this common endeavour, which we hope will bear fruit “*tempore opportuno*,” we also confirm that the pages of the Review will remain open to any other collaboration that, both in intention and in formulation, adheres to a wise balance between “*nova et vetera*.”

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A. BUGNINI, C. M.