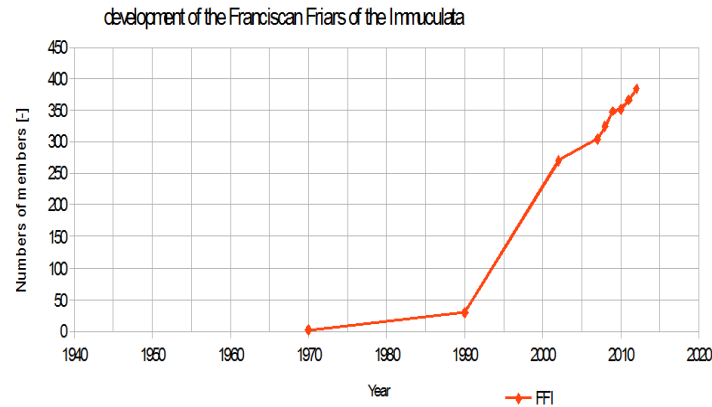


Logics behind the Chrono-logics The Apostolic Visitation regarding the chronology of events

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19700802	<p>Father Stefano Maria Manelli and Father Fr. Gabriel Maria Pellettieri established the Franciscans Friars of the Immaculate to fully recover the Franciscan tradition with the help of the Immaculate following the Council Vatican II “<i>Perfectae Caritatis</i>” decree. That means recovering the discipline, the lifestyle, the proper conduct with the superiors, the types of penance, the predominance of spiritual life.. Both are originally from the Conventional of the First Order of Franciscans.</p>
19900623	<p>On 23 June 1990, the Archbishop of Benevento, Carlo Minchiatti,[5] with the express permission of Pope John Paul II, erected as the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate the approximately thirty Franciscan friars who lived at Casa Mariana as a religious ins</p>
19980101	<p>On 1 January 1998, Pope John Paul II elevated the F.F.I. to an Institute of Religious Life with Pontifical Right, while the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate was elevated to a Pontifical Right on 9 November 1998.[5]</p> <p>After having been acknowledged by Diocesan Right in 1990 and by Pontifical Right in 1998 as religious Institute and not as an religious Order and by a consequent life according the ideals of St. Franciscus, especially devoted to the Immaculate as well as the saints Pio van Pietrelcina and Maximilian Kolbe, the numbers of friars increased relatively fast: from 30 in 1990 to 270 in 2002, and in 2012 the number of Friars is 384 of which 43 are novices. Furthermore 133 Friars are priests and the number of aspirants and postulations is about 140. And so in contrary to the traditional religious orders, including the Franciscans and the Capuchins, which are in a continue decreasing state in numbers since the Second Vatican Council – a decrease of 45% respectively 31% over the last 50 years -, this new religious Institute of Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate is strongly increasing after it has been acknowledged according the Diocesan and Pontifical Right.</p>
20051222	<p>At Christmas 2005 Pope Benedict XVI at his speech to the Curia: <i><u>"On the one hand there is an explanation, which I want to mention 'hermeneutics of rupture'. This often has the cooperation of the mass media, and also a part of modern theology has made use of here."</u></i></p> <p>By these words His Holiness Benedikt XVI repeated after about 33 years the words of His Holiness Paul VI whose words seem to be still actual in 2005. June 23th 1972, His Holiness Paul VI announced in a speech to the Cardinals his concern by the following words: <i>"... an emergency which We cannot and must not keep hidden: in the first place a false and erroneous interpretation of the Council, who would want to break with the tradition, even as regards the doctrine, an interpretation which goes so far as the Church is preconiliar rejected and allowed one considers a 'new' church, as it were reinvented from the inside, as regards the</i></p>

	<p><i>establishment of the Church, the dogma, the usa and the law.</i>"¹, while within one week after, this speech at the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul (June 29th, 1972), His Holiness Paul VI spoke publicly the famous words: "... that from somewhere or other, the smoke of Satan has entered the temple of God." <i>These words ring as true today, as the day they were spoken</i></p> <p>The Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate accepted in obedience these teachings by Pope Benedict XVI on Christmas 2005 about the "<i>hermeneutics of the reform, renewal in continuity</i>". Therefore the Friars were since 2005 involved in scientific studies, presenting their results at conferences as well as by publications. Even in 2010, they organized their own conference: "<i>The Second Vatican Council: a Pastoral Council – Historical, Philosophical and Theological Analysis</i>" with speakers like Mgr. Brunero Gherardini, Don Nicolas Bux and Mgr. Athanasius Schneider.</p>
<p>20070707 20070914</p>	<p>His Holiness Benedict XVI published the Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum. According to this publication, which lays out the "<i>mens</i>" of the Pope-legislator the Motu Proprio came in force d.d. 14th September 2007 and has been added to the Church Law.:</p> <p>Art 1. The Roman Missal promulgated by His Holiness Paul VI is the ordinary expression of the <i>lex orandi</i> (rule of prayer) of the Catholic Church of the Latin rite. The Roman Missal promulgated by Saint Pius V and revised by Blessed John XXIII is nonetheless to be considered an extraordinary expression of the same <i>lex orandi</i> of the Church and duly honoured for its venerable and ancient usage. These two expressions of the Church's <i>lex orandi</i> will in no way lead to a division in the Church's <i>lex credendi</i> (rule of faith); for they are two usages of the one Roman rite.</p> <p>Art. 2. In Masses celebrated without a congregation, any Catholic priest of the Latin rite, whether secular or regular, may use either the Roman Missal published in 1962 by Blessed John XXIII or the Roman Missal promulgated in 1970 by Pope Paul VI, and may do so on any day, with the exception of the Easter Triduum. For such a celebration with either Missal, the priest needs no permission from the Apostolic See or from his own Ordinary.</p> <p>Art. 3. If communities of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, whether of pontifical or diocesan right, wish to celebrate the conventional or community Mass in their own oratories according to the 1962 edition of the Roman Missal, they are permitted to do so. If an individual community or an entire Institute or Society wishes to have such celebrations frequently, habitually or permanently, the matter is to be decided by the Major Superiors according to the norm of law and their particular laws and statutes.</p>

¹ [Acta Apostolicae Sedis \(AAS\) jaargang 64 \(1972\), p. 498](#) [Die 23 mensis iunii a. 1972: Eminentissimis Sacri Collegii Cardinalium Patribus, Summo Pontifici die Eius nominali felicia ac fausta ominantibus]. "*Per alcuni, questo sentimento sorge dal fatto che l'edificio ecclesiale, il quale rappresentava ai loro occhi un tutto fortemente coerente e organizzato, oggi sembra a loro minacciato nella sua unità.*

Essi sono certamente scossi dal criticismo venuto alla luce in questi anni, dal carattere arrischiato di certe iniziative che ignorano la Tradizione, dall'abbandono di manifestazioni esteriori o di forme di pietà alle quali erano attaccati : però tendono a ripiegarsi su se stessi, e a rifiutare di prendere la parte loro spettante nella vita e nei compiti della Chiesa. Per altri, invece, la mancanza di fiducia nella Chiesa è originata dal convincimento che essa, secondo loro, rimarrebbe impigliata in istituzioni che hanno fatto il loro tempo : in una società secolarizzata, essi pensano che la Chiesa dovrebbe abbandonare la maggior parte delle forme che la distinguono e rinunciare perfino alle certezze acquisite, per mettersi unicamente all'ascolto dei bisogni del mondo; e provano, di fronte alla Chiesa visibile e istituzionale, una freddezza che porta alcuni ad allontanarsi da essa, sensibili, come pensano di essere, alle profonde mutazioni che caratterizzano la nostra epoca, alle novità delle situazioni culturali e alle possibilità scientifiche e tecniche.

Da queste opposte tensioni deriva uno stato di disagio, che non possiamo e non dobbiamo nasconderci : anzitutto una falsa e abusiva interpretazione del Concilio, che vorrebbe una rottura con la tradizione, anche dottrinale, giungendo al ripudio della Chiesa pre-conciliare, e alla licenza di concepire una Chiesa « nuova », quasi « reinventata » dall'interno, nella costituzione, nel dogma, nel costume, nel diritto."

	<p>The Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate accepted in obedience these teachings by Pope Benedict XVI given in the Motu Proprio <i>Summorum Pontificum</i> (2007) by giving a place for both Forms of the Roman Rite for the Friars, individually as well as in convent. Nobody has been forced to celebrate Holy Mass in a Form at which he is not attached to. After the decision in 2008 by the General Chapter the Superior General, Father Manelli, has waited until after the publication of the Instruction <i>Universae Ecclesiae</i> in 2011 to write and publish the general rules for introducing the Extraordinary Form, which he had send for comments to the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei (Prot. 39/2011L).</p>
2008	<p>From the minutes of the General Chapter of 2008. The quote below has been given by the Apostolic Visitor (2012.11.21) in the questionnaire to the professed members of the FFI as well by the FFI in the "Clarification in regard to the article of Antonio Tornielli on Vatican Insider, 8 August 2013".</p> <p><i>“It is then asked if the Motu Proprio of Benedict XVI will appear in the Directory and what should be the frequency, during the week, with which it is celebrated. Fr. Stefano responds that one should arrive at stable daily celebration where possible. It is then asked how to proceed in the parishes and dioceses where there is not a sensibility for this rite, and how to resolve the radio transmission of this Mass, which calls for many silent prayers. The chapter fathers agree that these problems can be overcome, and Fr. Stefano stresses the suitability [of the extraordinary form] above all for the conventual Mass, where possible. Lastly, as regards the difference in the liturgical calendar, we will wait for a new document of the Pope. Regarding the directives of an internal nature, the General Council will prepare a <u>protocollo applicativo</u> [i.e., norms for the application of the Motu Proprio] on the basis of this Pontifical document.”</i></p>
20113004	<p>His Holiness Benedict XVI, in an audience granted to undersigned Cardinal President of the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei on 8 April 2011, approved this present Instruction <i>Universae Ecclesiae</i> and ordered its publication.</p> <p>The Instruction <i>Universae Ecclesiae</i> has been published 30 April 2011 and signed by Willian Cardinal Levada, President, and Mons. Guido Pozzo, Secretary.</p>
2011121	<p>With a letter, Prot. 77/2011, dated 21 Nov 2011, the General Secretary, in the name of the General Council, sent all the F.F.I. Marian Houses (Friaries), some indicative (<i>not preceptive!</i>) norms regarding the use of the <i>Vetus Ordo</i> and the harmony between the <i>Vetus Ordo</i> and the <i>Novus Ordo</i> in the Communities and Institute.</p> <p>See the Official note of 3 Aug. 2013: a response to Vatican Insider:</p> <p>Fr. Stefano Manelli, as Minister General, together with his General Council, legitimately undertook an effort to promote the <i>Vetus Ordo</i>, respecting the Motu Proprio <i>Summorum Pontificum</i> (2007), respecting the decisions of our General Chapter of 2008, and respecting the Instruction <i>Universae Ecclesiae</i> (2011).</p> <p>With a letter, Prot. 77/2011, dated 21 Nov 2011, our General Secretary, in the name of our General Council, sent all the F.F.I. Marian Houses (Friaries), some indicative (<i>not preceptive!</i>) norms regarding the use of the <i>Vetus Ordo</i> and the harmony between the <i>Vetus Ordo</i> and the <i>Novus Ordo</i> in our Communities and our Institute.</p> <p>After this letter, various communities peacefully continued to give pride of place to the <i>Vetus</i> or the <i>Novus Ordo</i>. So there was no imposition on the part of Fr. Manelli.</p> <p>See also A further response to Vatican Insider (20130803):</p> <p><i>“But if we must speak of general chapters, be it known that in our case, the general chapter of 2008 entrusted the matter to our Institute’s General Council. For, in the acts of this chapter, the part regarding the motu proprio concludes in this way: “Lastly, as regards the difference of liturgical calendar, we will wait for a new document of the Pope. Regarding the directives of an internal nature, the General Council will prepare a proto-</i></p>

	<p><i>collo applicativo [i.e., norms for application (of the Motu Proprio)] on the basis of this Pontifical document” (p. 50). At the time, there was discussion among us as to whether it would be possible to follow a different calendar (that of the ordinary form) in the old Mass. This possibility was definitively excluded by no. 24 of the Instruction Universae Ecclesiae, which was made public 13 May 2011. Basing itself upon this document, the General Council published letter Prot. 77/2011, dated 21 Nov 2011, of which our last official note speaks. “</i></p> <p>See also the "Clarification in regard to the article of Antonio Tornielli on Vatican Insider, 8 August 2013":</p>
<p>201201xx</p>	<p>In a response on Marco Tossati in 'La Stampa' d.d 2013.12.05 Father Volpi wrote: <i>“The founder and ex- Minister General, Father Stefano Maria Manelli, in January 2012, had already evaded constructive dialogue with the religious who had complained of a crypto-lefebvrian and definitely traditionalist drift [in the community]”</i></p> <p>About the above said complaints as formulated by Father Volpi O.F.M.Cap. the FFI had already stated in an official note: "Clarification in regard to the article of Antonio Tornielli on Vatican Insider, 8 August 2013":</p> <p><i>“The Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate did not start as traditionalists and have not wound up as traditionalists. They started as traditional and that is how they have remained to this day. They are not traditionalists even though they have been taken to be such, even long before the Motu Proprio. Let us not confuse love for the Tradition with traditionalism. They accept with religious submission of mind and will Vatican II, the Liturgical Reform of Paul VI, and the post-conciliar Magisterium. The hermeneutic of continuity, recommended by Pope Benedict XVI, has been ours ever since our beginning.”</i></p>
<p>20120414</p>	<p>Some Friars, however, contested the aforesaid letter. Therefore, the Pontifical Commission “Ecclesia Dei”, has been consulted which with a Rescript of 14 Apr 2012, Prot. 39/2011L, found conformity between this letter (Prot. 77/2011) and the "mens" of Holy Father Benedict XVI, expressed in the already-mentioned Instruction Universae Ecclesiae, n° 8a (offering to all the faithful the Roman Liturgy in the <i>Usus Antiquior</i>, considered as a precious treasure to be preserved).</p>

Comment I:

Although the aforementioned complain might be known inside the FFI, the laity has to guess on it until Father Volpi mentioned it at 5th December 2013 in 'La Stampa' answering Marco Tossati's article [What did the Franciscans do?](#) a day earlier.

Remark 1: According the protocol number of the Rescript of 14 Apr 2012, as known **Prot. 39/2011L** this matter was already put in the hands of the Pontifical Commission **Ecclesia Dei** before January 2012. Therefore it was and is opportune to commend Father Manelli for waiting until the official response by the aforementioned Commission has been received.

Remark 2: The complaints coming from these (5) Friars seems to be vague and extremely suggestive. What should '*crypto-lefebvrian drift*' and a '*traditionalist drift*' mean.

Many traditional faithful are still asking for reasons, WHY the Franciscans of the Immaculate are treated so harsh – and especially WHY it is strictly forbidden to them (with some rare exceptions) to use the Vetus Ordo. They ask themselves what being “*Crypto-Lefebvrian*” and having a “*Traditionalist-drift*” really mean?

- **What kind of dogmatic faults can be characterized by the terms “*Crypto-Lefebvrian and Traditionalist-drift*”?** If this accusation has a dogmatic character, why was that accusation not directed to His Eminence Cardinal Müller, Prefect of the Congregation of Faith? If this accusation, like the name suggests, is indicating to any heresy by the Priestly Society Saint Pius X (SSPX), what would that heresy be in relation to the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate? **Or does the accusation mean** the acceptance in obedience of the teachings by Pope Benedict XVI on Christmas 2005 about the “*hermeneutics of the re-*

form, renewal in continuity” which is of course critical to the “*hermeneutic of failure*”?

According to the '**Protocol of 5 May 1988**' between the Holy See and the Priestly Society of St. Pius X related to Vatican II and renounced by Mgr. Lefebvre the next day, only the acceptance of the doctrine contained in number 25 of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* on the ecclesial Magisterium and the adherence which is due to that magisterium is obligatory (ad 2). Furthermore with regard to certain points taught by the Second Vatican Council or concerning later reforms of the liturgy and law, and which seem able to be reconciled with the Tradition only with difficulty, we commit ourselves to have a positive attitude of study and of communication with the Holy See, avoiding all polemics. (ad 3). Looking at the Scientific Conferences to which members of the FFI contributed (see below) these studies and teaching can never be described in a negative and derogatory manner as a *traditionalist drift*.

These scientific contributions by the members of the FFI can be found in good accordance with His Holiness Benedict XVI's '*hermeneutics of reform, renewal in continuity*' and as such are an implicit criticism of the '*hermeneutic of the rupture*'.

Therefore this complaint is also false and unfounded.

- **What kind of disobedience can be characterized by this term “*Crypto-Lefebvrian and Traditionalist-drift*”?** If this accusation means a case of disobedience, why are the measures taken so drastic like the prohibition of the use of the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, closing of houses and the seminary as well as requiring oaths on both the Missal of 1970 and Vaticanum II? If this accusation is meant to refer to the disobedience by the illicit ordinations of the Priestly Society Saint Pius X (SSPX), as far as we can see no unlawful ordinations have been taken place in the case of the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate. **Or does the accusation** aim at the acceptance in obedience of the teachings by Pope Benedict XVI given in the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* (2007) by giving a place for both Forms of the Roman Rite for the Friars, individually as well as in convent?

Mgr. Lefebvre and the Priestly Society of St. Pius X have never been accused for dogmatic faults, they never denied the Vaticanum II, even though they had a problem with some parts of the texts itself but above all regarding some interpretations, which principally are open to discussion. It was due to the illicit ordination of Bishops in 1988 that Mgr. Lefebvre and these Bishops were disciplined and punished by excommunication. Prior to this in the seventies Mgr. Lefebvre and the priests were already suspended due to the illicit ordinations of priests. ***Evidently the FFI cannot be accused of the same kind of disciplinary problems!***

However if the complaint of the few dissenting Friars was based on the letter, **Prot. 77/2011** by which the General Secretary, in the name of the General Council, transmitted to all the F.F.I. Marian Houses (Friaries) has sent some indicative (*not preceptive!*) norms regarding the use of the *Vetus Ordo* and the harmony between the *Vetus Ordo* and the *Novus Ordo* in the Communities and the Institute, which is in harmony with the motu proprio *Summorum Pontificum* and the instruction *Universae Ecclesiae* this movement to *Summorum Pontificum*, this acceptance of *Summorum Pontificum* can not be called a *crypto-lefebvrian drift*.

Such a complaint is as false as it is vague, unsubstantiated and accusatory.

Some contributions by the FFI at International Conferences after the publication of *Summorum Pontificum*

20080916	<p>Roman Conference on <i>Summorum Pontificum</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massimiliano Zangheratti, F.I. , Studio Teologico Immacolata Mediatrix (Rome): "Holy Mass: Root of Priestly Holiness " -- • some other speakers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Msgr. Camille Perl, Vice-President of the Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei 2. Don Nicola Bux, Consultor of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith 3. Fr. Joseph Kramer, parish priest of the parish of SS. Trinità dei Pellegrini 4. Prof. Roberto De Mattei, European University (Rome) and Director of the magazine "Radici cristiane"
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	<p>5. Prof. Manfred Hauke, Faculty of Theology (Lugano)</p> <p>6. Fr. Uwe Michael Lang, CO, European University (Rome)</p>
20091016	<p>The 2nd Conference on the Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum of H.H. Pope Benedict XVI: A Great Gift for the Whole Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M.R.P. Stefano M. Manelli, F.I. – Founder and General Minister of the Franciscans of the Immacolata “The Motu proprio Summorum Pontificum for the growth of religious life” • some other speakers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. H.E. Mons. Athanasius Schneider, C.R.S.C. – Auxiliary Bishop of Karaganda 2. Prof. Roberto de Mattei, Professor of Church History and Christianity at the European University of Rome 3. Dom Michael John Zielinski, O.S.B. Oliv. - Abbot - Vice president of the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church and the Pontifical Commission for Sacred Archeology 4. Mons. Prof. Brunero Gherardini, emeritus Ordinary of Ecclesiology and emeritus Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the Lateran Pontifical University - Vatican Canon
20101216	<p>December 16-18th, 2010: a conference took place in Rome at the Istituto Maria SS. Bambina sponsored by the Franciscans of the Immaculate: <i>The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council: A Pastoral Council - Historical, Philosophical and Theological Analysis</i></p> <p>Some speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Msgr. Brunero Gherardini, a Canon of St. Peter's Basilica, professor emeritus of the Pontifical Lateran University, and author of <i>The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council: An Open Debate</i>. He spoke on the topic of "<i>On the Pastoral Nature of Vatican II: An Evaluation</i>" • Professor Roberto De Mattei, author of <i>The Second Vatican Council: An Unwritten Story</i> who spoke on the topic of "<i>The Church in the Twentieth Century: Images of Sudden Change</i>" • Don Nicola Bux, a professor of sacramental theology at the Theological Faculty in Bari (Italy), a consultor of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as well as for the Office of Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff, who spoke at the conference on the matter of "<i>Sacrosanctum Concilium and Its Execution After the Council</i>" • Bishop Athanasius Schneider, the auxiliary bishop of Karaganda, Kazakhstan and author of <i>Dominus Est</i>, who spoke on the topic of "<i>Pastoral Theology: Developments in the Light of Vatican Council II Read Correctly</i>"
20130703	<p>FOTA VI liturgical conference, Cork, Ireland; theme “<i>Sacrosanctum Concilium 1963-2013</i>”, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of the Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Padre Serafino Lanzetta, F.I., Professor of Dogmatic Theology, Theological Institute Maria Mediatrix (Sassoferrato, Italy): <u><i>Sacrosanctum Concilium in the Light of the Liturgical Reform</i></u> • some other speakers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke 2. Sven Conrad FSSP 3. Prof. Dr. Manfred Hauke 4. Prof. Dr. Helmut Hoping

20120705	By protocol number 52741/2012 the Congregation of Institutes of Consecrated Life named Rev Dr Mons. VITO ANGELO TODISCO O.F.M.Cap. as Apostolic Visitor ad inquirendum et referendum for all houses and sodalities of the Congregation of the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate
20121101	<p>Apostolic visitor Rev. Mons. Vito Angelo Todisco O.F.M.Cap. send an questionnaire to the professed FFI members without giving a fixed deadline date for a response:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your opinion of the Superior General's style of government? 2. What is your opinion of the Superior General's decisions in liturgical matters? 3. What is your opinion about the Superior General's decisions regarding the formation of the young religious and the candidates to the priesthood? 4. What is your opinion on the relations between the Superior General and the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate? 5. What is your opinion on the relations between the Superior General and the General Council? 6. What is your opinion regarding the collaboration in the governing of the Institute between the Superior General and the General Council? 7. How often are you in contact with the Superior General and the members of the General Council? 8. Do you consider that the introduction of the Extraordinary Form in the Institute: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. is a good thing? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) b. it helps communion among the members? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) c. it meets the needs of evangelization? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) d. it meets the spiritual needs of contemporary man? YES (because: ..) / NO (because: ..) e. it satisfies the desires of the Superior General? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) f. it is requested by the Second Vatican Council? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) g. it responds to the "mens" of the Holy Father? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) 9. Do you think the introduction of the Extraordinary Form is desired <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. by the Pope? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) b. by the General Chapter? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) c. by the Superior General? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) d. by the General Council? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) e. by the Chapter of your Community? YES (because: ...) / NO (because: ...) 10. Do you think that the introduction of the Extraordinary Form in the Institute suits your spirituality? 11. If you had to choose between the two forms (Ordinary and extraordinary) for all the members of the Institute, which one would you choose and why? 12. In your view, what is the "Body of Government" put in charge by the Constitution of the F.I for the introduction of the Extraordinary form in the Institute? 13. 14. If the Superior General and the General Council, with the "LITURGICAL NORMATIVE FOR THE <i>VETUS ORDO</i>" of the 21st November 2011 had gone beyond what was established by the General Chapter in 2008, in your view, what should the response of the members of the Institute be? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Obey blindly, because..... b. Disobey, because..... c. Retain the Normative not binding, because..... d. Request the extraordinary convocation of a General Chapter, because..... 15a. THE SUPERIOR GENERAL'S STYLE OF GOVERNMENT <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Everything goes fundamentally well

	<p>II. Problems exist resolvable by the Ordinary General Chapter</p> <p>III. Serious problems exist resolvable by an Extraordinary General Chapter</p> <p>IV. Very serious problems exist that require an external Commissioner of the Institute</p> <p>15b THE DECISIONS OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL ON LITURGICAL MATTERS</p> <p>I. Everything goes fundamentally well</p> <p>II. Problems exist resolvable by the Ordinary General Chapter</p> <p>III. Serious problems exist resolvable by an Extraordinary General Chapter</p> <p>IV. Very serious problems exist that require an external Commissioner of the Institute</p> <p>15c. THE DECISIONS OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL IN REFERENCE TO THE FORMATION OF YOUNG RELIGIOUS AND CANDIDATES TO THE PRIESTHOOD</p> <p>I. Everything goes fundamentally well</p> <p>II. Problems exist resolvable by the Ordinary General Chapter</p> <p>III. Serious problems exist resolvable by an Extraordinary General Chapter</p> <p>IV. Very serious problems exist that require an external Commissioner of the Institute</p> <p>15d. THE RELATIONS OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL WITH THE CONGREGATION OF THE FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE</p> <p>I. Everything goes fundamentally well</p> <p>II. Problems exist resolvable by the Ordinary General Chapter</p> <p>III. Serious problems exist resolvable by an Extraordinary General Chapter</p> <p>IV. Very serious problems exist that require an external Commissioner of the Institute</p>
<p>20130529</p>	<p>The General Council and the Procurator of the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate send an appeal to the Congregation of Institutes of Consecrated Life. This appeal is also signed by Father Bruno as member of the General Council and being one of the few friars opposing the free use of the <i>Vetus ordo</i> within the FFI. The following is taken from the appeal:</p> <p>Several months have passed since Msgr. Vito Angelo Todisco started the Apostolic Visitation to our Institute, after the decree of this Congregation (Decree of July 5th 2012). Time is certainly ripe to express our negative considerations regarding the above said visitation that we accepted in spirit of Franciscan deference towards the Ecclesiastical Authority.</p> <p>The most relevant negative points are therefore outlined in the following points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The formation of the Visitor proved to be inadequate in understanding the real problems of the Institute for several reasons: he is not a regular, he is not an expert of liturgy, he is not an expert of administrative right. Furthermore he is longtime friend of some of the “critical” brothers [NOTE by JPO: this is signed by Father Bruno!], sharing with them since longtime their critics to the Founder, thus implying that his judgment could hardly be super partes; 2) The decision to proceed ONLY through a written questionnaire, completely omitting the visitation of the communities, even of the seminaries, despite our invitations. 3) The content of the questionnaire that, beyond the intent to depict a “tendentious” outline of the situation of the Institute, was full of questions not easily understandable by the majority of our brothers. 4) The prohibition to the Superiors to explain the meaning of those questions to the less learned brothers, in order to avoid “any interference” (see the letter of the Apostolic Visitor of Nov. 12th), definitely favored the interference of the critical brothers on them, thus negatively influencing their answers. <p>From all these evidences it is clear that the Apostolic Visitation has not yet been able to pursue</p>

	the objectives set in the decree of appointment of the Apostolic Visitor, who received the duty ad inquirendum et referendum “ <i>above all regarding the status of the visited communities and of the life of fraternal communion... the formation of the young religious and of the candidates to priesthood...</i> ”. All that has not been achieved in primis since there was a complete lack of knowledge of the real situation of our communities, above all of the seminaries. The results of the questionnaire, alone, without verifying that what is written in it actually corresponds to the thoughts of each friar, are unreliable, for the above said reasons.
20130711	On 19 th September 2013 the Congregation of Institutes of Consecrated Life finally presented some results of the questionnaire, especially on question 15.

Comment 2:

As mentioned in the appeal by the FFI the content of the questionnaire that, beyond the intent to depict a “tendentious” outline of the situation of the Institute, was full of questions with implications not easily understandable by the majority of the brothers. And even so, all of the questions are phrased to elicit subjective answers – nothing quantifiable, all expect only opinions.

Question 8, 9 and 10 are in direct opposition to the Motu Proprio **Summorum Pontificum** which obviously is the “mens” of the legislator of this Church Law, pope Benedict XVI. Art. 3 of Summorum Pontificum allows for the possibility for “*communities of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, whether of pontifical or diocesan right, moving to celebrate the conventional or community Mass in their own oratories according to the 1962 edition of the Roman Missal*”. And in fact the **sub-questions 8g and 9a** were already answered by the Pontifical Commission “**Ecclesia Dei**”.

Question 11 and 14 are just suggestive, because this case is not a matter of just an exclusive choice between the two forms (Ordinary and extraordinary) for all the members of the Institute.

Question 12 is not a matter of a subjective view, where an objective and formal administrative path has to go and which has been done well: Yes or No. Therefore this question is suggestive.

Question 15a, b, c & d. Considering the **sub-questions I, II, III and IV** obviously sub-question I (everything goes fundamentally well) is not logical contrary to the sub-questions II, III and IV (... problems exist resolvable by ...). Whatever has been answered concerning the sub-question II, III and IV one cannot conclude anything about the agreement or disagreement by the responder regarding Father Manelli as General Superior, while those who answered Yes on sub-question I are certainly supporting Father Manelli.

The presentation of the data of the questionnaire suggests strongly that these results were manipulated to imply that a large majority of the Friars is opposed the Founder en Superior General Father Manelli and asking for an Apostolic Commissioner. Recently at [a second presentation, 31st January 2014, by Msgr. José Rodríguez Carballo of the Congregation for Religious](#) this suggestion has been repeated.

The results of the two last sub-subquestions were combined, while here the results of the first sub-subquestion were ignored. Also the percentage of total of the chose responding to question is not given.

Therefore taking into account the response on the first sub-subquestions a maximum of only about 45% of the friars as an maximum were in favor for either an “extraordinary General Assembly” **or** an “Apostolic Commissioner”

Furthermore this manipulation shows that only a few Friars were indeed promoting the nominating of an Apostolic Commissioner, while a greater part of these 45% of the Friars were in favor on an extraordinary General Assembly. The most plausible motivation to resort in such manipulation would appear to be the desire to present a false picture of the real situation and need to show cause for the desired action

From above it can be concluded that The report of the Apostolic Visitor leaves open many questions concerning the Visitation:

- none of the houses and seminaries of the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate were visited to verify the complaints;
- a tendentious questionnaire was used, which:

1. evidently ignores the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* and by that the “mens” of the legislator, His Holiness Emeritus Benedictus XVI;
 2. evidently ignores the Prescript of 14 April 2012, *Prot. 39/2011L* by the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*;
 3. evidently ignores the Pope's teaching on the “*hermeneutics of the reform, renewal in continuity*”. Yours as well as the teaching by your predecessor.
- the results of the questionnaire were presented in a manipulative way, by showing only relative frequencies without clearly telling the reader about this fact and without revealing the absolute numbers – thus evoking the impression that more than 70 % of the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate had requested an Apostolic Commissioner while in fact the percentage is far less than 40%. (For further information please see http://www.ecclesiadei.nl/docs/20130919_presentatione_dati_visita_apostolica+english-summary.html)
 - the protest of the FFI against this procedure was ignored by the congregation for the Religious.

Instead of searching for the truth Apostolic Visitor mons. Todisco seems to have created a hammer in the hands of his friends Friars to threaten Father Manelli and their con-friars with the aim of an Apostolic Commissioner as the executor.

20130711	By protocol number 52741/2012 the Congregation of Institutes of Consecrated Life named Father Volpi as Apostolic Commissioner. The same decree include an additional decision by the Holy Father Francis that every religious of the Congregation of the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate is obliged to celebrate the liturgy according to the Ordinary Rite, and that, in the event, the use of the Extraordinary Form (Vetus Ordo) must be explicitly authorized by the competent authorities, for every religious and/or community that requests it. All instructions to the contrary notwithstanding.
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Comment 3:

Evidently the Congregation of Institutes of Consecrated Life has not only negated the appeal by the FFI, but due to the acceptance of mons. Todisco's manipulated report they have also bypassed both the Pontifical Commission “*Ecclesia Dei*”, which was already involved to this matter by writing **Prot. 39/2011L**, as well as the Motu Proprio **Summorum Pontificum** itself, by going directly to the Pope.

The presented results of the questionnaire shows clearly how the Apostolic visitor mons. Todisco has manipulated the results. A manipulation consisting not only of using tendentious questions, but also, presenting the results in a misleading manner by combining results to questions which, from the very text of the question were not intended to be combined – why else ask two questions, rather than one and also by omitting other critical numbers and details, such as how many answers were received to each question – there was no obligation to answer each and every question – and how many members of which the institute actually turned in the questionnaire. Evidently the given data in percentages are at least related to the actually number of the returned questionnaires and certainly not to the number of Friars.

Very likely the number of Friars actually voting for sub-question IV (*Very serious problems exist that require an external Commissioner of the Institute*) was to small, compared to all other sub-question - [probably only the 21 \(5,5%\) Friars who opposed against Father Manelli, as mentioned at the presentation on 31st January 2014-](#) to support a decision for an Apostolic Commissioner.

20130802	<p>Reaction by Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican Press Office, to the press in Vatican Insider (in italian)</p> <p>This article, after reporting the statements of Fr. Lombardi, who takes the same line we already had, contains calumnious statements against the FFI Founder, Fr. Stefano M. Manelli and in regard to the assignment of a Commissioner for the Institute of the Franciscan Fri-</p>
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ars of the Immaculate the Vatican Insider wrote (our bold):

1. "*The decision of Pope Bergoglio—against which some traditionalist groups rose up, and which the religious instead immediately accepted—was motivated by the fact that **the founder and general superior, Fr. Stefano Manelli, had imposed on all the communities of the Franciscans of the Immaculate the exclusive use of the extraordinary form of the liturgy, i.e., the old rite.***"
2. "*It can be adopted as a **proper (therefore exclusive) rite** by the Religious Institutes and monastic communities that **return to communion with Rome after having participated in the Lefebvrian schism**, and which for this reason are subject to the jurisdiction of the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*"*
3. "*The Franciscans of the Immaculate **were founded instead** after the Council, and furthermore a survey among the friars demonstrated that **the majority** of them desire to celebrate the ordinary rite".*

[20130803](#)

Official note by the FFI of 03 Aug 2013: the FFI, still under Father Stefano Manelli, stated a response to the incorrect information given by Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican Press Office and the redaction of the Vatican Insider. The following is taken from this note: :

This article, after reporting the statements of Fr. Lombardi, who takes the same line we already had, contains calumnious statements against our Founder, Father Stefano M. Manelli, statements that we feel the duty to reject. In the same article there is also untrue or imprecise information to which we wish to draw attention.

1. ... **It is our duty to respond, with knowledge and in conscience, that in reality, Fr. Stefano not only has never imposed on all the F.I. communities the use—much less the exclusive use—of the *Vetus Ordo*, but he does not even want it to become the exclusive use, and he has personally given the example, celebrating everywhere according to the one and the other *Ordo*.**

Fr. Stefano Manelli, as Minister General, together with his General Council, legitimately undertook an effort to promote the *Vetus Ordo*, respecting the *Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum* (2007), respecting the decisions of our General Chapter of 2008, and respecting the *Instruction Universae Ecclesiae* (2011).

With a **letter, Prot. 77/2011, dated 21 Nov 2011**, our General Secretary, in the name of our General Council, sent all the F.F.I. Marian Houses (Friaries), some indicative (not preceptive!) norms regarding the use of the *Vetus Ordo* and the harmony between the *Vetus Ordo* and the *Novus Ordo* in our Communities and our Institute.

After this letter, various communities peacefully continued to give pride of place to the *Vetus* or the *Novus Ordo*. So there was no imposition on the part of Fr. Manelli.

Some Friars, however, contested the aforesaid letter. Therefore, we consulted the Pontifical Commission "Ecclesia Dei", which with a **Rescript of 14 Apr 2012, Prot. 39/2011L**, found **conformity** between this letter (**Prot. 77/2011**) and the "**mens**" of Holy Father Benedict XVI, expressed in the already-mentioned *Instruction Universae Ecclesiae*, n° 8a.

2. ... in reality, in the spirit of the *Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum* (n° 3) and the *Instruction Universae Ecclesiae* (n° 8a), the *Vetus Ordo* as a "proper" rite (exclusive or not, but at least having priority), can be adopted also by Religious Communities not dependent upon the Pontifical Commission "Ecclesia Dei" and not coming from the Lefebvrian "schism". Nevertheless, it was never our Founder's intention to arrive at an *exclusive use*
3. ... the fact that we were founded after the Council does not prohibit us F.I.'s from adopting or privileging the *Vetus Ordo*. Furthermore, the *Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum* (published after the Council) is also addressed to the Institutes of Conse-

crated Life (without specification as to the date of foundation), and in addition, in no. 8a of the Instruction *Universae Ecclesiae*, it is specified that the Motu Proprio *Summorum Pontificum* has the aim, first of all, of “**offering to all the faithful the Roman Liturgy in the Usus Antiquior, considered as a precious treasure to be preserved**”. In that “**all the faithful**”, Religious are obviously also included
 ... if the "majority" of the friars [*So far as we are aware, there has not been any survey involving all the members of the Institute. Therefore, survey-based affirmations as to the will of the majority of the friars appear to us to be completely baseless*] prefers to celebrate according to the *Novus Ordo* (Holy Mass and Breviary), it could perfectly well continue to do so, as it has in the past. Furthermore, Fr. Manelli himself principally celebrates the *Novus Ordo* (Holy Mass and Breviary).

Evidently all these lies and misinformations have created a negative and dark cloud around the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate.

We have to realize that the Franciscans will not defend themselves due to their religious vows. They also have not and will not ask others to defend or protect the integrity of their order. If anyone offers help, they will decline. They are praying, suffering and hoping for a good solution. However, as we were advised when seeking counsel from sources in Rome and elsewhere to whom we promised confidentiality, if one is fairly certain that a mother is mistreating her child, treating that child apparently unjustly in a very serious manner, one cannot simply sit by observing and do nothing. Such a non-action would be unworthy for a well formed conscience and the human dignity of the abused as well. We can apply that analogy here, like that child was praying, suffering and hoping for help and a good solution. Therefore we have to help the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate by doing **good works**, which can only lead to that good solution by the help of our Lord. **Let us pray and work.**

While the actions taken with the Franciscan Friars have been very public, the offenses committed to warrant such harsh repercussions have not been publicly revealed. Complaints made internally are seemingly vague and ambiguous. Just at the end of last January the appointed Apostolic Commissioner was forced to clarify that one of the accusations that had been made in regard to the friars had been false. Scandal is being caused among the laity.

Because of all that has transpired that affects both the members of this religious order and the laity whom they serve, our 5 organizations, Pro Missa Tridentina - Germany, Ecclesia Dei Delft - The Netherlands, Vancouver Traditional Mass Society - Canada, Ecclesia Dei Society of New Zealand, and Una Voce Austria, decided after much prayer, making numerous inquiries and seeking counsel in many channels in many channels to respectfully launch a petition to His Holiness, Pope Francis, the most authoritative of all of our spiritual fathers.

It is interesting to note the similarity between this situation and the case of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter that occurred in 1999. There, too, it was a situation of the complaints of a very small number of FSSP priests, but in that instance their desire was to offer what is now called the Ordinary Form of the Mass as well as the Extraordinary Form. This would have transformed the FSSP into a ritual bi-forma (offering both the *Vetus* and *Novus ordo*) priestly fraternity, while one of the Fraternity's main charisms is the exclusive use of the traditional Latin rites.

Similarly in case of the FFI apparently only 5 (=1.4%) Friars, who claimed to be speaking for 21 (=5.5%) of about 386 ordained friars are in opposition to the use of the EF Form of Mass in their communities. The resulting actions taken against and within the order have been very serious, considering this low level of discontent.

Therefore we have to go back in history a bit to fill you in on the details of events. We are of course refer-

ring to the difficulties within the FSSP in 1999. The president, Michael Davies, and available members of the Council had a discussion at that time about how to proceed.

In contrast to what some people stated nowadays, that *"It should be the very central experience of FIUV and particularly its past Presidents, that the FIUV achieved a great deal more.... by private representations at Rome rather than public protests"*, Michael Davies, who as we know was President from 1995 to 2003, arranged an Extraordinary Assembly in Cologne, on the Saturday evening after the *"Una Voce Germany Assembly"*. Here the FIUV board and the Presidents of all associated members or their representatives discussed the attack on the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter and its General Superior, Fr. Josef Bisig FSSP. The question was, do we act (or interfere, as some would say), and if yes, how?

In 1999 we heard *exactly* the same arguments from Rome and the FSSP that we are hearing now concerning the FFI: You may not interfere into that internal problem of the Fraternity (now Friars), and, if you do so, it will make the situation for the Fraternity (now Friars) (more) worse.

Despite these warnings, after an intense discussion of about 4 hours, the Extraordinary Assembly decided to take action. This decision was reached because of the understanding that the attack on the FSSP was a direct attack on the Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei* itself. It was confirmed that Michael Davies' proposal to send petitions to Rome would go forward. Michael, as the President of FIUV, and the board signed the petition. The petition was circulated and many individual members of the laity signed the prepared text petition to be sent on to Rome. It has been directly confirmed to us that this petitioning definitely contributed positively in keeping the Fraternity of St. Peter an exclusively 'Vetus Ordo' Fraternity.

Now, concerning the current case of the FFI, this is not a strictly internal affair of the order, even not as being an internal affair of the religious. And how can any such action will make matters for the Franciscans more worse then it already is. Also concerning that request made on their website as well as the FFI Facebook account we have to consider that these sources are controlled by the Apostolic Commissioner, Fr. Volpi, and his secretary, Fr. Bruno.

Here once again, we, the members of the laity, have a duty and a right given by Canon Law to ask our spiritual fathers, especially our Most Holy Father, Pope Francis, to listen to our plea.

From the analysis above it is evident that the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate are victims of the *'hermeneutic of the rupture,'* which is beating around by such a polemical and aggressive attitude as they already did since the Vatican Council. Calling the acceptance of the motu proprio **Summorum Pontificum** by the large majority of the Institute an *Crypto-lefebvrian drift* is not only using a vague term, it is a false accusation and strongly suggestive. Also calling the acceptance of the *"hermeneutic of the reform, renewal in continuity"* proclaimed by His Holiness Benedict XVI in 2005 and recently confirmed by His Holiness Francis in his letter to Archbishop De Marchetto as being a *traditionalist drift* is a false accusation and extremely incorrect and suggestive.

Therefore what is happening here to the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate is not only based on lies, above all it is injustice and mercifulness. In conscience we may not and can not be silent about this attack on the Truth, Mercy and Justice inside the Church.