



October 7, 2025

JMJ

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In collaboration with Bishop Mark Beckman and the other pastors of parishes in our diocese where the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite is currently celebrated, Masses in the Extraordinary Form will begin to transition to the Ordinary Form. This transition brings our diocese into conformity with what has been requested by Pope Francis in his *motu proprio Traditionis Custodes*.

The final Mass in the Extraordinary Form to be offered at our parish will be on December 28, 2025. Until that date, the Extraordinary Form will continue to be offered every Sunday, with three exceptions. In order for us to celebrate the Solemnity of Christ the King as one parish family, the Ordinary Form will be offered on October 26th (30th Sunday in Ordinary Time) and November 23rd (Christ the King). In addition, December 14th (3rd Sunday of Advent) will also be offered in the Ordinary Form.

Monday Mass at 6 p.m. will continue to be offered in the Extraordinary Form throughout the month of October. Beginning in November, this Mass will transition to the Ordinary Form.

As part of this transition, Mass will begin to be celebrated using the *Missale Romanum*, editio iuxta typicam tertiam. Despite this change, Mass will continue to include traditional elements that do not conflict with the missal. Therefore, Mass will continue to be offered *ad orientem*, the altar arrangement will remain the same, we will continue to make use of the communion rail, Gregorian chant will retain its proper place in the liturgy, the Mass will continue to be offered in Latin, and there will be incense along with other traditional elements.

I know that this transition will be difficult for some. As your pastor, please know that you are each in my prayers as we undergo this change together. It is my hope that we can embrace this transition with both faith and charity. We must remain united to Christ, for He is the vine and we are the branches. Without Him—no matter our motives or feelings—we will not bear much fruit, for apart from Him we can do nothing. The Eucharist we receive is the same Lord who comes to us, no matter which form of the Church's liturgy is celebrated.

Next Sunday, October 19th, I have scheduled time after the 2 p.m. Mass for anyone who would like to join me for a discussion regarding this transition. Let us turn toward the Lord and place our trust in Him.

In Christ,



TREASURES NEW AND OLD UNITY IN FAITH POST-*TRADITIONES CUSTODES*

Homily
October 12, 2025

Very Rev. J. David Carter, JCL, JV, Pastor & Rector
The Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul

As you are aware, in 2021 Pope Francis issued the *motu proprio*, *Traditionis Custodes*, limiting the celebration of the 1962 Roman Missal—commonly called the Traditional Latin Mass—and replacing the broader permissions granted under *Summorum Pontificum* by Pope Benedict XVI in 2007. This decision was a heavy cross for our community.

Since Christmas 2014, we have enjoyed the celebration of the Mass according to the 1962 Missal, at least monthly. In 2020, discerning the legitimate desires of the faithful and following the still-valid provisions of *Summorum Pontificum*, we began offering the 1962 Roman Missal every Sunday at the 11:30 a.m. Mass. Thus, when *Traditionis Custodes* was issued one year later, our pastoral plan was disrupted.

At that time, I reminded our parish that Sts. Peter and Paul is a *Novus Ordo* parish at which the Traditional Latin Mass is celebrated, and that the primary purpose of doing so was mutual enrichment—one of the goals Pope Benedict XVI identified in *Summorum Pontificum*. I also strongly urged that we receive the Holy Father's directives with humility and obedience, resisting any temptation to oppose proper ecclesial authority. We must make a choice: to be Catholic or Protestant. Many mistakenly cling to the trappings of Catholic identity rather than its essence, which is union with the successor of Peter. As for Sts. Peter and Paul, we choose to be Catholic.

After a year of discernment and consultation with pastors where the *usus antiquior* is celebrated, Bishop Mark Beckman has received a request from the Dicastery for Divine Worship in Rome to implement *Traditionis Custodes* in the Diocese of Knoxville. Like the centurion in the Gospel of Luke who famously said, "Lord, I am not worthy," but also said, "I am a man under authority", so too Bishop Beckman is a man under authority. He loves the faithful who are devoted to the ancient liturgy and bears no ill will toward you. But he, and I with him, have professed an oath of fidelity to the Roman Pontiff and the laws of the Church. It is for us to also make this our refrain, "*Domine non sum dignus . . . I, too, am a man under authority.*"

We are not the masters of the liturgy; we are its servants. The truth is that since 2021 we have been living on borrowed time. Another pastoral reality we face is the lack of clergy trained to celebrate the 1962 Missal. I am the only priest at the Basilica able to do so. What would happen if I were unavailable due to illness or travel? Moreover, our split between two liturgical calendars has created an unintended division—two sets of readings, two feasts, two rhythms of time. It is increasingly clear that the Spirit is calling us to unity.

After consulting with Bishop Beckman, we have reached a clear path forward. The Diocese of Knoxville will be transitioning all celebrations of the Latin Mass from using the 1962 Missal to the 2002 Missal in Latin by the end of the year. In this way, we are not losing the Latin Mass, nor the Roman Rite. The bishop has assured us that the legitimate aspirations for transcendence, reverence, and beauty will continue to be honored. The celebration of the 2002 Missal in Latin, with all the traditional options and elements already permitted in its rubrics, will ensure that the treasures of our tradition are preserved while remaining in full communion with the Church. This is not the path of loss—it is the path of unity.



I know this decision is difficult for many who have grown deeply attached to the more ancient form. Yet I urge you to respond with humility and obedience. No one is being deprived of the sacraments. The Eucharist is no less Jesus in the 2002 Missal than in the 1962. The Holy Father rightly cautions those who, perhaps unintentionally, suggest otherwise. To remain Catholic is to remain united with the successor of St. Peter. The Church's movement is toward a unity of faith expressed in one Roman Missal, while still drawing deeply from the same well of tradition.

Our worship will continue to be beautiful, reverent, and sacred. The spirit of *Summorum Pontificum*—the mutual enrichment between old and new—has borne fruit. You are the proof of that. Now we are called to carry that fruit forward into the life of the Church as it stands unified today.

Christ's parable reminds us that the wise steward "brings out from his storeroom both the new and the old." (Matthew 13:52) We will retain the old—Latin, chant, sacred silence, *ad orientem* worship, etc. —and we will receive the new—the fuller cycle of Scripture readings, the unified calendar, and the deeper participation envisioned by the Council. These are not enemies; they are gifts meant to complement each other.

In this unity, we will no longer be divided by differing calendars or feasts. Our parish will celebrate together, as one household of faith. The Solemnity of Christ the King, now placed at the culmination of the liturgical year, will be our moment of transition—a sign that Christ reigns over all time, old and new alike. From November 23 on, we will be offering only one form of the Roman Rite here, albeit in the diversity of languages including the universal language of Latin.

I speak to you now with the heart of a father who desires only your good and your salvation: don't be Protestant. Remain united with the Church that Christ founded. In our time, some voices—though clothed in reverence and tradition—are drawing faithful souls into attitudes of suspicion, division, and disobedience. This is a grave danger. It is never a light thing to separate oneself, even in spirit, from the Body of Christ. To elevate personal liturgical preference over communion with the Church, made manifest especially in the Office of St. Peter, is to risk repeating the tragic errors of the past—errors that began with zeal for reform, but ended in rebellion and schism. Some communities, such as the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX), may preserve venerable liturgical forms, but they do so outside the full obedience owed to the Vicar of Christ. The Church has made clear that their canonical status remains irregular, and the faithful are not encouraged to attend their liturgies. Participation in such communities, when it expresses a rejection of the Church's legitimate authority, can constitute a true rupture of communion—a wound to the unity Christ desires. The Church's own canonical experts have clarified that a person formally adhering to a schismatic movement may incur the penalty of excommunication. This is not about punishment, but about the seriousness of choosing separation over communion. The Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts explains that such adherence occurs when one "opts for the followers of Lefebvre in such a way that this option is placed above obedience to the pope." (PCLT Communicationes, 29 [1997] 239-243)¹

As I have often repeated, it is good to be right—but you have to also be right in the right way. Hold fast to the faith, but do so within the barque of Peter. This is not the moment to abandon ship, but to trust the Captain who calms the storm, even if you have fear and anxiety in your hearts from the waves.

We are not losing the Mass. We are gaining unity. We are being invited to carry the treasures of our tradition into the heart of the living Church. The same Jesus who is truly present upon the altar has not changed. His grace is not diminished because His Church has reformed her rites.

¹ https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interpext/documents/rc_pc_interpext_doc_19960824_vescovo-lefebvre_it.html



This is the hour of holy obedience—not servile obedience like slaves, but filial obedience like sons before a father. The obedience that conforms us to Christ Himself, who “became obedient unto death, even death on a Cross.” (Philippians 2:8)

If we walk this path together, humbly and faithfully, I am convinced that the Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul will continue to be a beacon of beauty, unity, and holiness—an example of Pope Benedict’s desire for reform in continuity. I invite you, therefore, to lay down resentment today and take up reverence. Trade bitterness for blessing, and join me in bringing forth from our storeroom both the new and the old, so that Christ the King may reign in us and through us—one faith, one Church, one Lord, forever. Amen.

Wir entnehmen diese Dokumente dem Artikel Traditional Latin Mass annihilated in the Diocese of Knoxville, Tennessee (Update: and a humiliating homily) von Rorate Caeli (<https://rorate-caeli.blogspot.com/2025/10/traditional-latin-mass-annihilated-in.html>) in der Fassung vom 13. Oktober. der dort möglicherweise noch fortgeschrieben und durch weitere Dokumente ergänzt wird.)