

# **Abhinc Duos Annos**

## **Towards a Liturgical Reform**

Motu proprio of Pope St. Pius X

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**T**WO YEARS AGO, in publishing Our Apostolic Constitution, *Divino Afflatu*, We had especially in sight the recitation, as far as possible in its entirety, of the Psalter on weekdays, and the restoration of the ancient Sunday offices. But Our mind was occupied with many other projects—some mere plans, others already on the way to realization—relating to the reform in the Roman Breviary.

However, because of the numerous difficulties preventing Us from executing them, We had to postpone them for a more favorable moment. To change the composition of the Breviary to make it in accordance with Our desires, that is, to give it a finished perfection in every part, would involve:

- restoring the calendar of the Universal Church, to its original arrangement and style, retaining meanwhile the splendid richness which the marvelous fruitfulness of the Church, the Mother of Saints, has brought to bear upon it;
- utilizing appropriate passages of Scripture, of the Fathers and Doctors, after having reestablished the authentic text;
- prudently correcting the lives of the Saints according to documentary evidence;
- perfecting the arrangement of numerous points of the liturgy, eliminating superfluous elements.

But in the judgment of wise and learned persons, all this would require considerable work and time. For this reason, many years will have to pass before this type of liturgical edifice, composed with intelligent care for the Spouse of Christ to express her piety and faith, can appear purified of the imperfections brought by time, newly resplendent with dignity and fitting order.

In the meantime, through correspondence and conversations with a number of bishops, We have learned of their urgent desire—shared by many priests—to find in the Breviary, together with the new arrangement of the Psalter and its rubrics, all changes which already have come or which might come with this new Psalter.

They have repeatedly asked Us, indeed they have repeatedly manifested their earnest desire that the new Psalter be used more often, that the Sunday be observed more conscientiously, that provision be made for the inconvenience of transferred offices, and that certain other changes be effected which seem to be justified.

Because they are grounded in objectivity and completely conform to Our desire, We have agreed to these requests and We believe that the moment has come to grant them.

**A**BHINC DUOS ANNOS, cum Constitutionem Apostolicam *A*ederemus *Divino afflatu*, qua id proprie spectavimus, ut, quoad fieri posset, et recitatio Psalterii absolveretur intra hebdomadam, et vetera Dominicarum Officia restituerentur, Nobis quidem alia multa versabantur in animo, partim meditata, partim etiam inchoata consilia quae ad Breviarii Romani, susceptam a Nobis, emendationem pertinerent.

Sed ea tamen, cum ob multiplices difficultates tunc exsequi non liceret, differre in tempus magis commodum compulsus sumus. Etenim ad compositionem Breviarii sic corrigendam ut talis exsistat, qualem volumus, id est numeris omnibus absoluta, illa opus sunt:

- Kalendarium Ecclesiae universalis ad pristinam revocare descriptionem et formam, salvis tamen pulchris accessionibus, quas ei mira semper Ecclesiae, Sanctorum matris, fecunditas attulerit;
- Scripturarum et Patrum Doctorumque idoneos locos, ad genuinam lectionem redactos, adhibere;
- sobrie Sanctorum vitas ex monumentis retractare;
- Liturgiae plures tractus, supervacanea rebus expeditos, aptius disponere.

Iam vero haec omnia, doctorum ac prudentum iudicio, labores desiderant cum magnos, tum diuturnos; ob eamque causam longa annorum series intercedat necesse est, antequam hoc quasi aedificium liturgicum, quod mystica Christi Sponsa, ad suam declarandam pietatem et fidem, intelligenti studio conformavit, rursus, dignitate splendidum et concinnitate, tamquam deterso squalore venustatis, appareat.

Interea ex litteris et sermone multorum Venerabilium Fratrum cognovimus ipsis et permultis sacerdotibus esse optatissimum, ut in Breviario una cum Psalterio nova ratione disposito suisque rubricis adsint mutationes omnes, quae ipsum novum Psalterium vel iam secutae sunt vel sequi possunt.

Quod cum instanter a Nobis peterent, simul significarunt se vehementer cupere, ut et Psalterium novum usurpetur frequentius, et Officia Dominicarum serventur eo studiosius, et incommodis

Officiorum translationibus occurratur, et alia quaedam quae bonum videatur mutari, mutantur.

Huiusmodi Nos vota, utpote iterum veritati innixa Nostraeque admodum consentanea voluntati, grate equidem accepimus iis autem obsecundandi nunc esse tempus arbitramur.