



**Open Letter
to the faithful who worship at the
Church of St Anne, Belmont, Western Australia**

Monday, 11 December 2023

Dear sisters and brothers in the Lord,

As I most recently shared with you in my pastoral letter to the clergy and faithful of the Archdiocese of Perth on Monday, 4 December 2023, Pope Francis in his Apostolic Letter, *Traditionis Custodes*, issued *motu proprio* on 16 July 2021, promulgated universal law in relation to the celebration of Mass according to the Missale Romanum promulgated by Saint John XXIII in 1962.

Pope Francis in Article 5 of his Motu Proprio determined that “priests who already celebrate according to the Missale Romanum of 1962 should request from the diocesan Bishop the authorization to continue to enjoy this faculty”.

Indeed, in Article 8 he determined that “previous norms, instructions, permissions, and customs that do not conform to the provisions of the present *Motu Proprio* are abrogated”.

Notwithstanding that Fr Rowe had previously been granted permission, he was required by reason of the legislation introduced by Pope Francis on 16 July 2021 to obtain authorisation from myself so that he may continue to celebrate Mass using the Roman Missal promulgated by Saint John XXIII in 1962 in the Archdiocese of Perth.

On 19 September 2022, I issued the Norms for the Implementation of the *Motu Proprio Traditionis Custodes* that came into force that same day. In these Norms I established the procedure to be followed by a priest who seeks authorisation to celebrate Mass using the Roman Missal approved by Pope John XXIII in 1962. Fr Rowe has been made fully aware of this procedure. I note that it is now over twelve months since the issuing of those norms.

As of today’s date, Fr Rowe has not sought my authorisation to celebrate the Mass using the Roman Missal promulgated by Saint John XXIII in 1962.

Therefore I have informed Fr Rowe that as he has not sought the necessary authorisation required by canon law, and as he has not been authorised to celebrate the Mass using the Roman Missal promulgated by Saint John XXIII in 1962 in the Archdiocese of Perth, he is not authorised to celebrate Mass using the Roman Missal promulgated by Saint John XXIII in 1962 at the church of St Anne, Belmont, or anywhere else in the Archdiocese of Perth. Ordained priests have “a special obligation to show reverence and obedience to the Supreme Pontiff” [canon 274 §1] and accordingly all priests are under an obligation to comply with the norms of law promulgated by Pope Francis.

Consequently, as of the date of this letter, Fr Rowe is no longer authorised to celebrate the Mass using the Roman Missal of 1962 at the church of St Anne, Belmont, or any other location in the Archdiocese of Perth. For the avoidance of doubt, it has never been my intention that either the celebration of the Mass using the Roman Missal of 1962 be discontinued at the church of St Anne, or the community itself be ‘closed down’. To suggest otherwise is false.



Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB
Archbishop of Perth

The current timetable of Masses will continue, until determined otherwise, and will be celebrated at the church of St Anne by a group of priests authorised to celebrate the Mass using the Roman Missal of 1962 in the Archdiocese of Perth. Arrangements have already been made to this effect in support of the community who gather to worship at the church of St Anne, Belmont.

On 9 July 2010, Archbishop Hickey appointed Fr Rowe as the Rector of the church of St Anne, Belmont, and also as the Spiritual Leader of the community that was to celebrate the Mass using the Roman Missal promulgated by Saint John XXIII in 1962 at St Anne's church at Belmont.

Having regard for the Holy Father's *motu proprio* of 16 July 2021 and my decree of 19 September 2022, I have reviewed the need for a rector to be appointed to the church of St Anne, Belmont.

Accordingly, after consultation with the College of Consultors, I have determined that Fr Rowe's appointments, in light of the Holy Father's *motu proprio*, are no longer appropriate.

Therefore, and as of today's date, I have formally revoked Fr Rowe's appointment as both the rector of the church of St Anne, Belmont, and as the spiritual leader of the community that gathers there to celebrate the Mass using the Roman Missal promulgated by Saint John XXIII in 1962. Fr Rowe retains faculties for the Archdiocese of Perth. These faculties authorise Fr Rowe to celebrate Mass according to the Novus Ordo.

I take this opportunity to renew my call, offered in my pastoral letter to the clergy and the faithful of our archdiocese of Monday, 4 December 2023:

It is now time for all in the Archdiocese to accept the Pope's decisions and abide by them as they are set out in our diocesan regulations.

I am conscious that some of the decisions I must now make, and the consequences of them, will upset and anger some people. I can only appeal to everyone to put aside their personal preferences and work together to ensure that our communion with the Holy Father, made concrete through our communion with the local bishop, is realised in practice as well as in words.

Please continue to pray for the gift of communion in our Archdiocese, and for those people for whom the Pope's decisions are difficult to accept.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ Timothy Costelloe SDB

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