

Then, there is of course the question of the liturgical reform of John XXIII. Well, there is some discussion on this subject. There are some who have difficulty accepting it and who wanted us to take the liturgy of St. Pius X. I think that, in this case, as it comes to disciplinary matters that do not affect the faith, we have an obligation to obey the Holy See, even if we find a few drawbacks. When there is no serious reason for not obeying the Holy See, we must obey it. This reform has certainly, as Father Bonneterre in his little book on the liturgical reform notices, some tendencies towards the liturgical reform from after the Council. It's true, it's true. But then, I think that a reform had to be made. Besides, this reform was not made by John XXIII, because he published it almost immediately after his election. He did not have the time to do this reform before his election. There was already under Pius XII a commission for the reform of the liturgy. Myself, when I was still in Africa as apostolic delegate, I had instructions from Rome. I had to ask the various bishops of the four Episcopal Conferences, that I had founded and that I presided over, questions. During these reunions, I explained to them what Pope Pius XII was asking us to do about the breviary, about the Mass, and about things like that, and a few small reforms, that needed to be done. Personally, I left them free. They were bishops. It was for them to decide. But, I was trying to urge them not to change too much. However, there were some things that needed to be corrected.

We just finished Lent. Well personally, I am very happy to have been able to say all the ferial masses during this Lent. They are all different and beautiful masses that are very old indeed, among the oldest of the Church. So, during the thirty years of my priesthood, I had hardly been able to say the Masses of Lent, because, every time, there was the Mass of a saint. We could not say the ferial Mass. We had to say Mass of the saint of the day with the commemoration of the ferial day. Well, I think it was regrettable. So, in my opinion, it was an advantageous reform. There were some octaves that we regretted to see disappear like the Octave of the Epiphany, for example, one of the biggest feasts of the liturgy of the Church. It's unfortunate. It's true that we still say the Mass of the Epiphany anyway that day, but it is not the octave. On the other hand, there was also sometimes an accumulation of octaves. It was really impossible! We had to say commemorations, commemorations and commemorations of the octave. When we neared the feast of St. John the Baptist, there was the Corpus Christi, the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacred Heart, and more. They superimposed each other. It was really, really exaggerated. So, that this was a bit relieved is normal. Also, after Christmas, there were a lot of octaves: the Holy Innocents, St. John, and so on. All this must be multiplied and multiplied. So, I think that putting some order back was a necessary thing, because we always tend to increase the feasts. It is easy to understand that at certain times, the popes find it necessary to return to Tradition so as to decrease a little what has been accumulated over a certain period. Therefore, I do not think that we can really criticize thoroughly this reform.

Now, it's true that we could have kept the nine lessons in the breviary. I recognize this. I think that we cannot forbid those who want to read the nine lessons by devotion from doing so. They can read it for spiritual reading. But, in any case, I do not advise those who ask me and I never advised those who have asked me to mix the two, even if it only is mandatory for the ceremony of the common recitation of the breviary. "Well, during the common recitation, I will use the Breviary of John XXIII, but, outside of that, I will use the breviary of Pius X." I do not advise this. It makes duplicity and often the calendar is not the same. So during certain hours (in private) you would say the office of one saint and then, you would say the office of another saint during the Liturgy of the Hours (in public). This does not work. The liturgy is a whole. The liturgical day is a whole with the Mass and with the Divine Office. This puts more unity and piety in the liturgy. This unity must not be broken. In my opinion, it is wrong to stubbornly stick to it because we are personally attached to this or that. Again, we must have a certain discipline and a certain obedience to the Pope. The pontiff has changed this part of the liturgy and, in my opinion, there is nothing that goes against the Faith in what he did. Also, we cannot abuse of the freedom that we could eventually take. Why? I think that this is very important for the unity of the Fraternity. Unity is the expression of the Faith. So, it's very important that we all act the same way everywhere and that we all have the same ways of doing things. There were, for a time, some small difficulties in the beginning. I remember once that, on arriving at Zaitzkofen, for example, I lost myself. I was asked to lead the Divine Office. They signaled me to lead the Liturgy of the Hours but I no longer knew where I was because they still used the office of St. Pius X, and I used the office of John XXIII, so we were all confused. Then, I said: "No, we must end this. Everyone must say the same office. Moreover, it is unacceptable that someone should change it." They took the liberty to change, even though they knew very well that at Ecône, we had a uniform way of doing things. Everything came from Ecône. All those who went to the seminaries around the world to be directors or teachers, came from Ecône. Well, over the years, there are some who have not passed through Écône. But, they know very well what we do in Écône. So, I assume that Écône must be the rule. That is why it is very important not to make too many changes in Écône, because a small change made in Écône has many repercussions. They say: "But in Écône they do this, so we must do it like this also." Thank goodness, at Écône we keep the good traditions and it keeps the unity in the Fraternity. It's very comforting, I think, to arrive in Australia, South America, the USA, England, here, everywhere and to find the same things, the same customs. This unity of prayer is important for the communion between us. We must fight against this abominable dispersion which was made after the council.