



NewsLetter

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CDWDS Promulgates Rite of Institution of Catechists; Definitive Rites for Institution into Ministries to Follow in 2022

Pope Francis previously announced on May 10, 2021 the creation of the lay ministry of Catechist with the Apostolic Letter *motu proprio Antiquum ministerium*. Now, by a decree dated December 3 (Prot. n. 627/21) and released to the public on December 13, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has promulgated the Latin *editio typica* of the new Rite of Institution of Catechists.

In an accompanying letter to the Presidents of the world's Conferences of Bishops, Archbishop Arthur Roche, Congregation Prefect, explained that the rite is being issued at present without the *Praenotanda*, but that the Congregation intends to issue a second typical edition (*editio typica altera*) next year that will include a proper Introduction as well as the revised rites for all three ministries: Lector, Acolyte, and Catechist. Notably, 2022 will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Apostolic Letter *Ministeria quaedam* which reformed the discipline of the minor orders and instituted the ministries of Lector and Acolyte in the life of the Church.

The new rite follows the same format as the rites for institution of Lectors and Acolytes promulgated in 1972. After the candidates are introduced, each of them responding "Present" as their names are called, the bishop gives a homily, drawing from Sacred Scripture to teach about the ministry. A sample homily text is provided by which the bishop might conclude his remarks ("in these or similar words"). Then all rise and the bishop invites all present to pray for those to be instituted; after a period of silent prayer he prays a blessing over the candidates, thus instituting them in their ministry. After this, the new Catechists approach the bishop, who gives each one a cross, exhorting them to proclaim Christ by their words and manner of life.

There are a few minor differences between this new rite and the rites promulgated in 1972, although the changes seem to reflect details expressed in the 1985 *Ceremonial of Bishops*. For example, while the older rites simply indicate that they may take place either in Mass or in a celebration of the Word of God, the Institution of Catechists has separate chapters for these two options. In the chapter for institution during Mass, the new rite includes language drawn directly from the *Ceremonial of Bishops* that provides more detail regarding the things to be prepared for the celebration and for the choice of Mass texts that are to be used. Unlike the 1972 rite – but consistent with the *Ceremonial* – the new rite indicates that the bishop might hold his crosier as the candidates are introduced and that the candidates are to kneel as the assembly prays for them and as the bishop blesses them. Likewise, the new rite instructs the bishop to extend his hands over the candidates as he offers the prayer of blessing, while the 1972

rites are silent on this point. It might be expected that the forthcoming second edition of the rites for the institution of Lector and Acolyte will also incorporate the indications found in the *Ceremonial of Bishops*.

With the promulgation of this first edition of the rite, the International Commission on English in the Liturgy will be able to begin the process of drafting an English translation. Naturally, this work can only be finalized when the definitive text is issued in 2022. Archbishop Roche's letter observes that the current *editio typica* "can be widely adapted by the Episcopal Conferences," and the USCCB will need to consider whether any adaptations to the rite are warranted in this country. The current U.S. editions of the rites for instituting Lectors and Acolytes do not include any adaptations.

The Prefect also reiterates what was stated by Pope Francis in *Antiquum ministerium* regarding the role of the Conferences of Bishops in matters such as defining the role of the Catechists, in guiding their formation, and in determining the requirements for institution into the ministry. The Holy See is acutely aware that circumstances vary widely from place to place around the world, especially in mission territories as opposed to more established Churches, and therefore the judgement of the local bishops is essential when it comes to guiding this ministry. Archbishop Roche also emphasizes the fact that this is a lay ministry that is closely tied to the work of the diocesan bishop. To that end, seminarians may not be instituted as catechists, nor should those whose catechetical work is focused entirely in religious communities, ecclesial movements, or Catholic schools. Institution as a Catechist is more appropriate for a man or woman who labors in a stable manner in the service of the parish or diocese. By virtue of their baptism, many of the faithful are called to participate in the catechetical work of the Church, but only some catechists will need to be instituted into the ministry.

Between the preparation of the official English translation of the ritual and the development and approval of USCCB guidelines for the instituted ministries, it might be expected that it will be two or more years before this initiative can be launched at the diocesan level.

CDWDS Issues Clarifications Regarding *Traditionis Custodes*

On December 4, 2021, Archbishop Arthur Roche, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, issued a response to questions (Prot. n. 620/21) about the correct application of Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter *motu proprio Traditionis custodes*, by which the Holy Father modified the conditions for liturgical celebrations with those books in use prior to the reforms following Vatican II. Released to the public on December 18, Archbishop Roche wrote that the aim of these *responsa* is to safeguard the liturgical books promulgated by Popes Paul VI and John Paul II as the unique expression of the Roman Rite's *lex orandi* (law of praying). Additionally, on the same day as the public release of the *responsa*, the Congregation published the Latin text of *Traditionis custodes*, which was initially published in Italian and English and subsequently in Spanish and German translations. Each of the Congregation's responses cites the Latin version of the text, which is the "official text to be referenced" according to the explanatory note accompanying response 5. Among the modern language translations, the English version had been, and still is, designated as the official translation. The full text of the *responsa ad dubia* (in multiple languages) is available at [CultoDivino.va/content/cultodivino/it/documenti/responsa-ad-dubia/2022/su-alcune-disposizioni-del-traditionis-custodes-.html](https://cultodivino.va/content/cultodivino/it/documenti/responsa-ad-dubia/2022/su-alcune-disposizioni-del-traditionis-custodes-.html). A short summary of its contents follows.

Question 1 – In dioceses where one or more groups were celebrating according to the antecedent Missal at the time of the *motu proprio*'s promulgation, Article 3 of *Traditionis custodes* says bishops are to designate one or more locations for the celebration of the older form of the Mass, but not in parish churches and without establishing new personal parishes. The response clarifies that at the request of the diocesan bishop the CDWDS may dispense from that aspect of the norm which excludes celebrations in parish churches. The Congregation will grant this dispensation only if it is carefully demonstrated that it is impossible to use another church, oratory, or chapel. The dispensation will be withdrawn if a potential church, oratory, or chapel becomes available.

Question 2 – Traditionis custodes directly treats only the antecedent Missal, leaving many to question whether the other sacraments may be celebrated according to the antecedent Pontifical and Ritual. The response clarifies that the unrestricted use of the Pontifical and Ritual do not conform with the norms of *Traditionis custodes*. The diocesan bishop may not grant permission for the use of the Pontifical and permission to use the Ritual may only be granted to personal parishes erected for the celebration of the antecedent rites.

Question 3 – Prior to the publication of *Traditionis custodes*, those priests desiring to celebrate the antecedent rites needed to be qualified, namely, not impeded by law. They should not support or belong in any way to those groups that show themselves against the Holy Father or the validity and liceity of the liturgical reforms following Vatican II. A basic knowledge of Latin and the rite being celebrated was also necessary. The *motu proprio* adds additional qualifications. Those priests ordained prior to *Traditionis custodes* should receive authorization from the diocesan bishop to continue to use the faculty to celebrate the antecedent Missal. Those priests ordained after the *motu proprio* should receive similar authorization, which is given by the diocesan bishop only after he has asked permission from the Holy See. This response adds an additional requirement, namely, assent on the part of the priest to the validity and liceity of concelebration as well as the occasional practice of this manner of celebration.

Question 4 – Article 4 of *Traditionis custodes* notes that at celebrations of the antecedent Missal, the readings are to be proclaimed in the vernacular, using a translation of the Sacred Scriptures approved by the Conference of Bishops for liturgical use. This response clarifies that one may proclaim the readings from a “full text of the Bible.”

Questions 5-11 – The final seven responses concern the granting and use of the faculty to celebrate according to the antecedent rites. Regarding the authorization of priests ordained after *Traditionis custodes*, the English version notes that the diocesan bishop “shall consult the Apostolic See before granting this authorization.” The newly published Latin version, on the other hand, indicates that the diocesan bishop “will ask permission from the Apostolic See” (*a Sede Apostolica licentiam rogabit*). Therefore, this new Latin translation and response 5 assert that this communication between the diocesan bishop and the Apostolic See is not consultative “but a necessary authorization given to the Diocesan Bishop by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.”

In general, the diocesan bishop may grant this faculty indefinitely or for a period of time, and its use applies only to the territory of the diocesan bishop who granted it. Deacons, instituted ministers, and priests substituting for a priest who is impeded each require authorization. On a weekday, a priest whom the local ordinary has given permission to celebrate Mass twice a day for a just cause, that priest’s second celebration may not use the antecedent Missal – regardless of whether his first Mass was celebrated using the current or the antecedent books.

Silvina Cerezo Appointed as Secretariat Multicultural Specialist

The Secretariat of Divine Worship welcomes Mrs. Silvina Cerezo as its new Multicultural Specialist, focusing on Spanish-language liturgical issues. Her first day in the Secretariat will be January 10, 2022.

Silvina began working for the USCCB in 2018 as Program Associate for Special Programs in the department of Migration and Refugee Services (MRS). She provided extensive administrative and program support, preparing, editing, and publishing documents and other communications, translating to and from Spanish, and organizing special events. Before coming to the USCCB, Silvina worked for several years at Catholic Charities in the Archdiocese of Washington.

Silvina is a native of Argentina, where she studied Spanish, Literature, and Latin. She lived in Dublin, Ireland for several years where she deepened her knowledge of the English language. After arriving in the United States, she graduated from The Catholic University of America with a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies. She continued her education, as a non-degree student, at the Dominican House of Studies.

*Let us return to Bethlehem, let us return to the origins:
to the essentials of faith, to our first love, to adoration and charity.*



Let us look at the Magi who make their pilgrim way, and as a synodal Church, a journeying Church, let us go to Bethlehem, where God is in man and man in God. There the Lord takes first place and is worshipped; there the poor have the place nearest him; there the shepherds and Magi are joined in a fraternity beyond all labels and classifications.

May God enable us to be a worshipping, poor and fraternal Church. That is what is essential.
Let us go back to Bethlehem.

– Pope Francis, Christmas Eve Homily, 2021

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR 2022!

**From the Chairman, Members, and Consultants
of the Committee on Divine Worship
and the Staff of the Secretariat of Divine Worship**