

Questions on the Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms of the *Missale Romanum*

1. Why was the 1962 Missal of Blessed John XXIII chosen as the extraordinary form?

From the time of the Council of Trent to the Second Vatican Council there were seven official editions of the *Missale Romanum*. They were promulgated by Popes Saint Pius V (1570), Clement VI (1604), Urban VIII (1634), Leo XII (1894), Saint Pius X (1911), Benedict XV (1920), and Blessed John XXIII (1962). The 1962 edition was chosen as the last edition of the *Missale Romanum* promulgated before the Second Vatican Council.

2. Are the extraordinary and ordinary forms entirely different?

The Holy Father observes that there is “no contradiction between them and that the history of liturgical books is characterized by “growth and progress, but no rupture.” What earlier generations held as sacred, remains sacred and great for us too, and it cannot be all of a sudden entirely forbidden or even considered harmful. It behooves all of us to preserve the riches which have developed in the Church’s faith and prayer, and to give them their proper place.

3. How does participation of the faithful in the *Missale Romanum* of Blessed John XXIII differ from the *Missale Romanum* of the Servant of God, John Paul II?

In both the ordinary and extraordinary forms of the *Missale Romanum*, full, conscious, and active participation of the faithful is to be desired above all else. In both forms, this begins with an interior participation in the sacrifice of Christ, to which the gathered assembly is joined by the prayers and rites of the Mass. The ordinary form of the rite customarily accomplishes this participation through listening and responding to the prayers of the Mass in the vernacular, and by taking part in forms of exterior communal action. The extraordinary form accomplishes this participation largely through listening to the prayers in Latin and following the words and actions of the Priest and joining our hearts to “what is said by him in the Name of Christ and [what] Christ says [to] him.

4. How does the role of the Priest differ in the *Missale Romanum* of Blessed John XXIII differ from the *Missale Romanum* of the Servant of God, John Paul II?

The major differences concerning the role of the Priest in the ordinary and extraordinary forms pertain to orientation and language. During most moments of the Mass the Priest faces the altar with his back to the people. All prayers are in Latin, with only the readings and the Homily in the vernacular.

5. What other major differences characterize the extraordinary and ordinary forms of the *Missale Romanum*?

Extraordinary Form (1962)	Ordinary Form (2007)
includes 1% of Old Testament includes 17% of New Testament	includes 14% of Old Testament includes 71% of New Testament
Begins with prayers at the foot of the altar prayed privately by priest and server	Begins with a greeting and communal penitential rite
One Eucharistic Prayer: the Roman Canon	Nine Eucharistic Prayers, the first of which is the Roman Canon
Faithful usually receive Holy Communion only under one kind	Allows for wider distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds to the faithful
Last Gospel and Prayers to Saint Michael the Archangel included in closing rites	Closing rites include Prayer after Communion, Blessing and Dismissal
Preserves prayers and rites of 1570 with some changes	Simplifies prayers and rites in the light of contemporary research and understanding
Only clerics or “altar boys” perform liturgical ministry	Restores lay liturgical ministries and encourages careful differentiation of roles