



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

September 26, 2025

Prot. No. B 319/25

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we prepare for the upcoming implementation of *Traditionis Custodes* in our diocese, I write to those of you who have been blessed by the Extraordinary Form of the Mass to express my communion with you during this challenging time of transition. God has been at work in your lives through this particular celebration, and it is hard to imagine how the Holy Spirit could want otherwise. Our faithfulness to the discipline of the Church can be a moment of grace which can bring fruits that we cannot imagine. My prayer is that you will be open to that opportunity.

The grace of the sacraments is a gift beyond measure from God to the Church. All of us have come to appreciate the vital role this grace has in our daily lives as individuals and in the communal life of the Church. Through the sacraments we are sanctified and drawn ever closer to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, in communion with the Apostles and their successors. At the heart of this life is the Eucharist – “the source and summit of the whole Christian life” (*Lumen Gentium*, 11) – which nourishes and sustains us as His disciples.

Because the Eucharist is the center of our lives of faith, the Church carefully guides its celebration. This responsibility belongs to the Holy Father, in accord with the Magisterium, to discern how the liturgy best serves the good of the whole Body of Christ. Under this authority in 2007, Pope Benedict XVI initiated a greater availability of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass (Traditional Latin Mass) while maintaining the primacy and equal sacramental efficacy of the Ordinary Form. His hope was to limit the possibility of division in the Church among those who found the TLM more appealing. In 2021, using the same means as Pope Benedict (*motu proprio*), Pope Francis determined that while both are equally sacramentally efficacious, promoting two forms of the same rite was instead furthering division in the liturgical discipline of the Church. He therefore rescinded, as was his right, the possibility of more widespread celebration of the TLM and restricted it to non-parish churches.

In 2023 Bishop Jugis took the first step in implementing the Church’s liturgical discipline in this regard by restricting the celebration of the TLM to only four parishes in the Diocese of Charlotte and asking for an extension of two years for those four parishes to allow the faithful who had been celebrating the TLM to gradually accept the call of the Church to the celebration of the Novus Ordo (Ordinary Form) in all of our parish churches. That two-year extension ends on October 2, 2025, and as was announced in May, it is now appropriate for our diocese to come into full compliance with the Church’s discipline on this issue.

As your bishop, I recognize the challenge that these past four years have presented to you. I have listened to your stories of faithfulness and the ways the TLM has enriched your spiritual journeys. I also know that God's grace is not limited by our sacramental celebrations. I acknowledge that the form of our sacramental rituals has changed many times over the life of the Church and will continue to do so into the future. I invite you to accept this moment as an opportunity to profess our common belief in the power of the Holy Spirit to grace us in the celebration of the sacraments as the Church directs us.

Beginning October 5, 2025, the TLM will be celebrated in the Diocese of Charlotte on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation at the Chapel of the Little Flower, located at 757 Oakridge Farm Hwy., Mooresville, NC 28115. Sunday Masses will be celebrated at 10am and 12pm. Holy Day Mass times will be announced as needed. Given that the chapel resides in the territory of St. Therese Parish, it is being named in honor of and placed under the patronage of St. Therese under the title of the "Little Flower" as a symbol of her simple trust and love for God.

This chapel is not a parish, nor is it a parish-like community being formed for those who desire to celebrate the TLM. All who are currently attending the TLM at our four parishes will remain registered parishioners at their current parish. I know that you feel attached to your local parishes, and I want you to continue to be engaged in them. There will not be any programming offered at Little Flower Chapel other than Sunday and Holy Day Masses, so all the other dimensions of Catholic life (sacramental and otherwise) are to be engaged in your local parish. Fr. Brandon Jones will be the regular Sunday/Holy Day celebrant of these Masses while residing at St. Ann Parish. There will not be a collection taken at Little Flower during the Mass, so I ask you to continue your current parish support as you prayerfully discern fit.

This chapel holds approximately 350 people and has been recently renovated specifically for the celebration of the TLM. Understand that the chapel is not meant to be able to accommodate all who are currently attending the TLM in their respective parishes. I encourage you to see Little Flower Chapel as you would a shrine chapel that you might visit for Mass on occasion while participating regularly in the life of your registered parish. So that all who desire may be able to attend the TLM at Little Flower Chapel, I ask you to consider going for the first time on a Sunday later in October or early November so that the chapel can best accommodate everyone given its occupancy limitations. You can find more information at www.charlottediocese.org/TLMChapel.

While I recognize that for many of you there is still uncertainty regarding the future of the TLM, Jesus calls us to live fully in this moment as His Church. As such this is a moment for letting go and may therefore be a moment of grief for some. I understand that and commit to walk with you through that experience toward a greater glory that is always found in Jesus. May Mary, Mother of the Church, and St. Therese the Little Flower intercede for us to make this time of transition a moment of grace in our common journey of faith.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Michael T. Martin, OFM Conv.
Bishop of Charlotte

