

**Ask a Priest!**  
**July 5, 2021**

***Question: What is a stipend for Mass, or why does one offer money for a Mass?***

**Answer:** A stipend is a gift-offering, given to a priest who celebrates a Mass and offers that sacrifice for a specific, personal intention of the one who requests it. The offering is the person's prayerful participation in that Mass; it's not meant to be a payment. It implies both "thank you" and "I offer myself with that Divine Offering of Jesus" – same as the Offertory at Sunday Masses, except that the stipend usually goes to the priest for his needs. It is not to be confused with "selling-buying a Mass"; and priests have strict limits about receiving any money when offering a sacrament, so as to avoid the potential confusion. The stipend is an offering and there are recommended amounts based on cultural expectations; but the stipend is not necessary.