

MASS INTENTIONS

[Originally promulgated by Bishop Greteman, October 2, 1978; amended by Bishop Soens on December 13, 1983, August 20, 1996, December 17, 1996; amended by Bishop Nickless on July 1, 2018]

IV.3.19 Rational

The venerable and ancient practice of the faithful making an offering to the priest for the intention of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is guided by ecclesiastical law. Blessed Pope Paul VI wrote “This practice by which the faithful unite themselves more clearly with Christ offering himself as a victim thus deriving more abundant fruits from the sacrifice (of the Mass), has not merely been approved but has been positively encouraged by the Church. It is regarded as a sign of union of the baptized person with Christ and or the faithful with the priest who exercises his ministry for their good” (*Firma in Traditione*, June 15, 1974). It is opportune, therefore, to reiterate the universal norms found in the *Code of Canon Law*, Book IV, Title III, *The Most Holy Eucharist*, and Chapter III, *Offerings Given in the Celebration of Mass*. This reiteration underscores the following further application of these norms in the Diocese of Sioux City.

IV.3.20 Offering for Mass Intentions

The customary Mass Offering of ten dollars [\$10] is binding for the Diocese of Sioux City. All intentions are to be calculated on this basis unless the donor has voluntarily designated a larger offering or is only able to give a smaller amount or no monetary offering [canons 945, §2; 948; 952, §1 and §2].

- a. It is not permissible for a priest to accept more Mass offerings than he can discharge in one calendar year [canon 953]. The ‘calendar year’ begins to run the day the obligation is accepted, unless there is some other lawful stipulation [canon 955, §2].
- b. A pastor of a busy parish may receive more offerings for Mass intentions than can be discharged in one year. In such cases the Mass offerings are to be transferred to priests of proven integrity as soon as possible [canon 955, §1].

IV.3.21 Offering for Mass Intentions

A Priest who celebrates or concelebrates more than one Mass on the same day may apply to each Mass the intention with which an offering was made, subject to the rule that he may retain for himself the offering for only one Mass and diocesan guidelines are to be followed [see paragraph 9 part “d” below] regarding the allocation of all other offerings. The exception being Christmas, when three offerings may be retained; [canon 951, §1 and §2].

IV.3.22 Separate Masses

The norm is that separate Masses are to be applied for intentions for which an individual offering, even if small, has been made and accepted [canon 948]. Accordingly, a priest normally accepts one offering for one definite intention for one Mass. The content of this definite intention may be stipulated for one-person, multiple persons and/or include multiple prayer requests. Normally it is unlawful for a priest to accept multiple offerings for multiple intentions for one Mass.

IV.3.23 Mass for the People

Pastors are strictly obligated to celebrate the *Missa pro populo* (Mass for the people) each Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation, with no monetary offering being taken for that Mass. [canon 534, §1 and §2].

IV.3.24 Mass Offering Fund

Mass Offering funds are to be separately maintained from other parish funds, preferably in a checking account from which the Pastor may draw the appropriate amount on a regular basis.

- a. This account is owned [controlled] by the person of the Pastor, but in the manner of a trust, such that it does not go with the Pastor when he retires or is transferred.

IV.3.25 Mass Offering Register

Pastors are to have a special register in which to accurately note Mass intentions and offerings [canons 955, §3 and §4; 958, §1] and which is to be made available for inspection by the diocesan bishop or his delegate [canon 958, §2].

IV.3.26 The Priest's Intention[s]

The priest celebrant or concelebrant, acting in the person of Christ the Priest, brings the intentions of Christ himself for the whole Church to the celebration of every Mass. While it is commendable for the priest to remember various intentions, these cannot be considered part of the intention of the Mass with the offering attached and which always remains separate and distinct.

IV.3.27 Canonical Requirements

Priests are to observe all other canonical requirements regarding Mass offerings, e.g. avoidance of trafficking [canon 947], numbers of intentions to be accepted [canon 953], Masses without offerings [canon 945, §2], transfer of offerings [canons 954 and 955], and the obligation to fulfill Mass intentions [canons 948 and 949].

IV.2.28 Collective Intentions

By way of exception, a collective intention (i.e. multiple offerings for multiple intentions satisfied in one Mass); [see 'decree on Collective Mass Intentions, Congregation for the Clergy, *Mos Iugiter* 22.II.1991: AAS 83(1991) 443-446] is permitted in the Diocese of Sioux City only under the following conditions:

- a. The people making the offerings must be made aware at the time they make the offering that their Mass intentions will be remembered collectively at one Mass.
- b. They must be informed of the time and place of the Mass.
- c. Collective intentions are not permitted more frequently than twice a week per parish, and the Masses with collective intentions should be consistent from week to week and time of Mass.
- d. The celebrant may retain only the amount of one usual offering (i.e. \$10) in accord with the diocesan custom, [see n. 2 above]. The remaining monetary offerings may be allocated to charitable works such as:
 - i. If the parish supports a school, the stipends may be given to that school to help defray tuition for economically disadvantaged students.
 - ii. If the parish does not support a school, the monetary offerings may be used to support the parish program for Religious Education.

- iii. In consultation with the Parish Pastoral Council, it may be decided to apply these monetary offerings to a fund used to help individuals requesting emergency financial assistance or other charitable works.

IV.3.29 Mass Offerings from Closed or Merged Parishes

Mass Offerings with definite intentions that have been accepted before a merger or the closure/suppression of a Parish, and which are not able to be met by the actual Pastor, Parochial Vicar, or Sacramental assistant (retired priest) of the new or assuming parish are to be immediately sent to the Director of the Office of Worship who is responsible for sending the Mass Offerings with their definite intentions to trusted Priests who are able to fulfill the celebration of Holy Mass for the specified intention.

IV.3.30 Mass Offerings for the Propagation of the Faith

Pastors and Priests with surplus Mass offerings are kindly asked in all instances to contact the Diocesan Office for the Propagation of the Faith before forwarding Mass Offerings to priests otherwise unknown to them.

IV.3.31 Mass Offering for All Souls

On the day of the Commemoration of All Souls (November 2), it is licit for priests to celebrate three Masses. One has a ‘free’ intention and the priest may accept a \$10 Mass Offering; the second is for all of the faithful departed and a Mass Offering may not be accepted; the third is celebrated for the intentions of the Holy Father [Benedict XV, August 10, 1915]. Beyond the \$10 Mass Offering, all other monies provided as All Souls offerings are to be turned over to the parish and allocated following the guidelines of the “collective intentions.” [see IV.2.28.d above].

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