

## **Press Release from the Latin Mass Society**

Tuesday 27th February 2024

### **Traditional Latin Easter Triduum Services in the Archdiocese of Westminster cancelled**

The Latin Mass Society is grieved to announce that the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Vincent Nichols, will not give permission for the celebration of the major services of the Sacred Triduum (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday) according to the liturgical books in use before the Second Vatican Council: the Traditional Latin liturgy or *Vetus Ordo*.

There has been a celebration of the Traditional Triduum in the Archdiocese, with the permission of successive Archbishops, since the 1990s: first in Corpus Christi Maiden Lane, and then in St Mary Moorfields in the City of London. In recent years these services have been attended by up to 200 people.

His Eminence places this decision in the context of his ongoing dealings with the Dicastery for Divine Worship in Rome, writing ‘My approach to these matters is to be within the parameters laid down by the Holy See while waiting for the judgment of the Holy See on which, if any, parish church may be used for the celebration of Mass according to the Missal antecedent to the reform of 1970.’<sup>1</sup>

His decision, he explains, was made ‘for the sake of the wider provision’.

### **Comment from the Latin Mass Society**

The faithful attached to the *Vetus Ordo*, served by Sunday celebrations in St James Spanish Place, the London Oratory, and other locations, will now be denied the chance to attend the most important liturgical days of the year according to this liturgy within the Archdiocese of Westminster.

When Pope Francis’ Apostolic Letter *Traditionis custodes*, which restricted the *Vetus Ordo*, was published in 2021, Cardinal Nichols summarised the Holy Father’s concerns, adding: ‘In my judgement, these concerns do not reflect the overall liturgical life of this diocese.’<sup>2</sup>

LMS Chairman Joseph Shaw comments: “In this decision, as in the earlier ending of the 50-year tradition of two annual *Vetus Ordo* Masses at the High Altar of Westminster Cathedral, and the 20-year practice of the Archdiocese providing the Sacrament of Confirmation according to the *Vetus Ordo*, it seems that Catholics attached to the older liturgy are being punished for misdemeanours that Cardinal Nichols believes they have not committed.

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<sup>1</sup> In an email of 23<sup>rd</sup> February to Fr Michael Cullinan, who was to have been the principle celebrant of the Triduum services. Quoted with permission.

<sup>2</sup> See the website of the Archdiocese of Westminster <https://rcdow.org.uk/cardinal/news/cardinals-message-to-clergy-about-traditionis-custodes/>

“We await with concern the decision of the Dicastery of Divine Worship concerning the current celebrations of the *Vetus Ordo* on Sundays and weekdays in the Archdiocese, which have enriched and consoled many hundreds of Catholics over the decades. This form of the Mass never ceased to be celebrated regularly in the Archdiocese, thanks to the pastoral solicitude of Pope Paul VI in 1971, and of successive Archbishops, in allowing it to continue. It is tragic to see that pastoral attitude now being put aside.

“At the same time, we can reassure Catholics attached to the ancient Latin liturgy that the Triduum will still be celebrated in London, outside Westminster Archdiocese, and that the Latin Mass Society will continue to support these and other celebrations of this venerable liturgy.”

### **Notes for Editors**

The Latin Mass Society was founded in 1965 to support the continued celebration of the Catholic liturgy in the form it took at the eve of the Second Vatican Council: the ‘1962 Missal’, the ‘antecedent Missal’, the *Vetus Ordo* or Traditional Mass.

The Greater London area is served by three Catholic dioceses: Westminster, Brentwood, and Southwark.

The “English Indult” granted by Pope Paul VI in 1971 allowed the *Vetus Ordo* to continue to be celebrated in England and Wales without a break, even while it was prohibited in the rest of the world.

Services of the Easter Triduum began to be celebrated in Corpus Christi Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, by the parish priest, Canon McDonald, in the early 1990s; the full set of major services were celebrated from 1999. Ten years later these moved to the larger church of St Mary Moorfields in the City of London. They were not celebrated in 2021 due to COVID restrictions.

### Latin Mass Society

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