



Office of the Bishop

July 30, 2021

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The Church teaches that the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life during our pilgrim journey on this earth. Through the Eucharist we encounter the Real Presence of our Lord, body and blood, soul and divinity. We participate in the Passion, Cross and Resurrection by which we were redeemed. And we form the community of faith through which God's grace pours.

For more than five hundred years, the Church has presented to the faithful of the Latin Rite a specific ritual in each age for celebrating the Eucharist. In our own time, this ritual is contained in the Roman Missal promulgated by Saint John Paul II after the Second Vatican Council.

But after the Second Vatican Council, some bishops, priests and lay leaders challenged the legitimacy of the Missal that emerged from the Council and called the Council itself into question. Pope John Paul II sought to reconcile these critics by allowing a very limited use of the pre-Conciliar Missal, and Pope Benedict expanded that use. But this limited use has not produced the hoped-for reconciliation, and the celebration of the Extraordinary Form has become a source of division within the church in many areas.

In order to address this problem, and after consulting with the bishops of the world on these questions, Pope Francis has promulgated new rules governing the use of the Extraordinary Form. One of these rules affects directly the celebration here at Saint Margaret, because the celebration of the Tridentine Mass is not allowed in parochial churches. (This is in keeping with Saint John Paul's directive that the Extraordinary Form should be distinct from parish life.)

All parishioners of Saint Margaret are, of course welcome to participate in the Extraordinary Form of the Mass at Saint Anne Church in San Diego, which is a personal parish for all members of our diocese who seek to participate in the Eucharist in the Extraordinary Form.

But I recognize that Saint Anne is far from Saint Margaret, and that the pastoral care of those who have been participating in the two Extraordinary Form celebrations in the North must include a celebration of the Tridentine Mass closer to home.

For this reason, I met with several participants in the Extraordinary Form Masses at Saint Margaret and Saint Mary in Escondido last Thursday to speak with them about forming a committee to jointly identify an appropriate location for a weekly celebration of the Latin Mass in a non-parish setting in the northern part of the county.

I wish to say that on Thursday and on the previous occasions when I have met with the Extraordinary Mass participants in our diocese, I have found great respect for the Mass of Saint John Paul II and for the teachings of the Church. Thus I am deeply interested in finding a suitable location in the North for a weekly Mass, and encourage you to discuss this initiative after Mass this Sunday, and to select four or five parishioners who can work with a similar number from Saint Mary to make such a celebration possible.

May God bless you always.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. W. McElroy". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Most Reverend Robert W. McElroy
Bishop of San Diego