

CONGREGATIO DE CULTU DIVINO ET DISCIPLINA SACRAMENTORUM

Prot. N. 29/19

DECREE

ON THE INSCRIPTION OF THE CELEBRATION OF SAINT PAUL VI, POPE, IN THE GENERAL ROMAN CALENDAR

Jesus Christ, the fullness of humanity, living and working in the Church, invites all people to a transforming encounter with Him, who is “the way, the truth and the life” (Jn 14:6). This is the journey of the Saints. Paul VI made it following the example of the Apostle whose name he assumed at the moment when the Holy Spirit chose him as Successor of Peter.

Pope Paul VI (Giovanni Battista Montini) was born on 26 September 1897 at Concesio (Brescia), in Italy. On 29 May 1920 he was ordained to the priesthood. In 1924 he began his service to the Supreme Pontiffs, Pius XI and Pius XII, and at the same time exercised his priestly ministry among university students. Nominated as the Substitute of the Secretariat of State he worked during the Second World War to find shelter for persecuted Jews and refugees. He was later designated Pro-Secretary of State for the General Affairs of the Church, also because of which he knew and encountered many of the proponents of the ecumenical movement. Appointed as Archbishop of Milan, he worked with great care for the diocese. In 1958, he was elevated to the dignity of a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church by Pope Saint John XXIII, and following his death was elected on 21 June 1963 to the See of Peter. He immediately continued the work begun by his predecessors, in particular he brought the Second Vatican Council to its completion and he began many initiatives that showed his solicitude for the Church and for the contemporary world. Among these initiatives we ought to recall his voyages as a pilgrim, undertaken as an apostolic service which served both as a preparation for the unity of Christians and in asserting the importance of fundamental human rights. Furthermore, he exercised his Supreme Magisterium favouring peace, promoting the progress of peoples and the inculturation of the faith, as well as the liturgical reform, approving Rites and prayers at once in line with tradition and with adaptation for a new age. By his authority he promulgated the Calendar, the Missal, the Liturgy of the Hours, the Pontifical and nearly all of the Ritual for the Roman Rite with the purpose of promoting the active participation of the faithful in the Liturgy. At the same time he saw to it that papal celebrations should take on a more simple form. At Castel Gandolfo on 6 August 1978, he gave his spirit back to God and, according to his wishes, he was buried just as he had lived, in a humble manner.

God, the Shepherd and Guide of all the faithful, entrusts his pilgrim Church through the ages, to those whom he himself has established as Vicars of his Son. Among these, Paul VI shines out as one who united in himself the pure faith of Saint Peter and the missionary zeal of Saint Paul. His consciousness of being the Successor of Peter is evident when we recall that on 10 June 1969, during a visit to the World Council of Churches in Geneva, he introduced himself by saying “My name is Peter”. Nevertheless, he also acknowledged by the name he chose the mission for which he had been elected. Like Saint Paul he spent his life for the Gospel of Christ, crossing new boundaries and becoming its witness by proclamation and dialogue, a prophet of a Church facing outwards, looking to those far away and caring for the poor. The Church was always, indeed his constant love, his principal concern, the object of constant reflection, the first and most fundamental thread of his whole pontificate. He wished nothing other than the Church would have a greater knowledge of herself in order to be ever more effective in proclaiming the Gospel.

Having considered this Pope’s holiness of life, witnessed to by his works and words, and having taken account of the great influence of his apostolic ministry for the Church throughout the whole world, Pope Francis, assenting to the petitions and desires of the People of God, has decreed that the celebration of Pope Saint Paul VI, should be inserted into the Roman Calendar on 29 May with the rank of optional memorial.

This new memorial will be inserted into all Calendars and Liturgical Books for the celebration of the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours; the liturgical texts to be adopted, attached to this Decree, must be translated, approved and, after the confirmation of this Dicastery, be published by the Episcopal Conferences.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the offices of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 25 January 2019, on the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul, Apostle.

Robert Card. Sarah
Prefect

✠ Arthur Roche
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