CALENDAR NOTES

NOV 1
All Saints
- No other Masses may be celebrated on this day, including a Funeral Mass or a Mass in Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed. Consider exposing relics for the veneration of the faithful.

NOV 2
Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed
- The Gloria and the Creed are not said.
- READINGS: Given the number of options, prepare reading selections in advance.
- THREE MASSES: Following the Apostolic Constitution of Pope Benedict XV, Incruentum Altaris Sacrificium, all priests have the privilege of celebrating 3 Masses on this day, with the specific intentions specified. (see Ordo)
- INDULGENCES: from the Manual of Indulgences: A plenary indulgence, applicable only to the souls in purgatory, is granted to the faithful who, on any and each day from November 1 to 8, devoutly visit a cemetery and pray, if only mentally, for the departed; on All Souls’ Day (or, according to the judgment of the ordinary, on the Sunday preceding or following it, or on the solemnity of All Saints), devoutly visit a church or an oratory and recite an Our Father and the Creed.

NOV 9
Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica

NOV 13
Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time.
- WORLD DAY OF THE POOR
  The 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

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THE CHOICE OF THE MASS AND ITS PARTS
PART II

In the previous article, we examined the “Table of Liturgical Days According to Their Order of Precedence” as a resource to help resolve some conflicts when deciding which Mass to choose to celebrate. This further suggested the value of the Ordo as an aid for choosing Mass texts. The Masses chosen through these processes with the help of the Liturgical calendar would be found in the Roman Missal in the sections entitled “Proper of Time,” “Proper of Saints,” “Commons” which would be used as necessary to supply missing proper prayers.

However, the Roman Missal includes further Mass texts to be used on other occasions. These are found in the sections entitled “Ritual Masses,” “Masses for Various Needs and Occasions,” “Votive Masses,” and “Masses for the Dead.” Whereas the use of the first set of sections is governed by the liturgical calendar, the use of the second set of sections is governed by the circumstances, piety, devotion, and sacramental needs of a certain community. Attention to these further helps the priest to determine the foundational criteria in GIRM #352: “the common spiritual good of the People of God.” This article will examine Ritual Masses, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, and Votive Masses.

The question: “When is it appropriate to use one of these Masses?” may be addressed in part by answering: When are these Masses not permitted? We look to the Ordo again as a helpful resource. Next to every daily entry there is usually found either a V1, a V2, or a V3 which helps to indicate the permissibility of one of these kinds of Masses. The key to these symbols is found in the first pages of the Ordo. To summarize the meaning of these indications, we may say whenever one of these is found, a Ritual Mass may be celebrated. However, if there is no V1, V2, or V3 found in the entry of a day, a Ritual Mass may not be celebrated. As for Votive Masses or Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, a lower number implies greater restriction. On a day with V1, the direction or permission of the local ordinary (ie. bishop or vicar general) is required. Days with V2 or V3, no permission is needed, however with V2, it must be deemed to be a case of “serious need or pastoral advantage,” not merely “in favor of the devotion of the people,” as is the case in days with V3.

We may apply these indications to specific cases. Ritual Masses may be celebrated on most days, including the Sundays of Ordinary Time and Christmas. Thus, even at a parish Mass on these Sundays, the Ritual Mass “For the Conferment of Baptism” or “For the Conferment of Confirmation” may be selected when a baptism or confirmation is celebrated within Mass. There are days, including Sundays, when this is not permitted, however. For example, a Mass “For the Celebration of Marriage,” or “For the Ordination of a Priest” could not be celebrated on a solemnity such as January 1 or August 15. Instead, the Solemnity Mass for that day is celebrated and the rite would be included in the appropriate place within the Mass. Note that these Masses may always be celebrated on the evening before a Solemnity or Sunday, unless otherwise impeded. Remember, if
there is no V1, V2, or V3 found in the entry of a day, a Ritual Mass may not be celebrated. One exception to the restriction is the Masses for the Scrutinies which should be celebrated when the Scrutinies for the catechumens are celebrated during the Masses of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent.

As for Votive Masses and Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, we may consider the example of the First Friday Votive Mass for the Sacred Heart. If the first Friday is marked with a V3, the priest is free to celebrate the Votive Mass at his pleasure for the sake of the devotion of the people. If it is marked with a V2, however, there must be a “serious need or pastoral advantage” to supplant the celebration of the liturgical calendar. This might be found in a long-standing and deep devotion of the faithful to the Sacred Heart, for example. If it is a day with a V1, permission is needed from the bishop (or his equal in authority) to celebrate a votive Mass. Such a request may be made directly to the bishop or vicar general via email, for example.

For each of these Masses, there are options for readings found in Volume IV of the Lectionary, but there is also the option to read the (semi-)continuous readings for the Sunday or weekday cycle, which may be more pastorally advantageous in a parochial setting.

The Ordo is a great help in determining the permissibility of celebrating Ritual Masses, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, and Votive Masses. Their appropriateness must be considered in light of pastoral necessity and not merely the preference of the priest. In our next article we will consider Masses for the Dead and the various choices for readings and prayers found therein.

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