



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you have personal experience with the Tridentine Mass, or with contemporary Traditional Latin Mass communities? If so, what has your experience been like? How do you react to the claim that they are “hubs of resistance to the very idea of a living tradition,” or characterized by a rejection of the legitimacy of the ordinary form?

2. Austen Ivereigh argues that Pope Francis’s response to traditionalists is a response to corruption rather than sin. Do you agree with Francis’s distinction between corruption and sin? How should we respond to each kind of evil?

3. What examples does Ivereigh use to justify his claim that Francis believes the TLM movement is corrupt? Which of Ivereigh’s arguments or comparisons do you find persuasive? Which do you find unpersuasive? Why?

4. Gregory Hillis questions whether Francis’s response to traditionalists is too “heavy-handed,” demonstrating a “refusal to acknowledge anything good in the other.” He worries that this attitude gives people “an excuse to avoid the hard work and even discomfort of dialogue rooted in love that fosters communion across differences.” Do you see this occurring here or elsewhere? By restricting the practice of the Latin Mass, does *Traditionis custodes* foreclose the possibility of learning from traditionalists?

5. When describing his experience with traditionalists, Hillis acknowledges “the very real differences that exist between various aspects of our theology, ecclesiology, and morality.” What happens when these theological differences include a rejection of the legitimacy of Vatican II? How can Catholics balance Francis’s typical approach of seeking unity in tension and diversity (and his recognition that “ecclesial unity [can]not be imposed from above”) with positions that fundamentally reject the Church’s teachings?

6. Ivereigh points out what seems to be a lack of self-awareness among traditionalists: a refusal to acknowledge their own pride or wrongdoing, or to repudiate conspiracy-theory-peddling leaders of their movement. Hillis, meanwhile, is dubious about judging traditionalists for not engaging more in social-media battles. How should a traditionalist respond to members and facets of her own movement that are associated with “what is most vile in the history of the Church”? If there was more evidence of such a response, might that have changed Ivereigh’s diagnosis of corruption, or even Francis’s *motu proprio*?

7. Hillis expresses concern about progressives displaying an “‘arrogant triumphalism’ that ridicules and dismisses conservative voices.” Is this attitude intrinsic to *Traditionis custodes*, or only in the progressive response to it? How can progressives respond to traditionalists in a way that encourages dialogue rather than preemptively shutting it down?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Gregory Hillis, “I love Pope Francis’ commitment to dialogue—which is why his Latin Mass restrictions confuse me,” *America*, December 2021: <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2021/12/22/francis-latin-mass-traditionalists-synod-242111>

Rita Ferrone, “A Living Catholic Tradition,” July 2021: <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/living-catholic-tradition>

Massimo Faggioli, “The Limits of ‘Traditionis Custodes,’” July 2021: <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/limits-traditionis-custodes>