



His Excellency
STEVEN JOHN RAICA
By the grace of God and the Apostolic See
Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama

**DECREE PROMULGATING NORMS
FOR THE LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
MOTU PROPRIO OF POPE FRANCIS, «TRADITIONIS CUSTODES»**

Having attentively read, studied, and consulted concerning the *motu proprio* of the Holy Father Pope Francis, *Traditionis custodes* (TC), which governs the use of the older forms of the Sacred Liturgy, I am pleased to decree the following norms for the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama:

1. Our Lady Help of Christians Parish in Huntsville, erected as a personal parish for the benefit of the faithful in the greater Huntsville area who seek to worship in the *usus antiquior* on March 10, 2013, is judged effective for the spiritual growth of the faithful and is therefore retained and continues as it has since its establishment (TC, art. 3 § 5).
2. Since it will contribute to the spiritual good of the faithful, to the extent that it may be needed, a dispensation is granted in accordance with canon 87 § 1 of the *Code of Canon Law* from TC, art. 3 § 2, in order to continue authorizing the use of the *Missale Romanum* 1962 on any or all days of the year at the parish church of Blessed Sacrament in Birmingham.
3. As it has been determined that the priests resident at and the faithful who attend Christ the King Chapel in Cullman (Simcoe) do not deny the validity and the legitimacy of the liturgical reform as dictated by Vatican Council II and the Magisterium of the Supreme Pontiffs, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass may continue to be celebrated there on any or all days of the year according to the *Missale Romanum* 1962 (TC, art. 3 § 1).
4. TC, art. 3 § 3 states that “in these celebrations the readings are proclaimed in the vernacular, using translations of the Sacred Scripture approved for liturgical use by the respective Episcopal Conferences.” It is permitted to apply this norm in one of two ways:
 - The readings may be read or sung in Latin, in the normal manner as specified by the *Ritus servandus* and the *Ordo Missae*, with the vernacular readings proclaimed at the ambo following the Latin Gospel;
 - Or, alternatively, in a Low Mass, the vernacular readings may replace the Latin and be proclaimed at the normal locations for the readings as indicated in the *Ritus servandus* and *Ordo Missae*.

Since there is not at this time an edition of the vernacular readings that corresponds with the *Missale Romanum* 1962 formally approved for the Dioceses of the United States of America,

priests who celebrate these Masses may utilize the vernacular translations found in any hand missal published with ecclesiastical approval until further notice.

5. Outside of the three designated locations, those priests who possess the requisite faculty may celebrate non-scheduled, non-publicized, non-public Masses in a sacred place with the explicit permission of the Diocesan Bishop or his Delegate; this includes all visiting priests to the diocese. These Masses may admit a single minister to make the requisite responses and assist the celebrant during Mass. The norm of TC, art. 3 § 3, pertaining to the vernacular readings, is presumed not to apply to celebrations outside of the three designated locations.
6. Public Masses according to the *Missale Romanum* 1962 with a congregation outside the three established sites may not be scheduled under any circumstances.
7. According to TC, art. 5, “Priests who already celebrate according to the *Missale Romanum* 1962 should request from the bishop the authorization to continue to enjoy this faculty.” Therefore, any priest who was ordained prior to July 16, 2021 is to request permission of the Diocesan Bishop in writing through his Delegate (see below, # 10).
8. According to TC, art. 4, “Priests ordained after the publication of the present *motu proprio*, who wish to celebrate using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962, should submit a formal request to the diocesan bishop, who shall consult the Apostolic See before granting this authorization.” It will be presumed (and in some way verified) that such priests had received some form of training in the rubrics and rite of the Missal of 1962 prior to making the consultation.
9. According to TC, art. 8, “Previous norms, instructions, permissions, and customs that do not conform to the provisions of the present *motu proprio* are abrogated.” Consequently, the requisite faculty granted to priests will also include, as needed, permission to celebrate other sacraments and sacramentals according to the liturgical books legitimately approved for use in 1962. No use of the pre-1970 liturgical books is permitted apart from those cases included in this decree and those cases where a faculty is issued to those who legitimately request it.
10. According to TC, art. 3 § 4, the Diocesan Bishop is to appoint a priest to serve as his Delegate in the application of the *motu proprio*. In the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama, the Very Reverend Justin L. Ward, S.T.L., Vicar for Sacred Liturgy, is named as the Delegate for the application of *Traditionis custodes*. I authorize Father Ward not only to issue any and all faculties and permissions indicated in the foregoing, but also to answer any questions and consider and consult with me on any requests for exceptions that may arise.

These norms implementing *Traditionis custodes* in the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama shall enter into force immediately upon publication via the normal means of diocesan communication.

Given at the Diocesan Chancery in Birmingham on the 29th of July, the Memorial of Saints Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, in the Year of the Lord 2021.



Most Reverend Steven J. Raica
Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama



Very Reverend Bryan W. Jerabek
Chancellor & Judicial Vicar