



Note for the Presentation of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of the Decree *Cum sanctissima* on the liturgical celebration in honour of Saints in the *forma extraordinaria* of the Roman Rite, 25.03.2020

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH

Note for the presentation of the Decree *Cum sanctissima*

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With the Decree *Cum sanctissima* of 22 February 2020, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which since January 2019 deals with those matters formerly assigned to the Pontifical Commission "Ecclesia Dei"^[1], completed the work initiated several years earlier by that Commission in order to fulfil the mandate given by Pope Benedict XVI to facilitate the celebration of more recently canonised Saints according to the *forma extraordinaria* of the Roman Rite^[2]. Indeed, since the Sanctoral of the *forma extraordinaria* is determined by the liturgical books in force in 1962, Saints canonised thereafter were not included therein.

The studies carried out in order to develop a practical solution for the liturgical celebration of more recent Saints in the *Usus Antiquior* provided an opportunity to address the many issues that this matter raises, such as the density of the existing calendar (particularly as regards III class feasts), the consideration of all the repercussions of any potential changes, the always preferable consistency between Mass and the Divine Office, and the matter of the liturgical texts to be used.

In this context, it appeared that rather than dealing with this or that more recent Saint, it would be more appropriate to lay down a general principle that would enable, within the general rubrical context of the *forma extraordinaria*, and when the liturgical day permits, the celebration of any Saint canonised after the 1960s, on the date of their proper feast.

Specifically, the Decree broadens the scope of *missæ festivæ latiore sensu* referred to in no. 302-c of the *Rubricæ Generales Missalis Romani* (which hitherto only applied to IV class days), to a

number of III class feasts and to III class vigils^[3] (cf. Decree, n. 1). It is therefore clear that the new provisions will not in any way affect other celebrations, and in particular those of the I or II classes. In addition, the Decree specifies that *missæ festivæ latiore sensu* may be celebrated in honour of Saints canonised after 26 July 1960 (which is the date of the last amendment to the Martyrology of the *forma extraordinaria*), on their respective liturgical feast day (no. 2).

With this principle in mind, the other provisions of the Decree give the necessary indications that derive therefrom, such as the applicability to the Divine Office, which in such a case is to be celebrated in full in honour of the Saint (n. 3), the requirement to make a commemoration of potentially occurring III class feasts, as the case may be (n. 4), and the rules relating to the selection of the liturgical texts to be used (n. 5). Regarding this particular point, one should note the three successive sources from which texts are to be drawn, namely in the first place the *Proprium Sanctorum pro aliquibus locis* which already exists in the Missal of the *forma extraordinaria*, secondly a special Supplement to be published by the Holy See in the future, and finally, should the two former sources be lacking, the existing *Commune Sanctorum*.

It is noteworthy that the celebration of more recent Saints pursuant to the new provisions is a mere possibility, and therefore it remains optional. Accordingly, those who wish to continue to celebrate the Saints according to the existing calendar of the *forma extraordinaria* as it appears in the liturgical books, remain free to do so. In relation to this, one should be reminded that the existence of optional feasts in honour of the Saints is not a complete novelty in the Roman Rite, given that throughout the post-tridentine period, and up till the rubrical reform carried out by Pope St. Pius X, the calendar included no less than twenty-five such so-called *ad libitum* feasts.

The new Decree also opens a further possibility for cases in which whilst following the existing calendar, one wishes at the same time to honour eventual other occurring Saints. Specifically, according to n. 6 of the Decree, an *ad libitum* commemoration of an occurring Saint may be made, if said Saint appears in the *Proprium pro aliquibus locis* or in the future special Supplement.

In choosing whether or not to make use of the provisions of the Decree in liturgical celebrations in honour of the Saints, the celebrant is expected to make use of good pastoral common sense. As regards the particular case of celebrations in Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life, no. 7 of the Decree provides some useful clarification.

The Decree concludes (n. 8) with reference to a list of seventy III class feasts that may never be impeded by its provisions. This list, which is provided as an annex, reflects the particular importance of the feasts in question, on the basis of precise criteria, e.g. the importance of these respective Saints in the Plan of Salvation or in the history of the Church, their importance in terms of either the devotion they have generated or their writings, or the antiquity of their worship in Rome.

^[1] Cf. Francis, *Apostolic Letter in the form of Motu Proprio on the Pontifical Commission "Ecclesia Dei"*, 17 January 2019.

^[2] "New Saints (...) can and should be inserted in the old Missal. The "Ecclesia Dei" Commission, in contact with various bodies devoted to the *Usus Antiquior*, will study the practical possibilities in this regard": Benedict XVI, *Letter to the Bishops on the occasion of the publication of the Apostolic Letter "Motu Proprio Data" Summorum Pontificum on the use of the Roman Liturgy prior to the reform of 1970, AAS 99 (2007) 798*. This mandate was further confirmed and completed in 2011 by the Instruction *Universæ Ecclesiae* of the same Pontifical Commission: cf. Pontifical Commission

"Ecclesia Dei", *Instruction on the Application of the Apostolic Letter Summorum Pontificum of His Holiness Benedict XVI given Motu Proprio*, no. 25, AAS 103 (2011) 418.

^[3] In fact there is only one such III class vigil in the calendar of the *forma extraordinaria*, namely that of St. Lawrence on 9 August. On this subject one may be reminded that from 1568 until the *Codex Rubricarum* of 1960, non-privileged vigils such as that of St. Lawrence were of the simplex rite, and accordingly, when they fell in occurrence with a *semiduplex* or *duplex* feast of a Saint, that feast would prevail over the vigil. With the reform enacted under St. Pius X in 1911-1914, in non-conventual Masses the celebrant could, in certain cases, choose between the Mass of the occurring Saint or the Mass of the vigil (cr. *Additiones et variationes in rubricis Missalis*, no. 1).

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**Decree Cum sanctissima of the Congregation for the
Doctrine of the Faith on the liturgical celebration in honour of
Saints in the forma extraordinaria of the Roman Rite,
25.03.2020**

Decreto *Cum sanctissima*

Elenchus dierum festorum III classis qui non impediri possunt

Decreto *Cum sanctissima*

CONGREGATIO PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

DECRETUM

Cum sanctissima resplendeat in virtutibus Sanctorum virtus ipsa Iesu Christi, cumque semper proponenda sint fidelibus exempla eorum Sanctorum¹ Benedictus PP. XVI Epistula die VII mensis Iulii a. D. MMVII data Pontificiae Commissioni "Ecclesia Dei" mandavit ut quidam eorum, qui recentioribus decenniis Sanctorum Albo ascripti erant, secundum formam quoque extraordinariam Ritus Romani coli possent². Nam "maximopere decet ut qui sanctus est apud Deum, sanctus etiam ab hominibus habeatur"³, et "quia non parum prodest christifidelibus nova semper habere exempla virtutum quae imitentur"⁴.

Pontificia enim Commissio "Ecclesia Dei", quae eam sententiam per Instructionem *Universae Ecclesiae* confirmaverat⁵, aggressa est quaestionem num Servi Dei in Catalogum Sanctorum nuper relati veteri Missali commode inseri possint. Investigationem igitur hanc ab illa Pontificia Commissione inchoatam Congregatio pro Doctrina Fidei modo absolvit, postquam Litteris Apostolicis die XVII mensis Ianuarii a. D. MMXIX motu proprio datis Summus Pontifex Franciscus omnia munera illius Commissionis in hanc Congregationem transtulit⁶.

Quapropter Congregatio pro Doctrina Fidei, consultis nonnullis institutis religiosis, societatis vitae apostolicae, et viris peritis usui antiquiori illigatis, necnon Em.mo Card. Praefecto Congregationis de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum, infrascriptas normas ad cultum Sanctorum in forma extraordinaria fovendum adprobavit, firmis vero manentibus concessionibus calendariorum vel festorum particularium a S. Sede hucusque datis.

[1] Missa festiva latiore sensu (cf. RGMR 302) celebrari potest iusta de causa omnibus diebus festis III classis (iis exceptis de quibus inferius sub n. 8) necnon in vigiliis de Sanctis III classis.

[2] Praeterea, quod attinet ad RGMR 302 c), permittitur etiam Missa cuiuslibet Sancti Catalogo Sanctorum post diem XXVI mensis Iulii a. D. MCMLX ascripti, eo nempe die quo memoriam liturgicam eiusdem ab Ecclesia Universa recoli statutum est. Missa autem votiva eiusdem item permittitur ad normam RGMR 311, servatis aliis rubricis de Missis votivis.

[3] Quotiens dicitur Missa festiva latiore sensu, integrum Officium divinum cum Missa concordans absolvi potest, velut Officium ordinarium (RGRB 169).

[4] Commemoratio ordinaria de festo aut vigilia ommissa iuxta ea quae in nn. 1-3 statuuntur semper fit cum aliis commemorationibus occurrentibus iuxta rubricas, servata RG 111 d).

[5] Ad formulam Missae et Officii secundum suprascriptas ordinationes eligendam, nisi habetur in Proprio Sanctorum pro aliquibus locis Missalis Romani anni MCMLXII vel in eius novo Supplemento a S. Sede approbato, sumitur de Communi Missalis vel Breviarii. Quotiens in eodem Communi plures exstant formulae, electio fit ad libitum celebrantis. Formulae autem quae recensentur in praedicto Proprio Sanctorum vel Supplemento adhiberi debent eo die quo in iis habetur.

[6] Commemoratio praeterea ordinaria ad libitum celebrantis admitti potest de Sancto vel Mysterio eo die quo recensetur in Proprio Sanctorum pro aliquibus locis vel in novo Supplemento tam in Missa quam in Officio diebus liturgicis III vel IV classis, servata RG 111 d).

[7] Indomibus institutorum religiosorum vel societatum vitae apostolicae superiori domus, haud celebranti, competit decernere modum fruendi his ordinationibus in missa conventuali necnon in officio choraliter vel communiter celebrato.

[8] Dies festi III classis qui his ordinationibus neque impediri neque omitti possunt enumerantur in sequenti tabella. Dieta festa celebrari possunt etiam in feriis III classis Quadragesimae et Passionis, facta commemoratione ferire iuxta rubricas.

Quaecumque hoc Decreto statuta sunt, a die XIX mensis Martii huius anni, in festo S. Ioseph, Sponsi Beatae Mariae Virginis, Confessoris et Ecclesiae Universae Patroni, servantur, contrariis quibuscumque minime obstantibus.

Summus Pontifex Franciscus, in Audientia die V mensis Decembris a. D. MMXIX infrascripto Archiepiscopo Secretario Congregationis pro Doctrina Fidei concessa, hoc Decretum ratum habuit et publici iuris fieri iussit.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus Congregationis pro Doctrina Fidei, die XXII mensis Februarii a. D. MMXX, in festo Cathedrae S. Petri Apostoli.

Aloisius F. Card. LADARIA, S.I.

*Congregationis pro Doctrina Fidei
Praefectus*

✠ Iacobus MORANDI

Archiepiscopus tit. Caeretanu
Secretarius

1 Cf. Prus XII, Litt. enc. *Mediator Dei*, AAS 39 (1947), 581 ; CONCILIIUM VATICANUM II, Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 104.

2 BENEDICTUS XVI, *Epistula ad Episcopos ad producendas Litteras Apostolicas Motu Proprio datas, de Usu Liturgiae Romanae Instaurationi anni 1970 praecedentis*, AAS 99 (2007), 798.

3 BENEDICTUS XIV, *De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Canonizatione*, Lib. I, Cap. XIII, 2.

4 Ibid., 5.

5 PONTIFICIA COMMISSIO "ECCLESIA DEI", *Instructio ad exsequendas Litteras Apostolicas Summorum Pontificum a S.S. Benedicto PP. XVI Motu Proprio datas*, AAS 103 (2011), 413-420, n. 25.

6 FRANCISCUS, *Litterae Apostolicae Motu Proprio datae de Pontificia Commissione "Ecclesia Dei"*, die 17 Ianuarii 2019.

Elenchus dierum festorum III classis qui non impediri possunt

Ianuaris

17 S. Antonii Abb.

20 Ss. Fabiani Papae et Sebastiani Mm.

21 S. Agnetis Virg. et Mart.

24 S. Timothei Ep. et Mart.

25 In Conversione S. Pauli Ap.

26 S. Polycarpi Ep. et Mart.

27 S. Ioannis Chrysostomi Ep., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

29 S. Francisci Salesii Ep., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

31 S. Ioannis Bosco Conf.

Februarius

01 S. Ignatii Ep. et Mart.

05 S. Agathae Virg. et Mart.

06 S. Titi Ep. et Conf.

Martius

06 Ss. Perpetuae e Felicitatis Mm.

07 S. Thomae de Aquino Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

09 S. Francisciae Romanae, Vid.

12 S. Gregorii I Papae, Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

21 S. Benedicti Abb.

24 S. Gabrielis Archang.

Aprilis

11 S. Leonis I Papae, Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

14 S. Iustini Mart.

30 S. Catharinae Senensis Virg.

Maius

02 S. Athanasii, Ep., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

04 S. Monicae Vid.

05 S. Pii V Papae et Conf.

09 S. Gregorii Nazianzeni Ep., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

25 S. Gregorii VII Papae et Conf.

26 S. Philippi Nerii Conf.

Iunius

05 Bonifatii Ep. et Mart.

11 S. Barnabae Ap.

13 S. Antonii de Padua Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

14 S. Basilii Magni Ep., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

21 S. Aloisii Gonzagae Conf.

30 In Commemoratione S. Pauli Ap.

Iulius

07 Ss. Cyrilli et Methodii Epp. et Cc.

14 S. Bonaventurae Ep., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

19 S. Vincentii a Paulo Conf.

22 S. Mariae Magdalenae Paenitentis

29 S. Marthae Virg.

31 S. Ignatii Conf.

Augustus

- 02 S. Alfonsi Mariae de Ligorio Ep., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.
- 04 S. Dominici Conf.
- 05 In Dedicatione S. Mariae ad Nives
- 08 S. Ioannis Mariae Vianney Conf.
- 12 S. Clarae Virg.
- 20 S. Bernardi Abbatis et Eccl. Doct.
- 28 S. Augustini Ep., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.
- 29 In Decollatione S. Ioannis Bapt.

September

- 03 S. Pii X Papae et Conf.
- 12 Sanctissimi Nominis B. Mariae Virg.
- 16 Ss. Comelii et Cypriani Ep., Mm.
- 27 Ss. Cosmae e Damiani Mm.
- 30 S. Hieronymi Presb., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

October

- 02 Ss. Angelorum Custodum
- 03 S. Teresiae a Iesu Infante Virg.
- 04 S. Francisci Conf.
- 06 S. Brunonis Conf.
- 14 S. Callisti I Papae et Mart.
- 15 S. Teresiae Virg.

November

- 04 S. Caroli Ep. et Conf.
- 11 S. Martini Ep. et Conf.
- 14 S. Iosaphat Ep. et Mart.
- 18 In Dedicatione Basilicarum Ss. Petri et Pauli App.
- 22 S. Caeciliae Virg. et Mart.

23 S. Clementis I Papae et Mart.

24 S. Ioannis a Cruce Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

December

03 S. Francisci Xaverii Conf.

06 S. Nicolai Ep. et Conf.

07 S. Ambrosii Ep., Conf. et Eccl. Doct.

11 S. Damasi I Papae et Conf.

13 S. Luciae Virg. et Mart.

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