

THE ABUSE OF POWER

(This is a translation of the editorial by Jean Madiran in the July-August 1976 issue of *Itinéraires*. It appeared in *Approches* No 51-52, Nov. 1976, edited by Hamish Fraser (1913-1986). It is now posted on the *Apropos* website www.apropos.org.uk)

(I.) **The Mass forbidden**

This is a disastrous event, the most disastrous in the life of the Church since the promulgation of the New Mass and its Article 7 [of the *Institutio Generalis*]. It was not however an unforeseen eventuality. Our readers knew what we would think of it and what would be our attitude. We had declared our position in advance, as solemnly as we could, in our letter to Paul VI of October 27, 1972.

On that occasion we stated:

'Give us back the traditional, Latin and Gregorian Mass according to the Roman Missal of St. Pius V. You let it be said that you have forbidden it. But no pontiff, without an abuse of power, could prohibit the millenary rite of the Catholic Church, canonised by the Council of Trent. Obedience to God and to the Church would demand resistance to such an abuse of power, should it occur and not that it should be submitted to in silence .'¹

But here, in the Consistorial allocution of May 24, 1976 is the very abuse of power [we had spoken of]. Until then, the New *Ordo* promulgated in 1969 had not been reinforced by an obligation enforcing its use and excluding the Roman Missal [of St. Pius V].

This was the first of our arguments A,B,C,D on the traditional Mass². At Pentecost 1971, i.e. more than two years after its promulgation, Cardinal Ottaviani still maintained that *'The Traditional rite of the Mass according to the ORDO of St Pius V has not been abolished so far as I know.'*

It was forbidden only in France, by an illicit prohibition, i.e. by the juridically schismatic directive of the French episcopate dated November 12, 1969. There was no difficulty in ignoring the valueless decree of an episcopate which already no longer had any moral authority. During this period, Paul VI *let it be said* that he had forbidden or abolished the traditional Mass, but he did not say it himself. (He also *let it be said*, contrariwise - and it was by Cardinal Gut, the then Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship, that he allowed or had it be said - that in the matter of liturgical reform *'the Holy Father has frequently given in against his own will.'*

Once more, at the beginning of the year 1975, in the procedure taken against Mgr. Lefebvre, the Pope's commissars told him [Mgr. Lefebvre] explicitly, that by order of Paul VI, liturgical questions were outwith the scope of their investigation. Which confirmed that in refusing to accept the New Mass Mgr. Lefebvre was guilty of no transgression which could be held against him juridically.

¹ 'Letter to Paul VI' in our book *'Réclamation au Saint-Père*, the second volume of *l'Hérésie du XX^e siècle'* (Nouvelles Editions Latines).

² On this point and on those which follow see the special *Itinéraires* supplement, *'La messe, état de la question'*.

In June and in September of the same year, the letters of Paul VI to Mgr. Lefebvre still did not say a single word concerning the Mass. And under such circumstances, this omission was most significant. It reinforced the conviction of those who thought that in his heart of hearts Paul VI had no intention of prohibiting the Missal of St. Pius V, or that he recognised that he did not have the power to prohibit it. This has never been our point of view. It seemed to us that with all the strength of his own will, Paul VI was striving to effect the disappearance of the traditional Mass. But we observed that there was as yet no official ACT seeking to give the FORCE OF LAW to this wish. Paul VI had not dared [to go as far as that].

The shocking new feature of the Consistorial allocution of May 24 consists in the fact that for the first time he has dared to do so. Declaring that he was speaking 'in the name of Tradition itself, and explicitly involving 'the supreme authority that comes to us from Christ', he demanded that in obedience the traditional Catholic Mass be no longer celebrated. And there we have the consummation of a terrible abuse of power.

(2.) The pontificate of Article 7

The New *Ordo*, when it was first promulgated in 1969, included an *Institutio Generalis* i.e. an outline of principles serving as a general introduction, which spoke of the Mass as though it were no longer a sacrifice. This heretical tendency more or less present throughout it, was expressed most clearly in Article 7, in which the Mass was defined as a prayer meeting and a memorial assembly.

An unforeseen development of such shocking gravity and on such a question, is to the best of our knowledge without precedent in the history of pontifical documents. What seemed to come nearest to it was the error of Pope Honorius I, a long time previously, in the VIIth century, who after his death was condemned as a heretic by the Third Council of Constantinople and by Popes St. Agatho and St. Leo II.³

But the heretical formulas signed by Honorius I concerned the question of the two wills of Christ, a question which at that time had not yet been explicitly ruled upon by the Magisterium. There is no such excuse in the 20th century concerning the question of the holy sacrifice of the Mass. That is why it seems to us that the quite extraordinary affair of Article 7 is truly without precedent.

The demands, the protests concerning it were very determined. The next year, Paul VI corrected Article 7 and also several others (Articles 48, 55, 56 and 60) in order to introduce some mention of the holy sacrifice. This correction brought some solace which led to an ignoring of the lasting effects of the quite extraordinary incident of Article 7.

It was noted, moreover, that that the new doctrine of the *Institutio Generalis* in 1969 was in contradiction with the other documents of Paul VI, which had been happily traditional - e.g. the encyclical *Mysterium Fidei* of September 3, 1965 and the Profession of Faith of June 30, 1968. This observation had a tranquillising effect on many people.

They indicted the [Vatican] bureaucrats, accusing them of having tricked and taken surprise advantage of the Pope's good faith by means of Article 7.

³ Concerning the details of these events cf. Itinéraires No. 177 of November 1973, pp. 300-305 (and also the article in Approaches No. 14, *Infallibility, Old and New*, by G.A. Lawman.)

It is true that the various Vatican bureaux colonised in depth as they are by Modernism, Freemasonry and the Communist Party, are very active and guilty. But the supposedly pious hypothesis of surprise was scarcely reassuring. For in effect it meant supposing that Paul VI had either signed without reading, or read without understanding, the most formidable transformation of the Mass that had ever been enacted in the entire history of the Church. No matter how one looked at it, it was incredible, outrageous and most certainly disquieting. The pontificate which had promulgated Article 7 had by so doing accomplished something that all Catholics prior to 1969 considered to be absolutely impossible. The moral authority of this pontificate could not remain intact thenceforth save among those who no longer had the faith.

(3.) The insufficient correction

Since 1969 it is the doctrine of the first version of Article 7 which has been disseminated throughout the Catholic world - with the Holy See doing nothing to counter it save for this surreptitious correction of the *Institutio Generalis*, without any correction of the rite itself, of the new rite that was established in conformity with the doctrine of this first version [of Article 7].

It is in conformity with the first version of Article 7 that the French episcopate has taught as an alleged reminder of the Church's doctrine in the new missals that the Mass is no longer a sacrifice and that at Mass 'it is simply a question of recalling to mind [the Sacrifice of Calvary]'. Paul VI has let this be done. He did not intervene by means of a magisterial document. His two documents which have been cited concerning the holy sacrifice of the Mass, the encyclical *Mysterium Fidei* and his Profession of Faith are ANTERIOR to his Article 7. There is none posterior to it designed to contradict the erroneous doctrine of the first version of Article 7. And that is a second anomaly, as formidable as the first. For when so radical an error is disseminated at all levels in the Church, that is not the moment to cease encyclicals and professions of faith concerning this matter. It is the moment when it is necessary to *reiterate* them.

Although he was responsible for the first version of Article 7, Paul VI has done nothing apart from its surreptitious correction, to arrest the diffusion [of its errors]. He has not explained; he has not taught. The truth is that he has remained absolutely silent. Apart from the two brief allocutions of November 1969, in the course of seven years he has not spoken of the Mass. Yet this was the period in which the Mass suffered the greatest upheaval ever known. This was the period during which the doctrine of the first version of Article 7 was established more and more each day within the Church, claiming for itself a legitimacy of which it has never since been deprived.

We have had these observations continually in mind. But hitherto we have given expression to them only with discretion and only in case of necessity. However, the situation now created by the Consistorial allocution of May 24, 1976 compels us to insist more than we would have wished and more than we have ever done concerning the legitimate suspicion attaching to the actual incumbents of the apostolic succession.

In so far as innovations, especially concerning the Mass, derive from the same source as Article 7, we prefer to have nothing to do with them.

Even when they are supposedly licit or anodyne, we refuse to accept them so long as this legitimate suspicion remains. We have shown this more by our deeds than by our words, as for example in the case of the liturgical calendar which we have preserved and reproduced each year as it was in force at the death of Pius XII.

Given the great uncertainty actually prevailing concerning authority, we take note of its suspect functioning, and we confine ourselves to what the Church has always taught and has always done. If reforms are necessary, they can wait. It is a pity, but it is inevitable. They will await the guarantee of a restored authority. As for the pretence today, seven years after the event, of forbidding the celebration of the traditional Latin Gregorian Mass according to the Roman Missal, it is not acceptable. The authority responsible for this prohibition is the same as that responsible for the first version of Article 7.

(4.) Conciliar evolution

On May 24, 1976, by his supreme authority, Paul VI has taken full responsibility for conciliar evolution as a whole. Invoking his position as successor of Peter and Vicar of Christ, he orders the acceptance of *'the teaching of the Council itself, its application and the reforms that stem from it, its gradual application by the Holy See and the Episcopal Conferences under our authority willed by Christ'*.

'With the same, supreme authority that come from Christ Jesus, we call for the same obedience to all other liturgical disciplinary and pastoral reforms which have matured in these years in the implementation of the Council decrees.'

It is indeed all and everything [that must be accepted]. And it is that indeed which is at issue.

The Salleron-Lefebvre interview

In the course of his January 15, 1976 interview with Mgr. Lefebvre, Louis Salleron asked him the question: *'What difficulty do you find in making the public act of submission that is being asked of you: i.e. submission to the Council, to post-conciliar reforms and to the orientations to which the Pope himself is committed.'*

There could be no more opportune moment for once more reading Mgr. Lefebvre's reply attentively.⁴

'I find the difficulty of equivocation bordering on falsehood', replied Mgr. Lefebvre. 'From the "Council" one proceeds to "post-Conciliar reforms" and from there to the "orientations to which the Pope is himself committed". One no longer knows what precisely is involved. What is to be understood by the "orientations to which the Pope is himself committed"? Must we understand it to mean such of the orientations as involve the Pope personally (and what are these?), or the ACTUAL orientations of the Church, to all of which the Pope is committed?

When one sees what is happening in France - to speak only of our own country am I to think that, in its collegiality, the episcopate has submitted "to the Council, to post-Conciliar reforms, and to the orientations to which the Pope is himself committed"?

Logically, I must think so, since no public act of submission has been asked of the French Episcopate by Cardinal Villot or the Sovereign Pontiff. It is therefore to the destruction of the priesthood, to the changing or the negation of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to the abandonment of moral values, to the politicization of the Gospel and to the constitution of a national Church centred on the episcopal conference and the secretariat of the episcopate that I must subscribe to bear witness to my Communion with the Catholic Church and the Vicar of Christ? It is absurd. My Catholic faith and my duty as a bishop forbid me to do so.'

⁴ [This interview was reported in full in the June 1976 issue of *Approaches*, 49-50, pp.49-56.]

Paul VI stands surety for, guarantees and in the name of obedience imposes as obligatory the entire process of Conciliar evolution that coincides with the *self-destruction of the Church* which he deplored on one occasion in a few words, but to which he has since made no further reference for years. He no longer speaks out as he did on one occasion against this execrable '*post conciliar mentality*' (such were his actual words) that he found guilty of '*propagating the vain hope of giving the Christian religion a new interpretation*'⁵.

Yet it is this new interpretation which dominates the Church Militant, by the words and deeds of those whom Paul VI declares to be and keeps in communion with him; but from which communion he excludes *only* Mgr. Lefebvre. After making this clear, he proceeds in his Consistorial allocution of May 24, 1976, to complain of the errors of those at the other [liberal] end of the spectrum. But only to point out that those who subscribe to these errors '*are not very numerous...but they make a lot of noise*'.

It is not therefore the immense post-Conciliar drift of entire episcopates that he calls in question; nor does he proclaim the few responsible for so much noise to be '*outside the Church*'.

All this is coherent, arranged and calculated: yes, Paul VI protects and imposes Conciliar evolution as it has been put into operation by the episcopal conferences. It is not therefore a question of examining whether or not the Council could in theory have been or should be interpreted and implemented in a manner different to the way in which it has been interpreted and implemented. The interpretation now taking effect, the implementation now under way, *such as they are*, fully correspond with the will of Paul VI.

It is he who has made the Council and it is he who is interpreting it: it is he who promulgated the Conciliar texts and it is his authority that guides their implementation. We were not unaware of this. But until now this factual state of affairs had not received explicit confirmation by a demand for entire submission formulated in the name of the supreme authority.

That too is an event which makes the year 1976 as black as the year 1969. [Hitherto] the entire moderate opposition insinuated that prevaricating, falsifying, deserter-Bishops were no longer in communion with the Pope. But on May 24 Paul VI replied that he is in communion with them.

It is with Mgr. Lefebvre that he is not in communion.

Our position

We are irrevocably bound to all that Conciliar evolution disowns, despises or destroys. We are irrevocably bound to the historic entity of the Church by which divine revelation has been transmitted until our time, to this historic entity of the Church that is systematically insulted by modern impiety, by the filial impiety of Churchmen and by Conciliar impiety.

We are irrevocably bound to the universal stability of the words and sacraments of salvation which transcend time and space. We are irrevocably bound to the Roman Catechism, to the Catholic Mass, to the traditional faith: to the only guarantees, the indispensable guarantees, that our prayers and our hope are not going adrift, dreaming of a mythical Saviour, a creature of our imagination and our passions, displacing the real and living Jesus Christ Our Saviour.

Conciliar evolution is each day going further away from the word, the doctrine and the law of

⁵ In his exhortation '*Petrum et Paulum*' of February 22, 1967.

Jesus Christ. It is open to the world, open to Communism, open to nothingness.

We are irrevocably bound to the apostolic succession and the primacy of the Roman See: but not to the caprices and defections of its incumbents, who are not dispensed from the application of the principle that it is better to obey God than men.

Let us say, calmly, gently, without anger but not without resolution in this ghastly aftermath of consummated disaster: behind the Conciliar evolution there is the hand that guides it. We have known for a long time whose is this hand. We have always avoided striking at it. But it is indeed necessary to repel it or at least to escape from it if it now comes itself to strangle us.

Jean Madiran

Appendix

The facts concerning the prohibition

Here are the terms in which Paul VI expressed himself concerning the Mass on May 24:

'It is in the name of Tradition that we ask all our sons and daughters, all the Catholic communities, to celebrate with dignity and fervour the renewed liturgy. The adoption of the new Ordo Missae is certainly not left to the free choice of priests or faithful. The instruction of 14th June 1971⁶ has provided for, with the authorization of the Ordinary, the celebration of the Mass in the old form only by aged and infirm priests, who offer the divine Sacrifice sine populo. The new Ordo was promulgated to take the place of the old, after mature deliberation following upon the requests of the Second Vatican Council. In no different way⁷ did our Holy Predecessor Pius V make obligatory the Missal reformed⁸ under his authority, following the Council of Trent.

With the same supreme authority that comes from Jesus Christ, we call for the same obedience to all the other liturgical, disciplinary and pastoral reforms which have matured in these years in the implementation of the Council decrees.'

Paul VI thus invokes the precedent of St Pius V in his reform of the Mass, he (Paul VI) has proceeded 'in no different way' ('*haud dissimili ratione*') to St Pius V, he can in turn 'in no different way' make his reform obligatory.

But this is precisely the point: the manner in which he acted is not the same; nor is the obligation.

⁶ This instruction ... was in reality a *Notificatio* which was published in a suspect and lamentable manner, without either date or the author's name. We examined the unhappy circumstances attending its publication and the unhappy elements of its contents in *Itinéraires* No. 159 of January 1972 (p.136 ff.). The only Roman document to which the Consistorial allocution makes reference is therefore the latter, which is so outstandingly defective. On the other hand, it is to be noted that Paul VI makes no reference to his apostolic Constitution *Missale Romanum* of April 3, 1969, which promulgated the new Missal. This Apostolic Constitution in fact decreed no obligation, no prohibition.

⁷ *Haud dissimili ratione*

⁸ '*Recognitum*' says the Latin text, as it has always been said of the Missal of St Pius V. But it is important to note that the Italian text, which is from Paul VI's own pen, says '*riformato*'. Hence the French translation of *La Croix* '*de la même façon que la réforme de Saint Pie V avait été rendue obligatoire.*' [which is substantially the same as the above English translation cited from *L'Osservatore Romano* of June 3, 1976].

I. The manner of acting

(1.) In his revision of the Missal, St. Pius V at no time signed and promulgated so incredible an anomaly as that of the *Institutio Generalis* which he required to correct surreptitiously the following year. His moral authority remained intact. But not that of the Pontiff responsible for Article 7. It is the actual abuse of power by Paul VI that leads us to underline this point of such capital importance. When one has signed and promulgated a definition of the Mass that makes it a simple prayer meeting and a memorial assembly, it does not suffice thereafter to add a further correction.

Here for example is what I read in a journal of June 6: '*Liturgical problems have given rise to strange attempts, as for example, the first version of Article 7 of the Ordo. The Pope had it corrected.*'

Such a presentation of the facts does not conform to the truth. There was not a '*strange attempt*', then on the other hand a saving intervention by Paul VI imposing a correction. It is Paul VI in person and in his capacity as Sovereign Pontiff, who signed and promulgated the first version of Article 7. If one wishes one can choose never to speak of this article. But if one does speak of it, it is not permissible to create the impression that Paul VI's intervention in this matter consisted only in correcting an Article 7 for which he bore no responsibility. The [person] responsible, the signatory, the promulgator of the first version of Article 7 was indeed Paul VI himself.

Why did he do it?

The first hypothesis, the most obvious one, is that he did so because this Article 7 either expressed his own thought or at least did not offend it.

People may dismiss this hypothesis as unworthy of examination, they may do so wrongly: but, if they do dismiss it, it is then necessary to admit that Paul VI had signed it without reading it, or read it without understanding it. Which is scarcely better.

We point this out in order to establish the fact, made clear by the phenomenally extraordinary business of Article 7, that Paul VI in no way acted in the same manner as St. Pius V.

After Article 7, prudent virtue would not be so presumptuous as to impose on the celebration of the Mass the greatest upheaval in the course of its history.

(2.) The revision of [the Mass by] St Pius V, in conformity with the requests of the Council of Trent, did not have the objective of confecting a *new* Mass, but simply the unification and regulation of the *traditional* Mass. The difference is abysmal.

(3.) St. Pius V did not have the Missal revised with the help of heretical experts, called together in their capacity as heretics rather than as experts, with the intention of arriving, as in the case of Paul VI, at a reform which they [the heretics] could accept.

II. A parenthesis: the word 'canonised'

In passing, let us define a term. In our letter of October 27, 1972 to Paul VI, we spoke of the millenary rite of the Catholic Church *canonised* by the Council of Trent. It seems that there could be misunderstanding concerning the word '*canonised*'.

'Canonised'! Yes, but not in the sense in which a Pope canonises one who is Blessed and inscribes him in the catalogue of the saints.

No more than it means canonised in the manner of one of the books of Scripture: i.e. included among the books said to be canonical.

But canonised in the sense of established by legal title. I said canonised *simply* canonised (and not invented) in order to recall that the requests of the Council of Trent, put into operation by St Pius V, called for *a regulation of the existing Mass* and in no sense for the *fabrication of a new Mass*.

There is yet another difference, it is indeed the essential difference, concerning both manner and method, between the Missal of St Pius V and that of Paul VI.

The Council of Trent had as its intention that of '*arresting the process of Protestant disintegration of the rites of the Mass*', a disintegration that was '*encouraged by the innumerable varieties in Catholic missals and by abuses which the (Conciliar) fathers called by name under these headings: superstition, irreverence and avarice*'.⁹ It particularly sought to avoid '*that the people should be offended or scandalised by new rites*'.

It specified that '*legitimate customs*' would remain secure.

As for the traditional Mass, abandoned and '*de-canonised*' as it has been by the hierarchs of self-destruction, even if it were left no more than the right of immemorial custom, that at least could not be taken from it. It could be done only by a judgment declaring this custom to be abusive and evil: which is moreover the implicit if perhaps unconscious but inevitable implication of the actual prohibition.

III. The obligation

St Pius V did not *abolish*, on the contrary, in matters appertaining to rite, he *confirmed* legitimate customs having more than two centuries of existence.

In particular, he confirmed the right of Churches or communities having a Missal of their own, approved from the time of its institution. It is thus that the promulgation of the Roman Missal of St Pius V allowed the Dominican rite, the Lyonnais rite, the Ambrosian rite (at Milan) to subsist.

These rites have been preserved until today: but they too have just been suppressed, or, more precisely, forbidden, by the Consistorial allocution of May 24. I do not know what is and what will be the situation at Milan. But the Dominican rite and above all the Lyonnais rite have been used up to this year at the Lausanne Congress of the *International Office of Associations for Civic formation*.

Paul VI does not except them. He imposes his Missal as an obligation which does not tolerate the legitimate derogations stipulated by St Pius V.

Moreover, the obligation imposed by St Pius V was clearly and normally enunciated in the Bull *quo primum tempore* of July 19, 1570, which promulgated the *Missale recognitum*. On the contrary, the acts of Paul VI in 1969 are characterised by extreme confusion and uncertainty concerning the obligations which they indicate or do not indicate. Nowhere does there appear

⁹ Abbé Raymond Dulac, *Itinéraires*, No. 162, April 1972

the explicit will of conferring on the new Missal an obligation *excluding* use of the previous Missal. Juridically, by the constitution *Missale Romanum* of April 3, 1969, Paul VI merely authorised and established a new Mass (without suppressing the old), by virtue of a title of particular derogation concerning the non-abrogated prescriptions of the Bull *Quo Primum*. Hence the circulars applying it stipulating under what conditions or on which dates the celebration of the New Mass would be *permitted*. (In France *obligation* derived only from the episcopal directive of November 12, 1969.) Seven years after the event, in the Consistorial allocution of May 24, 1976, Paul VI invokes his '*supreme authority that comes from Christ*' to declare that the celebration of the traditional Mass is forbidden. Such a prohibition had already been enunciated but only either as an *opinion* (that of Solesmes) or as an *administrative instruction*. The FIRST ACT of Paul VI himself in this sense is that of the Consistorial allocution.

Two additional observations

To this it is necessary to add two observations both of which are conclusive:

1. No ACT of Paul VI ABOLISHED the Bull *Quo Primum* of St Pius V. It is not by way of *abolition*, but by way of *replacement*, that the Missal of Paul VI seeks to take the place of the Missal of St Pius V in an obligatory manner. '*Novus Ordo promulgatus est, ut in locum veteris substitueretur*'. (The new Ordo was promulgated to take the place of the old.' Paul VI in his Consistorial allocution.)

There is therefore no reason for asking to what extent Paul VI WOULD HAVE a right to abolish the Bull *Quo Primum*: the fact is that he HAS NOT abolished it. He has therefore not abolished the indult granted in perpetuity to all priests, regular and secular, without exception for both sung and low Masses.

In the words of the Bull *Quo Primum tempore*:

'Furthermore, by these presents and by virtue of Our Apostolic authority We give and grant in perpetuity that for the singing or reading of Mass in any church whatsoever this Missal may be followed absolutely, without any scruple of conscience or fear of incurring any penalty, judgment or censure, and may be freely and lawfully used. Nor shall bishops, administrators, canons, chaplains and other secular priests, or religious of whatsoever Order on by whatsoever title designated, be obliged to celebrate Mass otherwise than enjoined by Us. We likewise order and declare that no one whosoever shall be forced or coerced into altering this Missal.

No ecclesiastical superior can interfere with this privilege by any kind of prohibition, by neither internal nor external jurisdiction. This indult has no need of any subsequent approval, permission or consent. No regular or secular priest (says *Quo Primum*) can be validly '*obliged to celebrate Mass otherwise than enjoined by us*'.

2. A custom, and above all an immemorial custom is abolished by the Church only if it is not a legitimate custom. Even if it did not benefit from the indult granted in perpetuity by St Pius V, the traditional Catholic Mass would at least benefit from the right of immemorial custom. To suppose that it could be forbidden it would be necessary to suppose it to be *evil*. But if the traditional Mass is supposed to be *evil* to the point of requiring to be forbidden, the new Mass put in its place would necessarily be *another* Mass; not the same [Mass] preserved in substance and improved in manner of presentation, but a Mass substantially different.

Let us suppose (by hypothesis, or for the sake of argument) that the new Mass of Paul VI were excellent in all respects and that it corresponded happily to all the legitimate pastoral requirements of our time. In this case, one could at the most reproach the Old Mass for its archaic language, its old-fashioned vestments and other similar features. This was precisely the

reproach made concerning it by Paul VI in his allocution of November 26, 1969 when he spoke of rejecting, by his reform of the Mass, 'the *antiquated silk vestments in which it was regally adorned*'.

Yet the accepted French translation somewhat softens the bitter irony of the original Italian text of this declaration. But even in its attenuated form, it is painful enough to have to reproduce it, insulting, peculiar and shallow as it is. But to continue, let us suppose, as we have said (by hypothesis or for the sake of argument), that in the Old Mass there were obsolete trappings and that the reform of the Mass was limited to the bringing of these features up to date. Well then, even if this could justify the creation of a new Mass, *it could not in any case justify the prohibition of the Old*.

If [the Old Mass] were supposedly incapable of pleasing other than old folk, it would be necessary to leave it for people supposedly old: such is the Catholic way concerning all reforms designed not to correct an evil but to get rid of something out of date.

Consider this most carefully: if the Old Mass and the New were substantially the same Mass, if it were merely a question of bringing language and appearances up to date, there would be no reason for its *prohibition*.

Conversely, if the New Mass makes inevitable the prohibition of the Old, it is implicitly but necessarily because it is deemed foreign to it, incompatible with it, and is seen as the expression of another religion.

The only reason there can ever be why one Mass should require the prohibition of another, is a reason in terms of religion, of faith.

On the one hand, Paul VI gives an assurance that Conciliar reform preserves intact the substance of the faith, of the Mass, of the Sacraments; and that it changes only the presentation, formulation and trappings. But on the other hand he condemns as placing themselves outside the Church those who cling to the old trappings, formulation and presentation. But if it were a question of no more than external appearances good in themselves, there would be no matter or motive for condemnation.

That Paul VI condemns and prohibits the traditional Mass while he does not condemn the French Mass at which, in conformity with the first version of Article 7 [we are assured] '*it is simply a question of recalling to mind the unique sacrifice already consummated, the perfect sacrifice in which Christ offered Himself*'¹⁰: this poses a question not of pastoral tactics or *aggiornamento* but of religion.

That Paul VI considers the French and Dutch episcopates to be in communion with him, and Mgr Lefebvre not to be in communion with him: that poses a question not of discipline but of faith.

Jean Madiran

¹⁰ [This statement which appears in the New Missal for Sundays issued by the French Hierarchy is manifestly heretical. For canon 3 of The Council of Trent's statement concerning the Mass states: '*If anyone says that the Sacrifice of the Mass is a ...simple memorial of the sacrifice offered on the cross and not propitiatory... let him be anathema.*' Yet while Mgr. Lefebvre is suspended *a divinis* because of his fidelity to the Catholic theology of the Mass, this scandalous and unashamed heresy on the part of the most influential episcopal conference in the Universal Church has not even caused the mildest of ripples on the complacent waters of the Rhine-polluted Tiber. Note by Editor, *Approaches*.]