



# DIOCESE OF SAGINAW

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

## DECREE IMPLEMENTING THE *MOTU PROPRIO*, *TRADITIONIS CUSTODES*, IN THE DIOCESE OF SAGINAW

To Our Brothers and Sisters of the Diocese of Saginaw

### PREAMBLE

**Whereas**, the Supreme Pontiff Francis has issued an Apostolic Letter *motu proprio*, *Traditionis Custodes* (TC) issued on July 16, 2021, on the use of the 1962 *Missale Romanum*, effective immediately upon publication in *L'Osservatore Romano*;

**Whereas**, according to this Apostolic Letter and the Letter to Bishops accompanying it, Pope Francis was motivated out of a concern for the unity of the Church, and thus he intends to establish liturgical unity in the Roman Rite, by means of the unique expression of the *lex orandi* of the Roman Rite, following the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (TC. Art.1);

**Whereas**, according to this Apostolic Letter it is the exclusive competence of the diocesan bishop “to authorize the use of the 1962 *Missale Romanum* in his diocese according to the guidelines of the Apostolic See” (TC. Art.2);

**Whereas**, the “bishop of the diocese in which until now there exists one or more groups that celebrate according to the 1962 *Missale Romanum*, it is to determine that these groups do not deny the validity and the legitimacy of the liturgical reform, dictated by Vatican Council II and the Magisterium of the Supreme Pontiffs” (TC. Art. 3, §1);

**Whereas**, the diocesan bishop “is to designate one or more locations where the faithful adherents of these groups may gather for the Eucharistic celebration, (not however in the parochial churches without permission and without the erection of new personal parishes” (TC. Art. 3, § 2);

**Whereas**, the diocesan bishop is to appoint a priest as his delegate, who is entrusted with these celebrations and with the pastoral care of these groups of the faithful. This priest should be suited for this responsibility, having demonstrated skills in the use of the *Missale Romanum* antecedent to the reform of 1970, demonstrated knowledge of the Latin language sufficient for a thorough comprehension of the rubrics and liturgical texts, and animated by a lively pastoral charity and by a sense of ecclesial communion. This priest should have at heart not only the correct celebration of the liturgy, but also the pastoral and spiritual care of the faith (Art. 3§4);

**Whereas**, the diocesan bishop is to take care not to authorize the establishment of new groups (TC. Art. 3 § 6);

**Whereas**, according to canon 87, §1 of the Code of Canon Law, “A diocesan bishop, whenever he judges, that dispensation will contribute to their spiritual good, is able to dispense the faithful from universal and particular disciplinary laws issued for his territory or his subjects by the supreme authority of the Church”;

**I, The Most Reverend Robert D. Gruss, Bishop of Saginaw**, having requested from the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments a dispensation from Article 3, §2 of the *Motu proprio Traditionis Custodes*, so that Mass according to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 might continue to be celebrated at Holy Family Parish in Saginaw, Michigan, and having received said dispensation for a limited period of time and subject to specific conditions,

### **DECREE**

#### **I do hereby decree the following:**

In view of the spiritual good of the faithful, insofar as it may be pastorally necessary, the following provisions are hereby decreed:

**1.** A dispensation is granted from Article 3, §2 of *Traditionis Custodes*, authorizing the use of the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 at Holy Family Parish in Saginaw. This dispensation is granted until **8 September 2027**.

**1°** Should a renewal of this permission be sought after this period, a *relatio* must be submitted together with the request.

**2°** This *relatio* is to include:

- a) the number of faithful participating in these celebrations;
- b) the number of Masses celebrated in Latin according to the *editio typica tertia* (2008) of the current *Missale Romanum*; and
- c) an account of the steps taken to lead the faithful who are attached to the antecedent liturgical form toward the celebration of the liturgy according to the liturgical books reformed by decree of the Second Vatican Council, which constitute the unique expression of the *lex orandi* of the Roman Rite.

In this regard, the Holy Father’s Apostolic Letter *Desiderio Desideravi* on the liturgical formation of the People of God is to be regarded as a significant aid (Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments).

**i.** Such celebrations are not to be included in the parish Mass schedule, as they are attended exclusively by the faithful who belong to this group.

ii. Such celebrations are not to be held at times that coincide with the pastoral activities of the parish community. Should another suitable venue become available, this permission will be withdrawn. Accordingly, the pastor is to refrain from promoting or advertising the antecedent liturgy in the parish bulletin or on the parish website.

iii. The Sacred Scripture readings are to be proclaimed in the vernacular, using the official translation approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Practices or arrangements of liturgical space and altar that incorporate elements proper to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 into celebrations of the *Missale Romanum (editio typica tertia, 2008)* are not permitted.

iv. The Sacrament of Baptism is not permitted to be celebrated using the *Rituale Romanum (editio typica 1952)*, in accordance with the *Responsa ad dubia* and the negative response received from the Holy See. The Sacrament of Baptism may be celebrated using the *Rituale Romanum, Ordo Baptismi Parvulorum, editio typica altera (1973)*.

v. The Sacrament of Marriage is not permitted to be celebrated using the *Rituale Romanum (editio typica 1952)*, but may be celebrated using the *Rituale Romanum (editio typica 1991)*.

vi. As a condition for any future request for renewal of this dispensation, the Mass is to be celebrated in Latin once per month according to the *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia (2008)*. The specific Sunday shall be determined at the discretion of the Pastor.

vii. These provisions are not intended to marginalize the faithful who remain attached to the previous form of celebration; rather, they reaffirm that this permission is a pastoral concession granted for their spiritual good always in view of the common use of the one *lex orandi* of the Roman Rite and not an opportunity to promote the antecedent liturgical form.

2. No other locations are authorized for the celebration of Mass according to the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 beyond the parish specified above.

I hereby,

#### DELEGATE

1. In Accordance with *Traditionis Custodes*, (TC.Art. 3,§4). I hereby appoint Rev. Christopher Coman, to be my delegate for matters pertaining to liturgical celebrations according to the 1962 *Missale Romanum* and assist the appointed priests to continue celebrating the Mass using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962.
2. The priests appointed are entrusted with these celebrations, and it has been determined that the priests do not deny the validity and legitimacy of the liturgical reform as dictated by Vatican Council II and the *Magisterium* of the Supreme Pontiffs (TC. Art.3, §1).

3. That visiting priests from outside the diocese are not authorized either to begin or to continue enjoying the faculty to use the *Missale Romanum* 1962 in the Diocese of Saginaw.
4. That priests who do not request and receive the faculties by the diocesan bishop are not authorized to celebrate the Eucharist using the *Missale Romanum* 1962 in the Diocese of Saginaw, whether publicly or privately, and may not do so until the permission is granted.
5. It has been determined that priests ordained after July 16, 2021, who wish to celebrate Mass using the *Missale Romanum* of 1962 must make a request in writing to the diocesan bishop outlining the reasons for his desire to celebrate Mass in the *Usus Antiquior* of the Roman Rite.
  - i. Such priests must first be determined to be suitable (TC. Art. 3);
  - ii. It has been determined that in accordance with the requirements of *Traditionis Custodes*, the Apostolic See will be consulted before granting of such requests; and

I hereby,

### ESTABLISH

The celebration of Mass according to the 1962 *Missale Romanum* is restricted to Sundays at Holy Family Parish at 3:00 PM, following the parish's established schedule, and is not to be celebrated on weekdays, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day (unless it falls on a Sunday), the Easter Triduum, or Pentecost, in accordance with Article 3, §3 of *Traditionis Custodes*.

Everything I have decreed must be observed in all its parts. Anything else to the contrary notwithstanding, even if worthy of particular mention, may not be carried out following the promulgation of this decree, I establish that it be promulgated by way of publication on the website of the Diocese of Saginaw.

This decree takes effect immediately upon its publication on the official website of the Diocese of Saginaw. These provisions remain subject to any future modifications or directives issued by the Roman Pontiff or the competent authority of the Holy See.

Given on this date, March 13, 2026, in the year of Our Lord 2026, at the Chancery of the Diocese of Saginaw.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Robert D. Gruss  
Bishop of Saginaw



Rev. Alberto E. Vargas  
Chancellor