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TRADITION, REFORM, AND RESTORATION

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From the General Introduction

These papers, commissioned by the International Federation *Una Voce*, are offered to stimulate and inform debate about the 1962 Missal among Catholics ‘attached to the ancient Latin liturgical tradition’, and others interested in the liturgical renewal of the Church. They are not to be taken to imply personal or moral criticism of those today or in the past who have adopted practices or advocated reforms which are subjected to criticism. In composing these papers we adopt the working assumption that our fellow Catholics act in good will, but that nevertheless a vigorous and well-informed debate is absolutely necessary if those who act in good will are to do so in light of a proper understanding of the issues.

The authors of the papers are not named, as the papers are not the product of any one person, and also because we prefer them to be judged on the basis of their content, not their authorship.

The International Federation *Una Voce* humbly submits the opinions contained in these papers to the judgment of the Church.

Tradition, Reform, and Restoration: Abstract

The restoration of the ancient form of the Roman Rite to the altars of our churches might be criticised on two grounds: that such ‘restoration’ is contrary to the spirit of ‘reform’ called for by the Second Vatican Council; and that the notion of ‘tradition’ implies continuity, not the restoration of what has been lost or discontinued. On the first question, the language of the Council, in accord with the language of the Magisterium over many centuries, is always of ‘restoration’—*instauratio*—although this is also translated as ‘reform’. To make ready for the needs of the day is always to ‘restore’, going back into the tradition. On the question of tradition and continuity, the Second Vatican Council is again a source indicating the possibility of restoring what has been discontinued, ‘*ad pristinam sanctorum Patrum normam*’, and the restoration of the Extraordinary Form to renewed use is in fact a much more modest project of restoration than the restoration to use of texts and ceremonies in the context of the Holy Week reform of 1955, and the creation of the 1970 Missal.

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POSITIO 27: TRADITION, REFORM, AND RESTORATION

1. This paper seeks to address two possible objections to the revival of the Extraordinary Form: that such a project is contrary to the spirit of reform called for by the Church, particularly by the Second Vatican Council; and that such a project is contrary to the nature of tradition itself, which should not be ‘rediscovered,’ but only ‘passed on’.
2. For the purposes of this paper it is necessary to distinguish between the concepts of reform and restoration, and individual projects of reform or restoration. There have been many such projects, both proposed and implemented, in the history of the Church, some sponsored by the Papacy or by Councils, others by individual bishops, religious superiors, movements, or by individual scholars. These projects may be in tension with each other, and each must be assessed on its own historical and theological merits. In this series of Position Papers we have addressed past projects (such as the Pian Psalter¹ and the Holy Week reform of 1955),² and we have ourselves proposed some modest reforms (such as changes to Holy Days of Obligation³ and the Eucharistic Fast).⁴ The purpose of the present paper, however, is not to argue for or against specific proposals, but to clarify the concepts of reform and restoration themselves.

Reform and Restoration: *Instauratio*

3. The spread of the Extraordinary Form can be described as the recovery and restoration of tradition, and closely related movements can be identified in relation to sacred music, popular devotions, theological sources, and so on. The question to be considered first is whether a movement of *restoration* is appropriate in the light of the call for *reform* often made in the Church, and particularly in the Second Vatican Council. Simply put, the objection is that the concepts of *restoration* and of *reform* are opposed.
4. There is, however, in the language of the Church no tension between the concepts. On the contrary, we see in the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and its official English translation that the English nouns ‘reform,’ ‘revision,’ and ‘restoration’ are all used to translate the Latin *instauratio*; the corresponding verbs are used to translate *instaurare*.⁵ The verbs *restituere*, ‘to restore’,⁶ and *recognoscere*, consistently translated ‘revise’, are frequently used in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* to stand for the same idea.

¹ Positio 5: The Vulgate and Ancient Latin Psalters

² Positio 14: The Holy Week Reform of 1955, Parts 1 and 2

³ Positio 13: Holy Days of Obligation

⁴ Positio 10: The Eucharistic Fast

⁵ Examining the English translation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* from the Vatican website, we find the following translations for *instauratio* and *instaurare* (emboldened): ‘a general **restoration** of the liturgy’ (21), ‘recent liturgical **reforms**’ (23); ‘the **restoration**, progress, and adaptation of the sacred liturgy’ (24); ‘the **revision** of the liturgy’ (33); ‘the rites for the baptism of adults are to be **revised**’ (66); ‘the **restoration** already so happily begun’ (87); ‘when the office is **revised**’ (89); ‘In **revising** the Roman office’ (90); ‘**restoration** by St. Pius X’ (117); ‘the **reformed** liturgy’ (128).

⁶ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* uses the word five times, and the Vatican website’s translation always used ‘restore’ to render it. Thus: ‘other elements which have suffered injury through accidents of history are now to be restored’ (50); ‘there is to be restored, after the Gospel and the homily, "the common prayer" or "the prayer of the faithful." (53); ‘hymns are to be restored to their original form’ (93); ‘the discipline of the sacred seasons shall be preserved or restored to suit the conditions of modern times (107); ‘some of them, which used to flourish in bygone days, are to be restored as may seem good’ (109, a)

5. What, then, is the kind of change called for by this language? *Sacrosanctum Concilium* clarifies the meaning, in conformity with the usage of the terms over many centuries (see the Appendix), when it mandates that
- the rites be revised (*recognoscantur*) carefully in the light (*mens*, ‘mind’) of sound tradition, and that they be given new vigour to meet the circumstances and needs of modern times.⁷
- Recognoscantur* here means ‘be checked for authenticity and accuracy’; the translation ‘revise’ is misleading.⁸ Like *instauratio*, it implies a checking that something is correct, in light of tradition.
6. Thus, the primary concept at work here is that of *restoration*. The translation of any of these Latin terms with the English ‘reform’ is inaccurate, given the way the English term is generally used; ‘revise’ and ‘revision’ is also questionable.⁹ *Instauratio* is the seeking out of the genuine, correct, and old form of things, aiming at making something vital again, for its original purpose.¹⁰
7. A notable example in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* is the *instauratio* of Gregorian Chant;¹¹ other examples are the references to the charism of the founders as the key to the reform of a religious community or order, as demanded by the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on the Religious Life;¹² another would be the emphasis on the teaching of the Fathers given by the Council’s Decree on Priestly Training.¹³ In each case, ‘reform’ is a matter of restoration.¹⁴

⁷ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 4: ‘Lastly, in faithful obedience to tradition, the sacred Council declares that holy Mother Church holds all lawfully acknowledged rites to be of equal right and dignity; that she wishes to preserve them in the future and to foster them in every way. The Council also desires that, where necessary, the rites be revised carefully in the light of sound tradition, and that they be given new vigour to meet the circumstances and needs of modern times.’ (‘Traditioni denique fideliter obsequens, Sacrosanctum Concilium declarat Sanctam Matrem Ecclesiam omnes Ritus legitime agnitos aequo iure atque honore habere, eosque in posterum servari et omnimode fovendi velle, atque optat ut, ubi opus sit, caute ex integro ad mentem sanae traditionis recognoscantur et novo vigore, pro hodiernis adiunctis et necessitatibus, donentur.’)

⁸ The *Oxford Latin Dictionary* gives, for *recognoscere*: ‘1. To examine, review, inspect. ... b to examine, check (a document) in order to establish authenticity, accuracy, etc.’ ‘2. To give recognition to, acknowledge.’ ‘3. To recall (something previously known), to recognise.’ Clearly it is the meaning given in 1 b which is relevant here. Other uses of the word as translated in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* are as follows: ‘careful investigation is always to be made into each part of the liturgy which is to be revised’ (23); ‘The liturgical books are to be revised as soon as possible’ (25); ‘when revising the liturgical books’ (38); ‘The rite of the Mass is to be revised’ (50), and so on (the word appears nineteen times).

⁹ The *Oxford Latin Dictionary* is not aware of ‘reform’ as a meaning of the Latin noun or verb, giving as the primary meanings the notion of repetition,⁹ though ‘renew’ and ‘restore’ are also given for the verb, and an *instaurator* is ‘a person who renews or restores’.

¹⁰ See the Appendix for a comprehensive account of the usage of the term.

¹¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 117

¹² *Perfectae caritatis* 2: ‘let their founders’ spirit and special aims they set before them as well as their sound traditions—all of which make up the patrimony of each institute—be faithfully held in honour.’ (‘Ideo fideliter agnoscantur et servantur Fundatorum spiritus propriaque proposita, necnon sanae traditiones, quae omnia cuiusque instituti patrimonium constituunt.’)

¹³ *Optatam totius* 16: ‘Dogmatic theology should be so arranged that these biblical themes are proposed first of all. Next there should be opened up to the students what the Fathers of the Eastern and Western Church have contributed to the faithful transmission and development of the individual truths of revelation.’ (‘Theologia dogmatica ita disponatur ut ipsa themata biblica primum proponantur; quid Patres Ecclesiae Orientis et Occidentis ad singulas Revelationis veritates fideliter transmittendas et enucleandas contulerint necnon ulterior dogmatis historia -considerata quoque ipsius relatione ad generalem Ecclesiae historiam- alumnis aperiatur’)

¹⁴ Cf. Pope Benedict XVI: Address to the Roman Curia, 22 December 2005: ‘On the one hand, there is an interpretation that I would call ‘a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture’; it has frequently availed itself of the

8. Again, when it comes to specifics, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy states (50):
elements which have suffered injury through accidents of history are now to be restored to the vigour which they had in the days of the holy Fathers, as may seem useful or necessary.¹⁵

9. The specific proposals of the Second Vatican Council's Decree on the Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, historically led to the publication of what is now known as the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite. Pope Benedict XVI authorised the use of the 'previous liturgical tradition'¹⁶ as an Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite. If the Ordinary Form represents one attempt at an *instauratio* of the Roman Rite, the renewed use of the Extraordinary Form represents, for today, another attempt: the restoration to use of rites which were used formerly, in light of the needs of today. We have not attempted to consider the validity of the liturgical principles involved in each case, how they might relate to each other, or what authority they may have. It is enough for present purposes to establish the centrality of the notion of *instauratio* in the Church's self-understanding, and its continuing relevance in the development of the liturgy.

The Problem of Discontinuity

10. The etymology of 'tradition' (*traditio*) reminds us that tradition is what is passed on, most clearly when each generation hands on to the next what it received from the previous generation.¹⁷ The *instauratio* of making the Extraordinary Form more widely available goes beyond merely preserving what has been given us by those who passed it to us as our parents and teachers: it includes the bringing back of things which have actually been lost, or nearly lost, for a period of time. In this, however, it remains a more modest form of *instauratio* to those envisaged by the Second Vatican Council and the 1955 reform of Holy Week, which sought to restore to use rites and texts which had entirely fallen out of use, not for decades, but for centuries.

11. In his 1947 Encyclical *Mediator Dei* Pope Pius XII urges caution on those who seek the restoration of things lost in distant centuries, pointing out that the organic development of the liturgy in the Middle Ages and later was guided by Providence.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the restoration

sympathies of the mass media, and also one trend of modern theology. On the other, there is the 'hermeneutic of reform', of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given to us. She is a subject which increases in time and develops, yet always remaining the same, the one subject of the journeying People of God.'

¹⁵ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: 'restituantur vero ad pristinam sanctorum Patrum normam nonnulla quae temporum iniuria deciderunt, prout opportuna vel necessaria videantur.'

¹⁶ 'Traditio liturgica antecedens:' a phrase used by Pope Benedict XVI (2007) Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* (2007) 5.1. Cf. 'the ancient Latin liturgical tradition' ('antica tradizione liturgica latina') in Pope Benedict's *Letter to Bishops* (2007) which accompanied the Motu Proprio.

¹⁷ Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:3: 'For I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received', noting the Latin: 'Tradidi enim vobis in primis quod et accepi'

¹⁸ Pope Pius XII Encyclical *Mediator Dei* 1947 61: 'The liturgy of the early ages is most certainly worthy of all veneration. But ancient usage must not be esteemed more suitable and proper, either in its own right or in its significance for later times and new situations, on the simple ground that it carries the savour and aroma of antiquity. The more recent liturgical rites likewise deserve reverence and respect. They, too, owe their inspiration to the Holy Spirit, who assists the Church in every age even to the consummation of the world. They are equally the resources used by the majestic Spouse of Jesus Christ to promote and procure the sanctity of man.' ('Utique vetustae aetatis Liturgia veneratione procul dubio digna est; verumtamen vetus usus, non idcirco dumtaxat quod antiquitatem sapit ac redolet, aptior ac melior existimandus est vel in semet ipso, vel ad consequentia tempora

of tradition from decay or misdevelopment is certainly not ruled out, and there are important precedents for such projects.

12. First, and most radical of all, is the restoration of tradition by Our Lord in the Gospels. Our Lord criticises the Pharisees for ‘making void the word of God by your own tradition’;¹⁹ again, on the subject of divorce, He says ‘from the beginning it was not so’.²⁰ By sweeping away the human tradition, in one case, and the dispensation,²¹ in the other, Our Lord recovers the true tradition.
13. This appeal to the most ancient elements of tradition, against the practice of many centuries, is appropriate to the Kingdom established by Our Lord, and is made possible by His authority. It is not often that such a radical restoration would be possible without that authority, even if the Church’s indefectibility were not sufficient to render it unnecessary.
14. In a second category, less radical in terms of the length of the discontinuity, but involving more complexity and detail, are the restorations of the Temple cult recorded in the Old Testament, following periods of apostasy or foreign occupation.²² These are important illustrations of the possibility of *instauratio* from written records.²³ These restorations were rendered necessary and urgent by the fact that the Temple cult and other regulations were enjoined as a matter of Divine Law.
15. In the era of the Church, we find liturgical practices and texts current in one place influenced or replaced by those of another, where the former were for one reason or another regarded as corrupt or otherwise inferior. Examples would include the influence of the Roman liturgy in the Frankish dominions in the 8th century,²⁴ and the influence of German liturgical practices in Rome in the 10th century.²⁵
16. A third kind of *instauratio* is that of the many religious who have sought to bring back their orders to the spirit of their founders, from which the order had gradually departed, and the restoration of Chant in the late 19th and early 20th centuries at Solesmes.²⁶

novasque rerum condiciones quod attinet. Recentiores etiam liturgici ritus reverentia observantiaque digni sunt, quoniam Spiritus Sancti afflatu, qui quovis tempore Ecclesiae adest ad consummationem usque saeculorum (cfr. *Matth.* 28, 20), orti sunt; suntque iidem pariter opes, quibus inclita Iesu Christi Sponsa utitur ad hominum sanctitatem excitandam procurandamque.’)

¹⁹ Mark 7:13 ‘Rescindentes verbum Dei per traditionem vestram quam tradidistis’: the issue is the use of the category of ‘corban’ to avoid using goods to maintain one’s parents.

²⁰ Matthew 19:8: ‘ab initio autem non sic fuit.’

²¹ Cf. Deuteronomy 22:1.

²² By Hezekiah (2 Chron 29-30); by Josiah (2 Chron 34-35); by Ezra (Ezra 6; Nehemiah 8-9); and by Judas Maccabaeus (2 Macc 10). This is to say nothing of major programmes of physical restoration which had to take place from time to time, and the complete rebuilding of the Temple under Herod the Great.

²³ The finding of the Book of the Law and its renewed proclamation and implementation is a key theme in the restorations carried out both by King Josiah (2 Chron 34:13f) and by the Prophet Ezra (Nehemiah 8:1-3). Nevertheless, many details of the restored Temple cult must have been preserved, if at all, in secondary documents and by word of mouth.

²⁴ Josef Jungmann Vol I pp74-5

²⁵ Goddard *Festa Paschalia* pp57-8

²⁶ Benedictine monasticism itself was being restored at St Peter’s Abbey in Solesmes, France, at a time (1830) when the Benedictine tradition had worn thin. The contemporary practice of the chant was felt to be unsatisfactory, and thus began a major programme of research with a view to a restoration.

17. It is interesting to note that, as well as a reliance on manuscripts, the Solesmes chant scholar Dom Joseph Pothier was directly concerned with its value for his own day, considering how the chant could be sung with ease and beauty, while also attempting to discern, in the practice of chant of his day, ‘the feeble echo of a powerful tradition’.²⁷ While fallible,²⁸ the attempt at restoration was necessary, if the riches of the Chant tradition were to be made available for the Church in their fullness.

The Extraordinary Form: Conclusion

18. The *instauratio* represented by the spread of the celebration of the Extraordinary Form is an example of the seeking, in the Church’s treasury, for those things whether old or new, which can be of benefit to the Faithful and the Church’s evangelising mission.²⁹
19. At a practical level, this project has many things in its favour. It is not necessary to rely solely on book-learning, as there has not been a complete discontinuity in the celebration of the older Form.³⁰ When wide permissions for the celebration of the Extraordinary Form were given by Pope St John Paul II in 1984 and 1988, it was well within the lifetimes of those who had been expert in the liturgy prior to 1962. Furthermore, the written records of the former liturgical tradition are remarkable for their detail.
20. The aim of this work of *instauratio*, and related projects in the area of chant, devotions, and theology, is not a wholesale return to a former era, any more than was the attempt by the creators of the Missal of 1970 to restore certain older liturgical practices.³¹ It is, rather, a matter of putting the Church’s liturgical patrimony to work, in relation to modern conditions.

²⁷ Quoted by Katherine Bergeron *Decadent Enchantments: The Revival of Gregorian Chant at Solesmes* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1998) p15.

²⁸ In the case of Chant the debate about the meaning of ancient manuscripts, and the practical possibilities of restoring things to modern use, shows no signs of abating.

²⁹ Cf. Matthew 13:52: ‘Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven, is like to a man that is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old.’ (‘ideo omnis scriba doctus in regno caelorum similis est homini patri familias, qui profert de thesauro suo nova et vetera.’)

³⁰ Notably thanks to the permissions immediately given to older priests to continue to use them when the 1970 Missal was promulgated, and the English Indult of 1971.

³¹ Such as the Prayers of the Faithful, the people’s direct participation in the Kiss of Peace, and certain ancient liturgical texts.

Appendix: the Language of Reform and Restoration in the Documents of the Church

Throughout Antiquity and the Middle Ages, efforts to combat injustice and corruption were commonly presented, with or without historical justification, as efforts to return to the just and authentic practice of the past. The rhetorical importance of the virtues and institutions of the Roman Republic, throughout the Imperial period, is just one illustration of this. In the language of the Church, the language of restoration, to combat decay, decadence, and corruption, is similarly found.

Vulgate: 2 Chronicles (2 Paralipomenon) uses the verb *instaurare* of the physical repair and restoration of the Temple by Hezekiah (29:3) and Josiah (34:8, 10; 35:20). In **Nehemiah** 8 we find that to *convert* ('eos conversique sunt et clamaverunt ad te', 9:28) is to *revert*, to the law ('contestatus es eos ut reverterentur ad legem tuam', 9:29), a theme also implicit in the finding of the Book of the Law in the reign of Josiah (2 Chron 34:14).

St Pius V Quo primum (1570). St Pius V records that Trent ordered him to publish and correct (*edere; emendare*) the Roman Missal and Breviary. Accordingly he corrected (*castigare*) the Breviary. Then he restored (*restituere*) the Missal to the pattern (*normam ac ritum*) of the Holy Fathers. St Pius V declares: 'Quod recognitum iam et castigatum:' *recognitum* here means 'checked'. The experts appointed to the task (*eruditi delecti viri*) looked at all the manuscripts they could find in order to check the texts.

The terminology used in *Quo primum* is found throughout subsequent documents on liturgical reform. *Recognitio* is the term used in all areas of the Church's life for the process of texts (such as locally produced translations) being approved by the Holy See; successive editions of the Roman Missal indicate on their title pages the Popes who granted them *recognitio*.

Clement VIII Cum sanctissimum (1604) lists liberties taken with the text of the Roman Missal by printers and others; his *recognitio* is an indication of fidelity to the text approved by St Pius V.

Urban VIII Si quid est (1634) refers to St Pius and Clement VIII as having done a *recognitio* and *instauratio*. Following their example the rubrics have been restored to 'the old usage and rite' and clarified, and the biblical passages have been carefully checked.

St Pius X Divino afflatu (1911) speaks of making a step towards the *emendatio* of the Roman Missal and Breviary, and sets up a 'Consilium seu Commissionem' of scholars to do this, but, meanwhile, speaks of taking a more immediate task of *instauratio* a good number (*nonnulla*) of things in the present books.

Pius XII Maxima redemptionis nostrae (1955) (on the revision of Holy Week): the document is headed 'Decretum ... quo liturgicus Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Ordo instauratur'. The order is called an 'Ordo Instauratus'.

Second Vatican Council: Sacrosanctum Concilium (1962) 4 speaks of *recognoscere*, in this case 'ex integro', thoroughly, and 'to the mind of healthy tradition'. While recognising the more radical nature of the proposed reform, it is still emphatically linked to the norms of past tradition. The document goes on to use the term *instauratio* of what is intended, as noted above, echoing *Quo primum* ('ad pristinam ...sanctorum Patrum normam ac ritum restituerunt') in

paragraph 50 ('restituantur ad pristinam sanctorum Patrum normam nonnulla quae tempora iniuria deciderunt').

Paul VI *Missale Romanum* (1970) uses the terms *instauratio* with *renovatio* and *novitas*, including the phrase 'instauratio novitas'. This takes a further step in recognising that that what is being promulgated includes what is new (*novitas*), but it is still justified by reference to the notion of 'restoration'. Thus the Apostolic Constitution quotes *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 50 with a list, including (perhaps surprisingly) the Penitential Rite, of things being restored 'ad pristinam sanctorum Patrum normam'.