

APOSTOLIC LETTER

ISSUED BY

POPE JOHN XXIII

MOTU PROPRIO

(Rubricarum instructum)

APPROVAL OF THE NEW BODY OF RUBRICS OF THE ROMAN BREVIARY AND MISSAL

The Apostolic See, especially since the time of the Council of Trent, has constantly endeavoured to determine more carefully and to arrange more perfectly the structure of the rubrics, which regulate and govern the public worship of the Church. Hence by numerous revisions, changes and additions, the whole system of rubrics has grown considerably, but this growth has not always been systematic, and the original clarity and simplicity of the rubrics have suffered.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Our Predecessor, Pope Pius XII, of happy memory, agreed to the requests of many bishops and resolved to reduce the rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal in some matters to a simpler form. This was carried out by a General Decree of the S. Congregation of Rites, 23rd March, 1955.

In the following year, 1956, while the preparatory labours for a general reform of the liturgy were taking shape, Our same Predecessor determined to hear the opinions of the bishops concerning the liturgical revision of the Roman Breviary. Having carefully weighed the replies of the bishops, he resolved to proceed with a general and systematic revision of the rubrics of the Breviary and Missal, and he entrusted this to the special commission of experts, which had been charged with the task of the general reform of the liturgy.

After having proclaimed Our divinely inspired intention of holding a General Council, We reflected more than once as to

what should be done about this undertaking of Our Predecessor. And so after long and careful consideration, We came to the decision that the basic principles touching the general liturgical reform should be proposed to the Fathers of the next General Council, but that the above-mentioned revision of the rubrics of the Breviary and Missal should not be further postponed.

Consequently, the body of rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal, prepared by experts of the S. Congregation of Rites and carefully revised by the aforesaid Pontifical Commission for the general reform of the liturgy. We Ourselves, *motu proprio* and with full deliberation, have resolved to approve the following determinations:

1. We command that the new code of rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal, divided into three parts, namely: *The General Rubrics, the General Rubrics of the Roman Breviary, and the General Rubrics of the Roman Missal*, and soon to be published by Our Sacred Congregation of Rites, must be observed by all who use the Roman Rite as from 1st January of next year, 1961. Those who use another Latin rite are bound to conform as soon as possible to the new code of rubrics and to the calendar, in everything that is not strictly proper to their rite.

2. As from the same day, 1st January, 1961, the *General Rubrics* of the Roman Breviary and Missal, and also the *Additions and Changes* in the rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal, in accordance with the Bull *Divino afflatu* of Our Predecessor St. Pius X, which have hitherto been included in these books, cease to bind. Likewise, the General Decree *De rubricis ad simpliciore formam redigendis* of the S. C. R., 23rd March, 1955, which has been incorporated in this new revision of the rubrics, ceases to bind. Lastly, the decrees and replies to queries of the same S. Congregation are abrogated, when they are contrary to the new form of rubrics.

3. Moreover, statutes, privileges, indulgences and customs of any kind, centennial too and immemorial, even deserving special and particular mention, which are contrary to these rubrics, are revoked.

4. Publishers of liturgical books, duly approved and recognised by the Holy See, may now prepare new editions of the Roman Breviary and Missal, arranged according to the new code of rubrics. To preserve the necessary uniformity of the new

editions, the S. Congregation of Rites will issue special instructions.

5. In new editions of the Roman Breviary and Missal, the text of the rubrics mentioned in n. 2 is to be omitted, and the text of the new rubrics is to be placed at the beginning, as follows: in the Breviary, the *General Rubrics* and the *General Rubrics of the Roman Breviary*; in the Missal, the *General Rubrics* and the *General Rubrics of the Roman Missal*.

6. Lastly, let all concerned take steps, as soon as possible, to bring calendars and propers, whether diocesan or of religious, into conformity with the rules and spirit of the new edition of the rubrics and calendar, and have them approved by the S. Congregation of Rites.

And so having clearly established these norms, We deem it in keeping with Our Apostolic Office to add some words of exhortation.

This new arrangement of the rubrics has obviously, on the one hand reduced the whole structure of the rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal to a better form, set it out in a clearer order, and moulded it into a unity, while on the other hand some special modifications have also been introduced, which somewhat shorten the Divine Office. Indeed, very many of the bishops had desired this, in view especially of the large number of priests who have to support a burden of pastoral cares, which grows each day. With paternal love, We exhort these priests, and all who are bound to recite the Divine Office, to make up for the shortening of the Divine Office by greater diligence and devotion. Furthermore, since the readings from the Fathers have also been somewhat reduced, We earnestly exhort all clerics to secure the writings of the Fathers, so rich in wisdom and piety, and to read and meditate on them constantly.

What We have decreed and laid down in this Our Letter, issued *motu proprio*, must be considered ratified and confirmed, notwithstanding anything to the contrary, even deserving special and individual mention.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, on 25th July, in the year 1960, the second of Our Pontificate.

POPE JOHN XXIII

GENERAL DECREE
OF THE
SACRED CONGREGATION OF RITES

PROMULGATING THE NEW CODE OF RUBRICS
OF THE ROMAN BREVIARY AND MISSAL

The new code of rubrics of the Roman Breviary and Missal, which Our Holy Father Pope John XXIII, in the Apostolic Letter *Rubricarum instructum* given *motu proprio* on 25th July of this year, approved and commanded this Sacred Congregation to promulgate, the Sacred Congregation of Rites, by this General Decree, promulgates and declares to be promulgated. It must be inserted in new editions of the Roman Breviary and Missal, and must be observed by all to whom it applies as from 1st January of next year, 1961.

But in order that the present liturgical books may still be used, to the code of rubrics are added 'Changes' for adapting Breviaries, Missals and also the Martyrology.

From the office of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, 26th July, 1960.

✠ Cajetan Card. Cicognani,
Bishop of Tusculum.
Prefect.

L. ✠ S.

Henry Dante, *Secretary.*