

Postconciliar Reform of the Dominican Rite Liturgy: 1962-1969

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This article continues the history of the reforms of the liturgy of the Dominican Order during the 1950s. It covers the period of Vatican II until the Order's adoption of the Roman Rite in 1969.

With the publication of the new Dominican Breviary and the Calendar of 1962, projects to reform the liturgy began to change. With the exception of the reformed Easter Vigil, the reforms of the 1950s had been relatively minor affairs. Even the calendar reforms were noticeable principally to priests, not the casual layperson at Mass. As changes increased in quantity and importance during the early 1960s, expectation that major changes were in the offing began to spread and, in liturgically conscious circles, proposals for greater simplifications became common. Friars assembled at the General Chapter of Bologna in September 1961 had produced a set of petitions for communication to the Congregation of Rites. Mostly these dealt with the distinctive aspects of the Dominican Solemn Mass. Proposed changes included having the Gospel read from the pulpit facing the people, instead of toward "liturgical north" (the left side of the sanctuary). They asked that the unfolding of the corporal during the Epistle be abolished and that the rite for incensing the friars be simplified. For Low Mass, they petitioned that the "Prayers at the Foot of the Altar" be said in a voice loud enough for the congregation to hear. Permission was sought also to write new prefaces (the rite at this time had only 16) and for dropping the *Preces* at all hours except lauds and vespers.¹ An Extraordinary General Chapter was held the next year at Toulouse in preparation for the Second Vatican

¹ *Acta Capituli generalis provincialium s. Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum, Bononiae (18-24 Sept. 1961)* (Rome: Curia Generalitia, 1961), n. 153-58, 165-173.

Council.² It passed little legislation on liturgy but heard reports on reform of the Missal.³

Changes in the posture of friars in choir during Office did not require petitions to the Congregation of Rites as changes in the rite itself did, and, as requested by the General Chapter, new norms were promulgated at the beginning of 1963.⁴ These were extensive. The complex rules for raising and lowering the capuce at Mass and Office were reduced to raising it only when sitting. Abolished as well were the repeated uncoverings of the head at the Holy Names and at various verses in the Gloria, a practice that had paralleled the tipping of the biretta by secular priests. The profound bows at the names of Mary and Dominic became head-bows, and the (admittedly late-medieval) head-bow at the mention of the Precious Blood disappeared entirely; bows by the choir at the blessing of the reader were gone. The rubrics did, however, preserve the bow at the Gloria Patri during the psalms and during collects up to *qui vivit* in the doxology. Bowing for the Confiteor at prime and compline was replaced by kneeling, which was considered more “penitential.” At Mass, the ancient system of bows and prostrations on the forms by the friars in choir was replaced by standing facing the altar, sitting, and kneeling, the same rubrics already used by laypeople at High Mass. This had the effect of introducing kneeling during the Canon and erased the need to prostrate for the consecration. The elaborate medieval use of the body in prayer, so typical of medieval Dominican devotional works like *The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic*, was now gone.⁵ Finally, rubrics for conventual Low Mass were codified on the Roman model, and “dialogue format” became the norm.

2 *Acta Capituli generalis electivi sacri Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum: Tolosae, in conventu s. Thomae Aquinatis, a die 22 ad diem 29 iulii 1962* (Romae: S. Sabinae, 1962).

3 This originated with the commission to prepare a replacement for the 1933 Missal: *Acta Capituli generalis electivi s. Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum, Romae (11-17 Apr. 1955)* (Rome: Curia Generalitia, 1955), n. 90; whose tasks were later expanded: *Acta Capituli generalis diffinitorum s. Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum, Calarogae (24-30 Sept. 1958)* (Rome: Curia Generalitia, 1958), n. 162, to include reforming the role of the deacon at Solemn Mass.

4 “Schema simplificationis caeremoniarum in choro servandum,” ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964): 54-62 (this is the Jan-Mar. fasc. of 1963), issued in accord with n. 137 of the General Chapter of Toulouse (1962). The commentary of Fr. Ansgar Dirks is found on 58-62.

5 On this work and for a translation, see *The Nine Ways of Prayer of Saint Dominic*, ed. and trans. Simon Tugwell (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1978).

In the document itself, the authors spelled out the logic guiding these changes. Four principles were observed: 1. Simplification and conformity to the general practice of the Church; 2. Preservation, where possible, of primitive Dominican practices; 3. Greater uniformity among ceremonies; 4. Greater conformity with the Roman Rite.⁶ In practice, norms 1 and 4 predominated, and norm 2 seems to have had virtually no influence on the legislation at all. In this, the new choir rubrics were a sign of what was to come: from this point forward the effects of reform were to be to erase whatever was distinctive in the rite and conform to Roman practice. The pastoral problems of a distinct Dominican Rite in the midst of near-universal Roman liturgy, as well as hostility from the secular (and some Dominican) priests at Dominican “difference” would slowly be removed.⁷

Within months, approval from the Congregation of Rites arrived for revision of the rubrics of the Mass itself.⁸ This document presented the old and new rubrics in parallel columns to facilitate the changes. The reforms removed much of what seemed “different” about the Dominican Mass, at least from the point of view of the congregation. Among the most important changes, the priest no longer had his capuce up going to altar; he prepared the chalice at the Offertory, not on arriving at the altar; the practice of bowing to the Crucifix was replaced by simple head bows; and the very ancient practice of saying the historically later parts of the Roman Canon with hands folded was gone, replaced by the “orans” position throughout. In addition, the rite is simplified somewhat: Gone are the prayer *Actiones nostras* on arrival at the altar, making the cross on the altar before kissing it, holding the chasuble up against the altar when kneeling, the distinction between the deacon’s and priest’s hand position when reading the Gospel; and finally the double sip of the Precious Blood at the priest’s Communion. Also gone is the practice of coming to the center of the altar for the genuflection during the Creed. The corporal is placed in the burse at the remaking of the chalice rather than postponed till after the Last Gospel. Positively, coherent rubrics are finally provided for the people’s Communion, and the Confiteor

6 Ibid., 54 “Institutum Liturgicum proposuit schema simplificationis caeremoniarum in choro servandum, ita ut: 1. simplificationes legibus ecclesiasticis vel usui generali Ecclesiae non sint contrariae. 2. In quantum fieri possit, serventur usus nostri primitivi. 3. Augeatur cohaerentia inter caeremonias. 4. Augeatur conformitas cum usu generali Ecclesiae, id est cum Ritu romano.”

7 All priests consulted during the research for this essay commented on the secular clergy’s dislike for Dominican “singularity.”

8 SCR, “Diversae variationes in Missae rubricis” (Prot. No. 42-963-3 Apr. 1963), ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964): 171-180.

at that point is formally suppressed wherever it had not already been dropped.⁹ Other than the approval of new saints' days, the first part of the conciliar reform of the Dominican Rite was complete.¹⁰

Within six months of this legislation, Pope John XXIII died, on 3 June 1963. The Council was suspended for the papal election. It chose Cardinal Giovanni Montini of Milan as pope, who took the name Paul VI. These events interrupted the reform of the rite underway in early 1963. The new pope was known to be sympathetic to the Liturgical Renewal and far less old-fashioned in his piety than John XXIII. The momentum of liturgical change, already strong, increased. This was capped by the promulgation of the Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, on 4 December 1963. Although in many ways a conservative document that called for the retention of Latin in worship (while allowing the readings in vernacular) and gave Gregorian Chant "pride of place" over all other forms of music, the document did propose simplification of rubrics and rites and revision of the Lectionary to provide for a greater selection of readings. It also called for extensive changes in the Office, in particular, the replacement of the weekly psalter with a four-week one. In many ways more important than the conciliar document was the *motu proprio* of the new Pope Paul VI, *Sacram liturgiam*, issued on 25 January 1964.

Both documents were published in the *Analecta* in the spring of 1964.¹¹ On 15 March 1964, the new Master General, Fr. Aniceto Fernandez, wrote to the provincials to clarify the meaning of the two documents for the Dominican liturgy.¹² In his letter he took pains to emphasize that *Sacrosanctum concilium* had included the Dominican Rite when it said that "other rites legitimately recognized are to have equal right and honor" and that "it expects and wills that they be preserved in the future and in every way nourished."

9 Ibid., 178-79.

10 The SCR approved these calendar changes: new feasts of blessed: Bl. Peter Sanz and companions (3 June); Bl. Ignatius Delgado and companions (11 July); Bl. Joseph Melchior (27 Jul.) and B. Francis de Posadas (20 Sept). St. Catherine of Siena was raised to a Class I feast, Raymond of Penyafort to second class. See ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964): 296-97. Provision was also made for a Votive Mass of the Virgin and for the readings of St. Martin de Porres: ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964): 394-95 (readings on 408-13).

11 ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964): 333-67.

12 "Litterae de sacra liturgia," ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964): 404-05 "Sacrosanctum Concilium declarat se omnes ritus legitime agnitos aequo iure et honore habere eosque in posterum servari et omnimode fovendi velle atque exoptat."

But this did not exclude reforms. The Order would have to find a way to assimilate these documents. To this end, a liturgical commission was created by the master general on 24 June 1964.¹³ Friars who lived through the period say that, in practice, changes were mostly introduced whenever news of them appeared in the local Catholic press, much as they were made by secular clergy for the Roman Rite. No one seemed to wait for the Order to receive permissions for changes, as was in theory the law. Some priests acted more slowly; some even anticipated expected future changes. Dominican liturgical experts such as Fr. William Bonniwell and Fr. Ansgar Dirks had, by this time, concluded that further attempts to preserve the Dominican liturgy and modify it to conform to the reforms affecting the Roman Rite had ceased to be worth the trouble. They urged the immediate adoption of the Roman liturgy.¹⁴ This was a reversal of many Dominican liturgists' position in the 1940s, that "reform" of the Rite should be directed at restoring the thirteenth-century forms of Humbert, freed of later accretions and Romanizations.¹⁵ But opinion remained divided. Pressure for vernacularization, removal of monastic elements, and conformity to Roman use had by this time become pervasive. Changes that would be institutionalized in the reforms of Paul VI made it inevitable that any Dominican attempt to restore Humbert's Mass and Office would place the Order in a liturgical ghetto, practicing a museum-piece Latin liturgy in a vernacular *Novus Ordo* world. Very few friars would have found that outcome appealing. Even before the Commission was established, the master general had permitted

13 Its members were Chrysostom Vijverberg (*praeses*), Joseph Bernal, William Bonniwell, Ansgar Dirks, Louis Gignac, Pierre-Marie Gy, Damien Govert, Leopold Jager, Paulinus Miller, Aimon Rouget, Antonino Silli, Antonin Vismans: "Commissionis de Re Liturgica Instituto," ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964): 661.

14 Oral communications of Fr. Antoninus Wall, O.P. (ordained 1950), Fr. Samuel Parsons, O.P. (ordained 1957), and Fr. Albert Gerald Buckley, O.P. (ordained 1957), 8-12 August 2007. All of these friars are of the Western Dominican Province, U.S.A. Fr. Bonniwell himself described the decision that the Order should abandon the rite, and the consternation this caused Cardinal Browne at a meeting of Dominican liturgists to discuss that question during the Council: *Interview with Dominican Friar Fr. William Bonniwell, O.P. (1886-1984)* [Videotape], directed by Fr. Antoninus Wall, O.P., filmed by Gavin Colvert (1982), Archives of the Western Dominican Province, Oakland, California.

15 E.g., W. Bonniwell, *History of the Dominican Liturgy*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Wagner, 1945), 374: "It is therefore to be hoped that not only will the rite of the Order of Preachers be safeguarded against further losses, but that future revisions will efface the blemishes it has received in modern times."

the vernacular as it was used in the Roman Rite. Furthermore, prime was suppressed and the celebration of lauds and vespers were to be emphasized above the other hours.

These acts marked a significant shift. Within the monastic tradition, the hours, whether major or minor, served to sanctify the day (and night) by regular breaks for prayer. The emphasis on morning and evening prayers above the other hours represented the liturgists' hypothetical "cathedral office," in which these hours alone were supposed to have been celebrated for the laity and were considered sufficient to sanctify the day. Like the loss of prime, a part of the monastic office from before St. Benedict, this represents a move toward a spirituality intended for laypeople and the secular clergy. A similar intent marked the master general's decision to delegate the power to dispense from attendance at choir office to the provincials, thus making it easier to grant.¹⁶

These acts of the master general prepared the friars for the publication of reforms in the Solemn Mass that were already in preparation before Pope John's death. These were published in the April-June 1964 fascicle of the *Analecta*.¹⁷ Some of these changes involved the texts used at Mass and, to some extent, represent the desire to restore primitive Dominican practice. For example, the Mass propers of St. Peter Chrysologus, St. Stephen, and St. Brigid in the 1933 Missal simply reproduced the Masses found in the respective commons of the Roman Missal. New Masses were now provided, using Dominican propers and readings. Awkward Latin, perhaps the result of medieval copying errors, was corrected in a number of collects, and the Mass *Pro infirmis* was restored to its original form in the Humbert Codex.

More extensive, and less of a return to ancient sources, were the changes in the rubrics of Solemn Mass.¹⁸ Among the most important of these changes: the major ministers no longer recite the propers with the priest; kissing the priest's hand is suppressed; the deacon stops raising the priest's chasuble when he turns for the *Dominus Vobiscum*; servers leave their candles lighted for the whole service rather than snuffing and relighting them repeatedly (a medieval wax-saving

16 ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964): 309. To some extent, the cutting down of the Office was also behind the abrogation of the reform which provided that antiphons be recited before and after every psalm: SCR letter (Prot. No. 117-960-6 Aug. 1964), ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964): 653, although this also restored an older practice.

17 SCR Decree (Prot. No. 65-963-30 May 1963), SCR decree (Prot. No. 11-964-19 Feb. 1964) 470-74, 477-84; with commentary by Ansgar Dirks, 474-77.

18 *Ibid.*, 477-84.

practice); and the humeral veil is now placed on the credence table, not the altar, after its last use. Most of this involved suppression of what had become, for the taste of many, if not most, friars, fossilized remnants of medieval etiquette. Nor did these reforms change the rite in its substance, but one further change, the introduction of the new Communion formula (*Corpus Christi. Amen.*) and suppression of the Sign of the Cross over the communicant with the Host, affected every congregant going to Communion. They now responded "Amen" before receiving. In his comments on this, Fr. Dirks reminded the friars that the petition to adopt this form, already in use in the Roman Rite, was in accord with the *participatio actuosa* called for by the Council.¹⁹

Pressure to conform to the Roman use continued, especially now that Dialogue Mass was becoming more and more common, and Dominican priests faced the issue of celebrating Mass in secular parishes where congregations (at least to some extent) had begun to answer the priest in the (Roman) Prayers at the Foot of the Altar. To address this problem, permission was granted in late 1964 for Dominicans to use the Roman Rite Prayers at the Foot of the Altar, even in the context of the Dominican Mass, if they celebrated in secular churches—a permission extended, within a year, even to Masses in Dominican churches "when people are present."²⁰

The flurry of new reforms that marked the fall of 1964, inspired by changes in the Roman Rite, and resulting in a new decree dated 30 December 1964, would delay the publication of the new Dominican Missal for six months.²¹ That December decree repeats and codifies the reforms requested and instituted earlier in the year and adds to them. Most changes concern the Solemn Mass. The priest no longer recites the Ordinary and Proper quietly: "he may sing with the choir." The Secret is to be sung aloud, as is the entire *Per Ipsum*, during which the priest merely holds up the host and chalice, omitting the complicated series of crosses found in the medieval rite. The subdeacon no longer holds the paten covered with the humeral veil during the Canon—a rite going back to antiquity, when it carried the people's food offerings and had to be removed from the altar to make room. The people, or at least those who sing, now join in the Lord's Prayer.

19 SCR rescript (Prot. No. 11-964-19 Feb. 1964), ASOFP, 36 (1963-1964).

20 SCR decree (Prot. No. 104-964-24 Nov. 1964), ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 61; extended to Dominican Churches in SCR decree (Prot. No. 29-965-8 May 1965): 165.

21 "Normae ritus Ordinis Dominicani menti constitutionis de sacra liturgia et instructionis S. R. C. aptatae." (Prot. No. 124-964-30 Dec. 1964), ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 55-57.

This chant had been restricted to the priest since the time when it was placed just after the Canon by Pope Gregory the Great. It was St. Gregory's desire that by saying the Lord's Prayer, one composed by Christ, the priest might with "divine words" ratify the Roman Canon he had just prayed, which was composed by men and so made up of mere "human words." The Embolism that followed the Pater Noster was now sung aloud. These reforms have a whole different logic than those that have preceded: they are intended to reduce the number of prayers said silently (and so facilitate *participatio actuosa* by making them heard) and to increase the items sung in common by all (likewise increasing *participatio*). As to Low Mass, lectors and deacons may do the readings while the priest listens and these are to be read facing the people, the Gospel from the pulpit. Again, the principle seems to be *participatio*, although here those who get to have more participation are all clerics.

It seems to have been anticipated that this legislation would complete the reform of the Dominican Mass in preparation for the publication of the new Missal in time for Lent of 1965. But yet another round of changes, again modeled on those in the mother Roman Rite, arrived on 13 February 1965.²² It seems that this document addressed further petitions from the Liturgical Commission that had not arrived in time for the 30 December decree or had somehow been omitted from it by the Congregation. Master General Fernandez had written to request them the very day after the earlier decree arrived.²³ Unlike the last set of changes that emphasized increased participation, these are mostly ritual simplifications, removing gestures considered repetitive and "meaningless to modern sensibilities." Gone are the head bows during the Gloria and Credo, save at the name of Jesus, as are those at the Gratias agamus before the Preface and at the doxology of the Canon. All genuflections during readings and chants, save that in the Creed, are abolished. The Communion Verse and Postcommunion collect are read at the center of the altar, not at the side. The Signs of the Cross are gone from the end of the Creed and during the Sanctus, as is the one made with the paten during the Embolism. The procession in with the cross from the sacristy during the Creed, surely one of the more impressive "Gallican" aspects of the rite, is obsolete: the processional cross will now be kept at the credence table. Also gone by this time were the Last Gospel and the so-called Leonine Prayers after Low Mass, both optional in the Roman Rite since 1962. There

22 SCR "De aliis mutationibus in rubricis Missalis Ordinis Praedicatorum" (Prot. No. 17-965-13 Feb. 1965).

23 "Addenda litteris nostris Instaurationem liturgiae die 31 decembris 1964 datis," 82-85.

was never any Dominican legislation making them optional or dropping them, but they are absent from the 1965 Missal.²⁴

The original promulgation date of the new Missal was to have been in February 1965, but the February rubrical changes delayed publication. Instead, on the thirteenth of that month, the master general addressed a letter to the friars, explaining the work of the Liturgical Commission, the new rubrics and reforms, and giving permission to introduce the vernacular into Masses with the laity.²⁵ He emphasized the importance of education in making the reforms effective and successful. The delays and slow process in reform had caused some to balk at the process and introduce changes on their own. Fernandez wrote:

Let the friars, especially those who are young, attend with a humble and patient spirit to the mind and will of the Church legislating changes in Sacred Liturgy as these pertain to the Church's authority. Henceforth, let no one proceed in these matters at his own will, often with detriment; rather the liturgy and its institution are to be performed under competent authority.²⁶

The new rubrics of Mass were thus to go into effect on the feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, 7 March 1965, even though the new Missal was still unavailable. Concelebration in the Roman Rite went into effect on Holy Thursday, 15 April 1965. Nothing was provided for this in the drafts of the new Missal. Rather than send them back for more revisions, the Master went ahead with publication of the text in hand and instructed the Order simply to start using the Roman forms of concelebration after they went into force, leaving implementation up to local superiors.²⁷ In May, the Master again wrote to the provinces, apologizing for further delay and promising that the Missal would appear before summer.

Although its official publication date was 28 February 1965, the new Dominican Missal did not appear until fall of that year.²⁸

24 This certainly reflects their suppression for the Roman rite in March 1965, while the new Missal was still in press: SCR (Consilium) "Instruction on *Inter oecumenici*."

25 ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 75-85.

26 ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 166: Humili tamen et patienti animo, fratres, praesertim iuvenes, attendant ad mentem et voluntatem Ecclesiae, statuentis Sacrae Liturgiae moderatio ad Ecclesiae auctoritatem pertinent; nemo proinde alius in hac re suo Marte procedat, cum detrimento, saepius, ipsius Liturgiae eiusque instaurationis a competenti auctoritate peragendae.

27 "De concelebratione Missae," ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 166.

28 *Missale iuxta ritum Ordinis Praedicatorum* (Rome: S. Sabina, 1965),

It conforms to all the directives of the past two years, so there is no need, with one exception, to describe its contents. That exception is the appearance, following the Dominican Mass, of the Roman Ordo of Mass from the *Te igitur* of the Canon until the dismissal.²⁹ It has tabs for use, is printed in full format, just as is the Dominican Ordo, and has all the rubrics as they stood in 1965. There is no mention of this addition in any document published in the *Analecta* and nothing in the prefatory materials of the Missal itself, but it is obviously meant to allow the friar user to celebrate the Roman Mass, doubtless at Masses with the people. All that is lacking are the opening rites and the readings. But the Prayers at the Foot of the Altar were usually done from memory, and readings at public Low Masses were now generally in the vernacular using readings prepared under the direction of local ordinaries, so these texts were unnecessary. Almost immediately, in English-speaking lands, at least, as vernacular readings were introduced, lay readers, initially all men, were enlisted to proclaim them, so replacing the subdeacons and clerics to whom this work had previously been restricted.³⁰ This Missal provided for the desire of many friars involved in pastoral work and missions to celebrate the Roman Rite—and there was nothing to prevent a Dominican community or a friar celebrating privately from doing so. In this aspect, the book is a compromise and also a sign of things to come.

This last Missal of the Order is indeed a beautiful and sumptuous book. Available in deluxe burgundy Morocco leather with gilt edges, as well as in handsome red cloth, it has every appearance of being a book meant for the ages. Although the neo-gothic steel-cuts that decorated the 1933 Missal are gone, the use of large classical Roman type, the wide clean margins, and a full-page color reproduction of Fra Angelico's San Marco fresco of St. Dominic at the Foot of the Cross, flanking the Canon, more than compensate. Victorian sensibilities are gone; in their place is a modern, yet timeless, elegance. Considering it, one could easily forget that the consensus of the liturgists at its publication was that the Order should adopt the Roman Rite and move

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29 *Ibid.*, pp. 1*-15*, which follow p. 347; numbering resumes with p. 347 after p. 15*. This Roman material is an insert.

30 The Order issued no explicit legislation on the use of lay readers. Fr. Fabian Stanley Parmisano, O.P. (oral communication of Aug. 16, 2007), a priest ordained in 1953, described the introduction of this practice in the Western Dominican Province in 1966. It was inspired by the introduction of lay readers in the Roman rite during the previous year. Women readers seem to have appeared somewhat after, but female altar servers did not appear until the 1970s, considerably after the abandonment of the rite.

on. It is a monument to the momentum involved in major publishing projects, and to the efforts of that remaining group of friars who were determined to preserve the Dominican Rite.

While the Missal of 1965 was still in press, the Order of Preachers was holding its General Chapter in Bogota, Columbia.³¹ This chapter was the first that had to find ways of responding to the challenge of the Council and to institute an *aggiornamento* of the religious life. While earlier general chapters generally focused on issues of formation and religious life, this one turned attention to engagement with the world and the Order's apostolic mission. Some of its legislation on liturgy repeated earlier prescriptions: there was to be musical instruction in novitiates and houses of study (already required at the Chapter of 1955), while decisions on the celebration of minor Dominican blessings were to be at the discretion of the provinces. While it never said so, in so many words, the thrust of its legislation was to de-emphasize monastic observance and accommodate Dominican training and life to pastoral concerns. The burdens of the Office and monastic practices were to be reduced. The chapter gave the master general authority to abolish prime, which he did soon after.³² Petitions were sent to the Congregation of Rites requesting that friars "in missions" might say only one of the three remaining little hours. In public liturgy, lauds and vespers were to be emphasized, as these were the prayers at which the laity were most likely to be present. Concelebration at the community Mass would be the norm, thereby relieving priests of the need to say a private Mass as well as to attend the Mass of the whole community. Another petition to the Congregation asked that individual houses be given the right to adopt the Roman Office in the vernacular, should they wish to do so. Finally, the Liturgical Commission, now under the presidency of Fr. Vincent de Couesnongle, was to draw up plans to reform liturgy so that it "match the actual experience of worship and spirituality."³³ This is an interesting comment and implies a theological reversal. Historically Dominicans considered the liturgical rites themselves to inform and shape the Dominican style of worship and spirituality, rather than considering liturgy as something distinct, that had to be "conformed" to some autonomous "spirituality." This change, hardly noticed at the time, was revolutionary.

During the next two years, the Order and the provinces struggled to enact reforms in discipline, life, and worship. The traditional lay

31 *Acta Capituli generalis diffinitorum sacri Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum, Bogotae (15-23 Iulii 1965)* (Rome: Curia Generalitia, 1965).

32 Master General's letter (Prot. No. 7/65): ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 301.

33 *Ibidem*.

brothers' habit was abolished so that all friars, priest or lay, would dress the same.³⁴ New prefaces were provided for the Mass, following Roman models.³⁵ A supplement to the Breviary was published, including rubrical changes and new saints.³⁶ But perhaps the most revolutionary changes in this period involved the general introduction of the vernacular and the Romanization of the Dominican chant. In the wake of the Council, the Congregation of Rites was barraged with questions and petitions from religious orders with choral obligation asking if they could institute a wholly vernacular Office and drop the use of Gregorian chant. Citing the conciliar decree preserving the use of Latin and chant in just such cases, the Congregation generally said no, but hedged this prohibition with so many exceptions that it ceased to apply in most cases. Clerics with choral obligation, like the Dominicans, could adopt vernacular in missionary lands, in churches engaged in pastoral ministry, and when laypeople were present. The presence of people at conventual Masses (also supposed to be in Latin) justified readings in vernacular and its use for all parts of the Mass where this was already the case in Masses of the Roman Rite.³⁷

These exceptions effectively answered the request of the Chapter of Bogotá requesting use of the Roman Office in vernacular, and Master General Fernandez himself broadened permission for dropping Latin Office in a letter to the provinces of 25 September 1966. He spoke of the many complaints he had received about the continued use of Latin at prayer, especially from young friars (“praesertim apud juvenes”) and the chaotic introduction of unauthorized vernacular texts. Arguing that community prayer “should be intelligible” (and so confessing the failure of Pope John XXIII’s encyclical *Veterum sapientia*), he regularized the situation by allowing conversion to vernacular Office at each house’s discretion, in accord with the Congregation’s current discipline. Perhaps recognizing that the Congregation’s exceptions covered just about every case except private recitation of the Office in nonpastoral houses, he went on to remind the friars that, for a clerical order, recitation of the Latin Office remained normative. He cited the papal letter to the general superiors of clerical religious

34 Letter of the Master: ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 306. This change had been enacted by the General Chapter of Bogotá, n. 198.

35 Allowed by permission of SCR Prefect Cardinal Arcadio Larrana: ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 425.

36 *Supplementum Breviarii Ordinis Praedicatorum* (Rome, 1966).

37 SCR “Instructio de lingua in celebrandis Officio divino et Missa conventuali aut communitatis apud religiosos adhibenda.” ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 421-24.

orders of 15 August 1966 to that effect as his evidence. He hoped that friars would show respect for this papal command.³⁸

But the dam had broken. Houses rapidly began to adopt the vernacular for Office. Some simply dropped the Dominican Office and began to use new vernacular Roman books.³⁹ Or, as was the case in the English-speaking world, friars began to use the vernacular versions of the Dominican Office that had appeared as congregations of sisters received permission for vernacular liturgy.⁴⁰ The liturgical situation remained confused and chaotic on the local level, and the Congregation of Rites issued a *monitum* on 14 December 1965 ordering religious to use only approved liturgical texts and make no changes without permission.⁴¹ A period of experimentation began for the Office as translations were tried and dropped, music was composed or adapted, and different formats for prayer were arranged.⁴² For example, in the provinces of France, a lectionary of Patristic reading for use at the Dominican Office was compiled and published, but only in time for the adoption of the Roman Liturgy in 1969.⁴³

As the confusion over vernacularization of the Office raged, the Order's Liturgical Commission moved to "reform" the chant. The result was the new *Regulae cantus*, promulgated in February of 1965.⁴⁴ With it came, finally, the publication of a Holy Week music book for use in choir to replace the long-outdated materials from before

38 "Litterae de Re Liturgica" (25 Sept. 1966), ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 662-64.

39 As happened eventually in France, where permission to use the Roman Breviary in French was granted. See "Concession de l'usage de l'edition française du nouveau Bréviaire romain dans les provinces dominicaines de langue française," Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship decree (Prot. No. 979/69), *Notitiae*, 5 (1969): 364.

40 The English Office according to the Dominican Rite was prepared and published by Dominican Sisters in Ireland: *Breviary According to the Rite of the Order of Preachers* (Dublin: St. Saviours, 1967).

41 (Prot. No. 5821/64) ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 425.

42 Petitions to the Master General to get retroactive permission for the experimentation already under way, but the Congregation, deferred from giving permission (or forbidding it) on the grounds that they were about to request input from all major superiors about the effectiveness of the experiments that they had already introduced: SCR "Communicatio Rev.mo P. Magistro Ordinis" (Prot. No. 549/69-24 Feb. 1969), ASOFP, 39 (1969-1970): 130.

43 *Lectionaire patristique dominicain*, 3 vols. (Prouille-Fanjeaux: n.p., 1969-1970).

44 *Tonorum communium iuxta ritum Ordinis Praedicatorum Regulae* (Rome: S. Sabina, 1965).

the Council.⁴⁵ This new system of chant was to go into effect at the start of the 1965-1966 academic year, itself a sign that houses of study (except in mission lands) were among the few places where the vernacular was not already used (at least in theory). The new rules adopted the Solesmes method of singing (a nineteenth-century invention, never used by the Dominicans, whose chant followed a living oral tradition going back to the days of Humbert of Romans). These changes involved a whole new way of executing the psalm tones, the most important chants of the Office, which were now to be sung using the Benedictine method. In practice, adapting the tone to the words of each psalm had to become an unconscious habit for a religious to sing them properly. Abolition of the historic execution of the psalms, at a stroke, effectively reduced all friars to the level of novices who would have to learn how to sing the Office all over again. The master general recognized that this change would meet resistance. He wrote: "It might happen that not all friars will like this new method and system of singing, which is now a matter of public law and not a local option."⁴⁶ He expected immediate obedience. Those frustrated or unhappy should console themselves with the dictum of Humbert of Romans that friars should celebrate the Office and Mass the same way everywhere, he said. That Humbert's dictum would also forbid vernacularization (which had the effect of excluding friars who did not know the local vernacular) seems to have been lost on Master General Fernandez. This change in the chant certainly made the move to vernacular then under way far more attractive. Those attached to the ancient chant of the Order were now forbidden to sing it anyway.

As the Divine Office entered the vernacular virtually everywhere, and the Roman Office often took the place of the Dominican Breviary, the Dominican Mass underwent its last adaptations. These were meant to conform it as much as possible to the way the Roman Liturgy was performed in parish churches. The first step in this direction came with a reply to a *dubium* presented to the Congregation of Rites, asking if those using the Dominican Rite Mass might adopt and use the vernacular Roman lectionaries then becoming available in most places and whether the new sets of weekday readings being produced ad hoc under the direction of the bishops might be used.⁴⁷ The answer was yes, and that the Dominicans should follow the directives of the local bishops in doing this. As Dominicans could

45 *Officium Hebdomadae sanctae iuxta ritum Ordinis Praedicatorum* (Rome: S. Sabina, 1965); it went into force on 2 Feb. 1965.

46 "De opusculo 'Toni communes,'" ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 227-28.

47 "Consilium ad exsequendam Constitutionem de sacra liturgia," ASOFP, 37 (1965-1966): 427.

already use the Roman Prayers at the Foot of the Altar, this allowed the use of the whole Roman Foremass within the Dominican Rite. It also put the local bishop in a position of supervision over Dominican worship, something never before the case.

The next step was to conform the execution of the Dominican Mass *ordo* to the current practice in the Roman, which had just undergone further simplification under the terms of the Sacred Congregation of Rites' decree *Tres abhinc annos* (29 December 1966). This had been probably the single most extensive revision of the Roman Rite until the new Missal of Paul VI in 1970.⁴⁸ One senses that the changes were as much an attempt to get control over wild local experimentation as to reform the liturgy itself. With the document came a "dichiarazione" in Italian, correcting a multitude of innovations and abuses introduced at the local level. These included celebrating Mass during meals in laypeople's homes while seated at the table, celebrations where the priest wore lay clothes instead of vestments, replacing the texts of the Mass with privately composed or spontaneous prayers, and the introduction of secular songs in place of the traditional chants and hymns. The letter lamented that such practices "tend to desacralize the liturgy fatally."⁴⁹ The master general referred these documents to the Liturgical Commission of the Order, which replied that any provisions of it that could be applied to the Dominican Mass should be. Acting on this advice, the master general petitioned the Congregation for permission to adopt the changes of *Tres abhinc annos*. He soon received permission to do so and communicated that decision to the provinces.⁵⁰

The effect of these changes was to introduce the rubrics that would become those of the Pauline Missal of 1970. The host would remain on the paten and priests would no longer keep their fingers together after touching it, all Signs of the Cross in the Canon, which now was spoken aloud, were dropped save one, genuflecting was restricted to once at each elevation, and the altar was no longer kissed except at the beginning and end of Mass. The Roman Practice of holding the hands extended over the gifts at the words *Quam oblationem*, something not done in the Dominican Rite, is now imposed. The fraction now follows the Embolism and no Signs of the Cross are made over the chalice with the particle at the Pax. The prayer *Placeat*, formally said

48 This document was included in ASOFP, 38 (1967-1968): 216-22.

49 "Tendono fatalmente a dissacrare la liturgia."

50 SCR "Novae variationes ad executionem Constitutionis de sacra liturgia" (Prot. No. 57-967-7 Jun. 1967); A. Fernandez, "Litterae ad priores provinciales de re liturgica" (7 June 1967), ASOFP, 38 (1967-1968): 247-51.

quietly before the blessing, is dropped, although a priest may say it from memory on the way back to the sacristy from the altar. At this time also, portable altars were being installed, allowing Mass facing the people, something again on which there was never any direct Dominican legislation. At the House of Studies of the Western Province U.S.A., for example, friars read in the San Francisco diocesan paper that altars were being turned around. That evening, in preparation for morning Mass, the house liturgist and some assistants moved the secondary altar of St. Rose of Lima from a side chapel into the space between the choir stalls. From then on it became the altar of sacrifice, and so it remains, albeit slightly modified and moved, to this day.⁵¹

Although some houses attempted to find ways to preserve them, this turning of the altar and the Canon recited aloud, in the case of the Solemn Mass, ultimately brought about the dropping of the complex movements of the major ministers, which no longer seemed to make sense in a Mass celebrated *ad populum*.⁵² Master General Fernandez finally received the Congregation's permission to allow the vernacular for all parts of the Mass and Office in 1967. He communicated the news to the provinces in a letter of 5 June 1967.⁵³ In it, he reminded the friars that this permission did not abrogate previous law as to the use of Latin in choir by clerics, nor did it change Vatican II's directive to preserve and to privilege Gregorian Chant. This self-contradictory qualification to the general permissions in the letter was doubtless intended as a sop to placate those attached to the Latin Office and chants. His letter would be the last piece of legislation affecting the Dominican Rite and its form of celebration.

The changes in the liturgical life of the friars in the period after the close of the Vatican Council were codified in the book of constitutions prepared during the General Chapter of the Order that met at River Forest near Chicago from August to September 1968. This was

51 Oral communication of that liturgist, Fr. Samuel Parsons, O.P. of the Western Dominican Province U.S.A. (8 August 2007).

52 Those interested in local experimentation on liturgy within the order after 1969 might begin by consulting *Cidominfor-IDI*, the Dominican Order's newsletter, which began publishing reports on local experimentation in that year. At the Western Province USA House of Studies, the liturgical commission drew up a set of rubrics for solemn Mass facing the people, but they were dropped almost immediately. The rubrics may be found in "Rubrics for a Solemn Mass of the Dominican Rite," Oakland CA: Western Dominican Province Archives, box VII.100A. They are undated but probably date to the 1966-67 academic year.

53 "Litterae ad provinciales de lingua vernacula adhibenda in celebratione Divini Officii et in Missa conventuali" (Prot. no. 259-67-11 June 1967), ASOFP, 38 (1967-1968): 315.

the first systematic revision of the Order's constitutions since that of 1954. The legislation emphasized the communitarian aspect of worship and the centrality of the Mass (which was to be concelebrated). It tended to place the Divine Office, except perhaps lauds and vespers, in a very secondary position. Emphasizing the communal quality of the Office, the new constitutions required all friars to attend Mass and all the Offices, thus abrogating the old "lector's privilege" which dispensed academics from much of the Office on account of study. The assumption that the Office would be in vernacular underlay another new rule, also communitarian in flavor, that provided that the cooperator brothers (the new term for lay brothers) would sing along with the clerics. The spirit of these documents probably reflected quite accurately the liturgical life already practiced by friars in parochial and pastoral work outside of the houses of study. In a sense, the most tradition-bound part of these new laws was the long section on suffrages for the dead (over a third of the total), which reflected the importance of such prayers in classical Dominican piety.⁵⁴ There was nothing in these Constitutions to suggest that the Order had ever possessed a liturgical rite of its own.

Acting on the recommendation of the Liturgical Commission of the Order under the presidency of Fr. Alfonso d'Amato of the Lombard Province, the chapter commissioned the master general, Fr. Aniceto Fernandez, to request permission from what was now called the "Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship" to allow the Order to adopt the Roman Rite. He was also asked to create a new commission to examine the old liturgical and musical books of the Order to see what elements might be suitable for use with the new Roman liturgy.⁵⁵ Fr. Fernandez convened an extraordinary session of

54 *Liber constitutionum et ordinationum Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1969), issued on 1 November 1968, esp. nn. 56-75, "De sacra liturgia et oratione," pp. 41-46. Fr. Alfonso d'Amato explained the spirit of this legislation in "Presentatio textuum novarum constitutionum ab unoquoque diversarum commissionum praeside," ASOFP 39 (1969): 36-38. I have followed this exposition in my comments on the new constutions.

55 *Acta Capituli generalis provincialium Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum, River Forest (30 Aug.-24 Oct. 1968)* (Rome: Curia Generalitia, 1968), "De liturgia," nn. 56-62. In 1973, a liturgical commission of the Order considered those elements of the Dominican rite should be preserved within the context of the New Roman Rite. It concluded that "it could in no way be asserted that the Order had lost its own rights regarding the Missal and Breviary" and other liturgical books. On this project, see Dominique Dye, "Le Rit dominicain à la suite de la réforme liturgique de Vatican II," ASOFP, 43 (1977): 193-275, and Vincenzo Romano, "The Rite of Profession of the Order of

his council on 3 April 1969. At it, Fr. Ansgar Dirks, as representative of the Liturgical Commission, gave a report explaining what changes the adoption of the new Roman Rite then in preparation would entail, and the council voted to accept the commission's recommendation to adopt that Rite as that of the Order.⁵⁶

The Master forwarded a petition to that effect to the Congregation. On 2 June 1969, permission was formally granted for adoption of the Roman Rite, to come into effect on 18 November 1969. Fr. Fernandez communicated this news by letter to the provincials of the Order. For the Roman Masses celebrated in Gregorian chant, the chants of the old Dominican Gradual might still be used, "until some other accommodation can be found." The new Roman Missal then in preparation might replace the old one when it came into effect on 30 November 1969, and its celebration in vernacular might begin as soon as bishops' conferences approved vernacular translations. Until those developments, the older Roman Mass, as currently reformed, was to be celebrated, whether in Latin or the vernacular. Fr. Fernandez did especially emphasize that, according to the terms of the rescript, permission to use the old Dominican liturgy might be given by provincials to priests of their provinces and by the Master to priests of the whole Order.⁵⁷ But, for the Order as a whole, the Liturgy of Humbert was now a thing of the past.

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Preachers," http://www.australia.op.org/texts/romano_prof.doc (accessed 8/9/2007). This project would finally result in the *Proprium Missarum Ordinis Praedicatorum*, 2 vols. (Rome: S. Sabina, 1982-85), which provided propers for the Office in the first, and for the Missal and Lectionary in the second volume. No printed volume of the Dominican elements for Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, or funerals ever appeared.

56 Ansgar Dirks, "Relatio Consilio generali extraordinario oblata de novo ordine Missae," ASOFP, 39 (1969-1970): 572. In it he assured the assembled friars that "experti omnes, reprehensionibus minoris momenti neglectis, novam dispositionem laudant" and cites as evidence articles from *La Maison-Dieu* and *La rivista liturgica*, and he reminds the friars that not to follow the changes (e.g. omitting the prayer for peace after Embolism) is to neglect the pastoral welfare of the people.

57 *Ibid.*, 289-90: "Etiam tamen notandum quod iuxta Rescriptum S. Congregationis 'Pro Cultu Divino' diei 2 junii."