

Cardinal Sarah's Address on the 10th Anniversary of “*Summorum Pontificum*”

March 31, 2017

The exclusive English translation of the message sent by the Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments to the Colloquium “The Source of the Future.” Cardinal Robert Sarah – Colloquium “The Source of the Future” (“Quelle der Zukunft”) on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the publication of the Motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum* by Pope Benedict XVI. [(March 29 – April 1, 2017 – Herzogenrath, near Aachen (Germany)].

Introductory Message

First of all I wish to thank from the bottom of my heart the organizers of the Colloquium entitled “The Source of the Future” on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum* by Pope Benedict XVI, in Herzogenrath, for allowing me to offer an introduction to your reflections on this subject, which is so important for the life of the Church and, more particularly, for the future of the Liturgy; I do so with great joy. I would like to greet very cordially all the participants in this Colloquium, particularly the members of the following associations whose names are mentioned on the invitation that you so kindly sent me, and I hope that I do not forget any: Una Voce Germany; The Catholic Circle of the Priests and Laity of the Archdioceses of Hamburg and Cologne; The Cardinal Newman Association; the Network of the priests of Saint Gertrude Parish in Herzogenrath. As I wrote to the Rev. Father Guido Rodheudt, pastor of Saint Gertrude Parish in Herzogenrath, I am very sorry that I had to forgo participating in your Colloquium because of obligations that came up unexpectedly and were added to a schedule that was already very busy. Nevertheless, be assured that I will be among you through prayer: it will accompany you every day, and of course you will all be present at the offertory of the daily Holy Mass that I will celebrate during the four days of your Colloquium, from March 29 to April 1. I will therefore start off your proceedings to the best of my ability with a brief reflection on the way that the Motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum* should be applied in unity and peace.

As you know, what was called “the liturgical movement” in the early twentieth century was the intention of Pope Saint Pius X, expressed in another Motu proprio entitled *Tra le sollicitudini* (1903), to restore the liturgy so as to make its treasures more accessible, so that it might also become again the source of authentically Christian life. Hence the definition of the liturgy as “summit and source of the life and mission of the Church” found in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of Vatican Council II (see n. 10). And it can never be repeated often enough that the Liturgy, as summit and source of the Church, has its foundation in Christ Himself. In fact, Our Lord Jesus Christ is the sole and definitive High Priest of the New and Eternal Covenant, since He offered Himself in sacrifice, and “by a single offering He has perfected for all time those whom He sanctifies” (cf. Heb 10:14). Thus as the *Catechism of the*

Catholic Church declares, “It is this mystery of Christ that the Church proclaims and celebrates in her liturgy so that the faithful may live from it and bear witness to it in the world” (n. 1068). This “liturgical movement”, one of the finest fruits of which was the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, is the context in which we ought to consider the Motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum* dated July 7, 2007; we are happy to celebrate this year with great joy and thanksgiving the tenth anniversary of its promulgation. We can say therefore that the “liturgical movement” initiated by Pope Saint Pius X was never interrupted, and that it still continues in our days following the new impetus given to it by Pope Benedict XVI. On this subject we might mention the particular care and personal attention that he showed in celebrating the Sacred Liturgy as Pope, and then the frequent references in his speeches to its centrality in the life of the Church, and finally his two Magisterial documents *Sacramentum Caritatis* and *Summorum Pontificum*. In other words, what is called liturgical *aggiornamento*¹ was in a way completed by the Motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum* by Pope Benedict XVI. What was it about? The Pope emeritus made the distinction between two forms of the same Roman rite: a so-called “ordinary” form, referring to the liturgical texts of the Roman Missal as revised following the guidelines of Vatican Council II, and a form designated “extraordinary” that corresponds to the liturgy that was in use before the liturgical *aggiornamento*. Thus, presently, in the Roman or Latin rite, two missals are in force: that of Blessed Pope Paul VI, the third edition of which is dated 2002, and that of Saint Pius V, the last edition of which, promulgated by Saint John XXIII, goes back to 1962.

In his *Letter to the Bishops* that accompanied the Motu proprio, Pope Benedict XVI clearly explained that the purpose for his decision to have the two missals coexist was not only to satisfy the wishes of certain groups of the faithful who are attached to the liturgical forms prior to the Second Vatican Council, but also to allow for the mutual enrichment of the two forms of the same Roman rite, in other words, not only their peaceful coexistence but also the possibility of perfecting them by emphasizing the best features that characterize them. He wrote in particular that “the two Forms of the usage of the Roman rite can be mutually enriching: new Saints and some of the new Prefaces can and should be inserted in the old Missal.... The celebration of the Mass according to the Missal of Paul VI will be able to demonstrate, more powerfully than has been the case hitherto, the sacrality which attracts many people to the former usage.” These then are the terms in which the Pope emeritus expressed his desire to re-launch the “liturgical movement”. In parishes where it has been possible to implement the Motu proprio, pastors testify to the greater fervor both in the faithful and in the priests, as Father Rodheudt himself can bear witness. They have also noted a repercussion and a positive spiritual development in the way of experiencing Eucharistic liturgies according to the Ordinary Form, particularly the rediscovery of postures expressing adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: kneeling, genuflection, etc., and also greater recollection characterized by the sacred silence that should mark the important moments of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, so as to allow the priests and the faithful to interiorize the

¹ “*Aggiornamento*” is an Italian term that means literally: “updating”. We celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* of Vatican Council II *Sacrosanctum Concilium* in 2013, since it was promulgated on December 4, 1963.

mystery of faith that is being celebrated. It is true also that liturgical and spiritual formation must be encouraged and promoted. Similarly, it will be necessary to promote a thoroughly revised pedagogy in order to get beyond an excessively formal “rubricism” in explaining the rites of the Tridentine Missal to those who are not yet familiar with it, or who are only partly acquainted with it...and sometimes not impartially. To do that, it is urgently necessary to finalize a bilingual Latin-vernacular missal to allow for full, conscious, intimate and more fruitful participation of the lay faithful in Eucharistic celebrations. It is also very important to emphasize the continuity between the two missals by appropriate liturgical catecheses.... Many priests testify that this is a stimulating task, because they are conscious of working for the liturgical renewal, of contributing their own efforts to the “liturgical movement” that we were just talking about, in other words, in reality, to this mystical and spiritual renewal that is therefore missionary in character, which was intended by the Second Vatican Council, to which Pope Francis is vigorously calling us. The liturgy must therefore always be reformed so as to be more faithful to its mystical essence. But most of the time, this “reform” that replaced the genuine “restoration” intended by the Second Vatican Council was carried out in a superficial spirit and on the basis of only one criterion: to suppress at all costs a heritage that must be perceived as totally negative and outmoded so as to excavate a gulf between the time before and the time after the Council. Now it is enough to pick up the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* again and to read it honestly, without betraying its meaning, to see that the true purpose of the Second Vatican Council was not to start a reform that could become the occasion for a break with Tradition, but quite the contrary, to rediscover and to confirm Tradition in its deepest meaning. In fact, what is called “the reform of the reform”, which perhaps ought to be called more precisely “the mutual enrichment of the rites”, to use an expression from the Magisterium of Benedict XVI, is a primarily spiritual necessity. And it quite obviously concerns the two forms of the Roman rite. The particular care that should be brought to the liturgy, the urgency of holding it in high esteem and working for its beauty, its sacral character and keeping the right balance between fidelity to Tradition and legitimate development, and therefore rejecting absolutely and radically any hermeneutic of discontinuity or rupture: these essential elements are the heart of all authentic Christian liturgy. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger tirelessly repeated that the crisis that has shaken the Church for fifty years, chiefly since Vatican Council II, is connected with the crisis of the liturgy, and therefore to the lack of respect, the desacralization and the leveling of the essential elements of divine worship. “I am convinced,” he writes, “that the crisis in the Church that we are experiencing today is to a large extent due to the disintegration of the liturgy.”²

Certainly, the Second Vatican Council wished to promote greater active participation by the people of God and to bring about progress day by day in the Christian life of the faithful (see *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 1). Certainly, some fine initiatives were taken along these lines. However we cannot close our eyes to the disaster, the devastation and the schism that the modern

² Joseph Ratzinger, *Milestones: Memoirs: 1927-1977*, translated by Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998), 148.

promoters of a living liturgy caused by remodeling the Church's liturgy according to their ideas. They forgot that the liturgical act is not just a PRAYER, but also and above all a MYSTERY in which something is accomplished for us that we cannot fully understand but that we must accept and receive in faith, love, obedience and adoring silence. And this is the real meaning of active participation of the faithful. It is not about exclusively external activity, the distribution of roles or of functions in the liturgy, but rather about an intensely active receptivity: this reception is, in Christ and with Christ, the humble offering of oneself in silent prayer and a thoroughly contemplative attitude. The serious crisis of faith, not only at the level of the Christian faithful but also and especially among many priests and bishops, has made us incapable of understanding the Eucharistic liturgy as a sacrifice, as identical to the act performed once and for all by Jesus Christ, making present the Sacrifice of the Cross in a non-bloody manner, throughout the Church, through different ages, places, peoples and nations. There is often a sacrilegious tendency to reduce the Holy Mass to a simple convivial meal, the celebration of a profane feast, the community's celebration of itself, or even worse, a terrible diversion from the anguish of a life that no longer has meaning or from the fear of meeting God face to face, because His glance unveils and obliges us to look truly and unflinchingly at the ugliness of our interior life. But the Holy Mass is not a diversion. It is the living sacrifice of Christ who died on the cross to free us from sin and death, for the purpose of revealing the love and the glory of God the Father. Many Catholics do not know that the final purpose of every liturgical celebration is the glory and adoration of God, the salvation and sanctification of human beings, since in the liturgy "God is perfectly glorified and men are sanctified" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 7). Most of the faithful—including priests and bishops—do not know this teaching of the Council. Just as they do not know that the true worshippers of God are not those who reform the liturgy according to their own ideas and creativity, to make it something pleasing to the world, but rather those who reform the world in depth with the Gospel so as to allow it access to a liturgy that is the reflection of the liturgy that is celebrated from all eternity in the heavenly Jerusalem. As Benedict XVI often emphasized, at the root of the liturgy is adoration, and therefore God. Hence it is necessary to recognize that the serious, profound crisis that has affected the liturgy and the Church itself since the Council is due to the fact that its CENTER is no longer God and the adoration of Him, but rather men and their alleged ability to "do" something to keep themselves busy during the Eucharistic celebrations. Even today, a significant number of Church leaders underestimate the serious crisis that the Church is going through: relativism in doctrinal, moral and disciplinary teaching, grave abuses, the desacralization and trivialization of the Sacred Liturgy, a merely social and horizontal view of the Church's mission. Many believe and declare loud and long that Vatican Council II brought about a true springtime in the Church. Nevertheless, a growing number of Church leaders see this "springtime" as a rejection, a renunciation of her centuries-old heritage, or even as a radical questioning of her past and Tradition. Political Europe is rebuked for abandoning or denying its Christian roots. But the first to have abandoned her Christian roots and past is indisputably the post-conciliar Catholic Church. Some episcopal conferences even refuse to translate faithfully the original Latin text of

the Roman Missal. Some claim that each local Church can translate the Roman Missal, not according to the sacred heritage of the Church, following the methods and principles indicated by *Liturgiam authenticam*, but according to the fantasies, ideologies and cultural expressions which, they say, can be understood and accepted by the people. But the people desire to be initiated into the sacred language of God. The Gospel and revelation themselves are “reinterpreted”, “contextualized” and adapted to decadent Western culture. In 1968, the Bishop of Metz, in France, wrote in his diocesan newsletter a horrible, outrageous thing that seemed like the desire for and expression of a complete break with the Church’s past. According to that bishop, today we must rethink the very concept of the salvation brought by Jesus Christ, because the apostolic Church and the Christian communities in the early centuries of Christianity had understood nothing of the Gospel. Only in our era has the plan of salvation brought by Jesus been understood. Here is the audacious, surprising statement by the Bishop of Metz:

The transformation of the world (change of civilization) teaches and demands a change in the very concept of the salvation brought by Jesus Christ; this transformation reveals to us that the Church’s thinking about God’s plan was, before the present change, insufficiently evangelical.... No era has been as capable as ours of understanding the evangelical ideal of fraternal life.³

With a vision like that, it is not surprising that devastation, destruction and wars have followed and persisted these days at the liturgical, doctrinal and moral level, because they claim that no era has been capable of understanding the “evangelical ideal” as well as ours. Many refuse to face up to the Church’s work of self-destruction through the deliberate demolition of her doctrinal, liturgical, moral and pastoral foundations. While more and more voices of high-ranking prelates stubbornly affirm obvious doctrinal, moral and liturgical errors that have been condemned a hundred times and work to demolish the little faith remaining in the people of God, while the bark of the Church furrows the stormy sea of this decadent world and the waves crash down on the ship, so that it is already filling with water, a growing number of Church leaders and faithful shout: “*Tout va très bien, Madame la Marquise!*” [“Everything is just fine, Milady,” the refrain of a popular comic song from the 1930’s, in which the employees of a noblewoman report to her a series of catastrophes]. But the reality is quite different: in fact, as Cardinal Ratzinger said:

What the Popes and the Council Fathers were expecting was a new Catholic unity, and instead one has encountered a dissension which—to use the words of Paul VI—seems to have passed over from self-criticism to self-destruction. There had been the expectation of a new enthusiasm, and instead too often it has ended in boredom and discouragement. There had been the expectation of a step forward, and instead one found oneself facing a progressive process of decadence that to a large measure has been unfolding under the sign of a summons to a presumed

³ Cited by Jean Madiran, *L’hérésie du XX siècle* (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Latines [NEL], 1968), 166.

“spirit of the Council” and by so doing has actually and increasingly discredited it.⁴

“No one can seriously deny the critical manifestations” and liturgy wars that Vatican Council II led to.⁵ Today they have gone on to fragment and demolish the sacred *Missale Romanum* by abandoning it to experiments in cultural diversity and compilers of liturgical texts. Here I am happy to congratulate the tremendous, marvelous work accomplished, through Vox Clara, by the English-language Episcopal Conferences, by the Spanish- and Korean-language Episcopal Conferences, etc., which have faithfully translated the *Missale Romanum* in perfect conformity with the guidelines and principles of *Liturgiam authenticam*, and the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has granted them the *recognitio* [approval].

Following the publication of my book *God or Nothing*, people have asked me about the “liturgy wars” which for decades have too often divided Catholics. I stated that that is an aberration, because the liturgy is the field par excellence in which Catholics ought to experience unity in the truth, in faith and in love, and consequently that it is inconceivable to celebrate the liturgy while having in one’s heart feelings of fratricidal struggle and rancor. Besides, did Jesus not speak very demanding words about the need to go and be reconciled with one’s brother before presenting his own sacrifice at the altar? (See Mt 5:23-24.)

The liturgy in its turn moves the faithful, filled with “the paschal sacraments,” to be “one in holiness”⁶; it prays that “they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by their faith”; the renewal in the Eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and man draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire. From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a font, grace is poured forth upon us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their end, is achieved in the most efficacious possible way. (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 10)

In this “face-to-face encounter” with God, which the liturgy is, our heart must be pure of all enmity, which presupposes that everyone must be respected with his own sensibility. This means concretely that, although it must be reaffirmed that Vatican Council II never asked to make tabula rasa of the past and therefore to abandon the Missal said to be of Saint Pius V, which produced so many saints, not to mention three such admirable priests as Saint John Vianney, the

⁴ Joseph Ratzinger and Vittorio Messori, *The Ratzinger Report: An exclusive interview on the state of the Church*, translated by Salvator Attanasio and Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985), 29-30.

⁵ Joseph Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology: Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology*, translated by Sister Mary Frances McCarthy, S.N.D. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 370.

⁶ Cf. Postcommunion for the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday.

Curé of Ars, Saint Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio) and Saint Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, at the same time it is essential to promote the liturgical renewal intended by that same Council, and therefore the liturgical books were updated following the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, in particular the Missal said to be of Blessed Pope Paul VI. And I added that what is important above all, whether one is celebrating in the Ordinary or the Extraordinary Form, is to bring to the faithful something that they have a right to: the beauty of the liturgy, its sacrality, silence, recollection, the mystical dimension and adoration. The liturgy should put us face to face with God in a personal relationship of intense intimacy. It should plunge us into the inner life of the Most Holy Trinity. Speaking of the *usus antiquior* (the older form of the Mass) in his Letter that accompanies *Summorum Pontificum*, Pope Benedict XVI said that

Immediately after the Second Vatican Council it was presumed that requests for the use of the 1962 Missal would be limited to the older generation which had grown up with it, but in the meantime it has clearly been demonstrated that young persons too have discovered this liturgical form, felt its attraction and found in it a form of encounter with the Mystery of the Most Holy Eucharist, particularly suited to them.

This is an unavoidable reality, a true sign of our times. When young people are absent from the holy Liturgy, we must ask ourselves: Why? We must make sure that the celebrations according to the *usus recentior* (the newer form of the Mass) facilitate this encounter too, that they lead people on the path of the *via pulchritudinis* (the way of beauty) that leads through her sacred rites to the living Christ and to the work within His Church today. Indeed, the Eucharist is not a sort of “dinner among friends”, a convivial meal of the community, but rather a sacred Mystery, the great Mystery of our faith, the celebration of the Redemption accomplished by Our Lord Jesus Christ, the commemoration of the death of Jesus on the cross to free us from our sins. It is therefore appropriate to celebrate Holy Mass with the beauty and fervor of the saintly Curé of Ars, of Padre Pio or Saint Josemaría, and this is the *sine qua non* condition for arriving at a liturgical reconciliation “by the high road”, if I may put it that way.⁷ I vehemently refuse therefore to waste our time pitting one liturgy against another, or the Missal of Saint Pius V against that of Blessed Paul VI. Rather, it is a question of entering into the great silence of the liturgy, by allowing ourselves to be enriched by all the liturgical forms, whether they are Latin or Eastern. Indeed, without this mystical dimension of silence and without a contemplative spirit, the liturgy will remain an occasion for hateful divisions, ideological confrontations and the public humiliation of the weak by those who claim to hold some authority, instead of being the place of our unity and communion in the Lord. Thus, instead of being an occasion for confronting and hating each other, the liturgy should bring us all together to unity in the faith and to the true knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the

⁷ Cf. Interview with the Catholic website Aleteia, March 4, 2015.

fullness of Christ... and, by living in the truth of love, we will grow into Christ so as to be raised up in all things to Him who is the Head (cf. Eph 4:13-15).⁸

As you know, the great German liturgist Msgr. Klaus Gamber (1919-1989) used the word *Heimat* to designate this common home or “little homeland” of Catholics gathered around the altar of the Holy Sacrifice. The sense of the sacred that imbues and irrigates the rites of the Church is the inseparable correlative of the liturgy. Now in recent decades, many, many of the faithful have been ill treated or profoundly troubled by celebrations marked with a superficial, devastating subjectivism, to the point where they did not recognize their *Heimat*, their common home, whereas the youngest among them had never known it! How many have tiptoed away, particularly the least significant and the poorest among them! They have become in a way “liturgically stateless persons”. The “liturgical movement”, with which the two forms (of the Latin rite) are associated, aims therefore to restore to them their *Heimat* and thus to bring them back into their common home, for we know very well that, in his works on sacramental theology, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, well before the publication of *Summorum Pontificum*, had pointed out that the crisis in the Church and therefore the crisis of the weakening of the faith comes in large measure from the way in which we treat the liturgy, according to the old adage: *lex orandi, lex credendi* (the law of faith is the law of prayer). In the preface that he wrote for the French edition of the magisterial volume by Msgr. Gamber, *La réforme de la liturgie romaine* [English edition: *The Reform of the Roman Liturgy*], the future Pope Benedict XVI said this, and I quote:

A young priest told me recently, “What we need today is a new liturgical movement.” This was an expression of a concern which nowadays only willfully superficial minds could ignore. What mattered to this priest was not winning new, daring liberties: what liberty has not been arrogantly taken already? He thought that we needed a new start coming from within the liturgy, just as the liturgical movement had intended when it was at the height of its true nature, when it was not a matter of fabricating texts or inventing actions and forms, but of rediscovering the living center, of penetrating into the tissue, strictly speaking, of the liturgy, so that the celebration thereof might proceed from its very substance. The liturgical reform, in its concrete implementation, has strayed ever farther from this origin. The result was not a revival but devastation. On the one hand, we have a liturgy that has degenerated into a show, in which one attempts to make religion interesting with the help of fashionable innovations and catchy moral platitudes, with short-lived successes within the guild of liturgical craftsmen, and an even more pronounced attitude of retreat from them on the part of those who seek in the liturgy not a spiritual “emcee”, but rather an encounter with the living God before Whom all “making” becomes meaningless, since that encounter alone is capable of giving us access to the true riches of being. On the other hand, there

⁸ Cf. Interview with La Nef, October 2016, question 9.

is the conservation of the ritual forms whose grandeur is always moving, but which, taken to the extreme, manifests a stubborn isolation and finally leaves nothing but sadness. Surely, between these two poles there are still all the priests and their parishioners who celebrate the new liturgy with respect and solemnity; but they are called into question by the contradiction between the two extremes, and the lack of internal unity in the Church finally makes their fidelity appear, wrongly in many cases, to be merely a personal brand of neo-conservatism. Because that is the situation, a new spiritual impulse is necessary if the liturgy is to be once more for us a communitarian activity of the Church and to be delivered from arbitrariness. One cannot “fabricate” a liturgical movement of that sort—any more than one can “fabricate” a living thing—but one can contribute to its development by striving to assimilate anew the spirit of the liturgy, and by defending publicly what one has received in this way.

I think that this long citation, which is so accurate and clear, should be of interest to you, at the beginning of this Colloquium, and also should help to start off your reflections on “the source of the future” (“*die Quelle der Zukunft*”) of the Motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum*. Indeed, allow me to communicate to you a conviction that I have held deeply for a long time: the Roman liturgy, reconciled in its two forms, which is itself the “fruit of a development”, as the great German liturgist Joseph Jungmann (1889-1975) put it, can initiate the decisive process of the “liturgical movement” that so many priests and faithful have awaited for so long. Where to begin? I take the liberty of proposing to you the three following paths, which I sum up in the three letters SAF: *silence-adoration-formation* in English and French, and in German: SAA, *Stille-Anbetung-Ausbildung*. First of all, *sacred silence*, without which we cannot encounter God. In my book *The Power of Silence, [La Force du silence]* I write: “In silence, a human being gains his nobility and his grandeur only if he is on his knees in order to hear and adore God” (n. 66). Next, *adoration*; in this regard I cite my spiritual experience in the same book, *The Power of Silence*:

For my part, I know that all the great moments of my day are found in the incomparable hours that I spend on my knees in darkness before the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. I am so to speak swallowed up in God and surrounded on all sides by His presence. I would like to belong now to God alone and to plunge into the purity of His Love. And yet, I can tell how poor I am, how far from loving the Lord as He loved me to the point of giving Himself up for me. (n. 54)

Finally, *liturgical formation* based on a proclamation of the faith or catechesis that refers to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which protects us from possible more-or-less learned ravings of some theologians who long for “novelties”. This is what I said in this connection in what is now commonly called, with some humor, the “London Discourse” of July 5, 2016, given during the Third International Conference of *Sacra Liturgia*:

The liturgical formation that is primary and essential is...one of immersion in the liturgy, in the deep mystery of God our loving Father. It is a question of living the liturgy in all its richness, so that having drunk deeply from its fount we always have a thirst for its delights, its order and beauty, its silence and contemplation, its exultation and adoration, its ability to connect us intimately with He who is at work in and through the Church's sacred rites.⁹

In this global context, therefore, and in a spirit of faith and profound communion with Christ's obedience on the cross, I humbly ask you to apply *Summorum Pontificum* very carefully; not as a negative, backward measure that looks toward the past, or as something that builds walls and creates a ghetto, but as an important and real contribution to the present and future liturgical life of the Church, and also to the liturgical movement of our era, from which more and more people, and particularly young people, are drawing so many things that are true, good and beautiful.

I would like to conclude this introduction with the luminous words of Benedict XVI at the end of the homily that he gave in 2008, on the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul: "When the world in all its parts has become a liturgy of God, when, in its reality, it has become adoration, then it will have reached its goal and will be safe and sound."

I thank you for your kind attention. And may God bless you and fill your lives with His silent Presence!

Robert Cardinal Sarah

Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments

(Translation from the French original by Michael J. Miller.)

Cardinal Robert Sarah is prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. He is the author, with Nicolas Diat, of *God or Nothing* (Ignatius Press).

⁹ Cardinal Robert Sarah: Third International Conference of the Sacra Liturgia Association, London. Speech given on July 5, 2016. See the Sacra Liturgia website: "Towards an Authentic Implementation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*", July 11, 2016. <http://www.sacraliturgia.org/2016/07/robert-cardinal-sarah-towards-authentic.html>