

Mass Intentions and Stipends Revisited

Over the past years, there has been much discussion among priests, including the friars, about how Mass intentions and stipends should be handled in the parish. Some priests are opposed to the idea of accepting stipends because it leads to the theological aberration of people thinking that they can “buy a Mass.” Here at St. Francis, years ago, the priests stopped accepting stipends for specific intentions. Instead, people were asked to write intentions in a book and to make a donation if they wished.

Through our local dean, Fr. David Hoefler, Bishop Paprocki has conveyed to us that this practice is not in accord with Canon Law. We have been instructed to handle our Mass intentions and stipends according to the norms of the Church.

Here are some of the appropriate sections of Canon Law which apply to Mass stipends:

Can. 945 §1 In accordance with the approved custom of the Church, any priest who celebrates or concelebrates a Mass may accept an offering to apply the Mass for a specific intention.

Can. 946 The faithful who make an offering so that Mass can be celebrated for their intention, contribute to the good of the Church, and by that offering they share in the Church's concern for the support of its ministers and its activities.

Can. 948 Separate Masses must be applied for the intentions of those for whom an individual offering, even if small, has been made and accepted.

Can. 953 No one may accept more offerings for Masses to be celebrated by himself than he can discharge within a year.

Can. 954 If in certain churches or oratories more Masses are requested than can be celebrated there, these may be celebrated elsewhere, unless the donors have expressly stipulated otherwise.

§4 Each priest must accurately record the Masses which he has accepted to celebrate and those which he has in fact celebrated.

Can. 958 §1 The parish priest, as well as the rector of a church or other pious place in which Mass offerings are usually received, is to have a special book in which he is accurately to record the number, the intention and the offering of the Masses to be celebrated, and the fact of their celebration.

In order to comply with Canon Law, we will take the following steps, effective immediately:

- We will accept Mass stipends for particular intentions. (I am told that the standard stipend for the diocese of Springfield is \$10.) Please note that this is a **recommended** donation but not a required donation. In keeping with Canon 948 above, the priests are charged to offer a Mass even if the donation is smaller than the recommended donation.
- People who wish to offer a stipend for a Mass intention may continue to use the envelopes in the back of the church or they may come to the parish office with their offering.

- As much as possible, we will try to follow the donor's wishes in regard to the date and time when the Mass will be offered. Please note, however, that there will be instances when we cannot completely comply with the donor's wishes.
- Each Sunday and each holy day of obligation, it is required that one of the parish Masses be offered *Pro Populo* (for the people of the parish).
- The intentions that are offered at Mass are intended to be **general** intentions (e.g., for the Church throughout the world) and not personal intentions. Members of the assembly may continue to write intentions in the binder in the rear of church. However, these intentions will no longer be read at Mass. Instead, the book will be brought forward and placed near the altar or ambo before Mass begins.

Sacrament of Anointing

In the biblical letter of St. James, the early Christian Church is exhorted to “call for the leaders of the Church” when one of the members is sick. The leaders are expected to pray over the sick and to anoint them. It was James’ understanding that this prayer and anointing led to the forgiveness of sins and would restore the sick to health.

The Church continues to draw on that belief as it celebrates the Sacrament of Anointing for those who are sick. It is the intention of this sacrament to provide spiritual healing and strength to those who are variously afflicted in body, mind, or spirit. As you know, our various ailments can affect our spiritual and emotional health, our participation in church, our ability to pray, our patience, and many other aspects of life.

This sacrament of spiritual healing is typically not intended for minor problems. Nor is it reserved (as back in the days of “Extreme Unction”) for those who are dying. It is intended for people with a serious chronic or acute condition who wish to share in the healing ministry of the Church.

Who should be anointed? For one thing, the instruction for the Sacrament of Anointing indicates that the elderly have already reached the point where they are eligible for anointing. As always, I leave it to YOU to decide whether or not you fall in that category. I would also recommend that you participate if you have a serious chronic disease (e.g., cancer, asthma, diabetes, addiction, etc.), a serious acute condition (e.g., broken bone), a spiritual ailment (e.g., spiritual “dryness” or chronic lack of faith), or an emotional ailment (e.g., chronic anxiety). Remember, these are just **examples**. Each person must decide whether or not he/she can benefit from the special sacrament. Children are typically not anointed unless they, too, have a serious condition .

We will be celebrating the Sacrament of Anointing on October 18 at 2:00 p.m. in St. Francis of Assisi Church. This date was chosen because it is the feast of St. Luke whom Paul refers to as “our dear physician” in the letter to the Colossians. St. Luke is the patron of physicians and surgeons.

Our next communal anointing is slated for February 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, also designated as a world day of prayer for the sick.

Liturgical Changes

The following changes will be implemented to bring our liturgical practices more in line with the rubrics of the new Roman Missal.

Readers

- Carry the Book of the Gospels in the entrance procession. The Lectionary is never carried in the procession.
- Place the Book of the Gospels on the front of the altar. Do not walk behind the altar.
- If the choir or song leader is not going to sing the Responsorial Psalm, it is read by the reader. There should be a brief pause between the first reading and the psalm. Don't rush!
- After the second reading, place the lectionary on the shelf of the ambo (lectern).
- We will no longer be reading the intentions from the congregation. Instead, the book of intentions will be placed near the ambo or altar.
- Please make sure that you are appropriately dressed to perform a public ministry of the Church.

Musicians

- Whenever the Penitential Act using "I confess" is used, it is followed by the "Lord, Have Mercy"—preferably sung. Please check with the presider before Mass to know which form of the Penitential Act will be used.
- There should be a pause between the first reading and the singing of the Responsorial Psalm.
- There should be a pause between the second reading and the Gospel Acclamation. Please do not start the acclamation until the presider stands.
- Please be aware that the assigned liturgical texts cannot be changed or replaced. This includes the texts of the Responsorial Psalm, service music, and acclamations. If you have any questions, please contact Fr. John.
- The "Lamb of God" should not begin until the presider is at the altar and is ready to break the Bread.
- The norms call for the Communion antiphon/song to begin while the presider is receiving Communion. This can be difficult to implement and requires further discussion. For now, we'll continue as we are.
- Ideally, the Communion song should be so familiar to the congregation that they won't need to carry songbooks in order to participate.
- Please make sure that you are appropriately dressed to perform a public ministry of the Church.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

- Liturgical norms state that the EMHC's are not to come to the altar until after the presider receives Communion. At SFA, this means that the EMHC's should wait in the sacristy.
- At St. Francis, it may be necessary for the lead EMHC for the month to come to the altar to assist with transferring the consecrated Hosts from the ciborium to the Com-

munion bowls. Once the bowls are filled, the EMHC moves to the east side of the altar. All the other EMHC's remain in the sacristy until after the presider receives Communion. The lead EMHC will assist with the cup.

- At the Saturday Vigil Mass and at the Sunday Masses, we would like to add one Host minister and one cup minister to take care of Communion at the chapel.
- The only correct formula for giving Communion is “The Body of Christ” or “The Blood of Christ.”
- After Communion, the EMHC's should consume any of the Precious Blood that is left—provided this can be done safely. Cups and bowls should be taken to the sacristy. The purificators should then be placed over the cups.
- Please do not stack the Communion bowls on top of each other. This helps prevent any particles of the Blessed Sacrament from being lost and prevents the bowls from being damaged.
- Liturgical norms specifically forbid the EMHC's from purifying the Communion vessels. Please leave them for the priest unless otherwise instructed. At SFA, the cups and bowls should be taken to the sacristy. The proper procedure for purifying vessels is 1) use a purificator to brush the particles from the bowls into the chalice, 2) put water into one of the cups and swirl it around to remove any of the Precious Blood, 3) pour the water into the next cup and repeat, and 4) pour the water into the chalice and then consume the water.
- The sacrarium (special sink in the sacristy) is never to be used to dispose of the Precious Blood or any particles of the Body of Christ.
- Please make sure that you are appropriately dressed to perform a public ministry of the Church.

Servers

- The processional cross is to be carried at the beginning and the end of Mass. We will not use the processional cross for the procession with the bread and wine.
- The collection basket is not to be placed near the altar. At St. Francis, one of the ushers will take it to the sacristy. See below.
- At St. Francis, once the altar is prepared, the servers will move together to the front pew on the west side of the center aisle where they will remain until the Sign of Peace. During the Sign of Peace, the servers will return to the sanctuary, share the greeting of peace with the priest, and then stand at their chairs.
- After the presider receives Communion and as the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion come forward, the servers should join them near the altar.
- Please do not wear “flip-flops” to serve.

Ushers

As the bread and wine are brought forward in procession, one of the ushers will come down the west aisle. When the presider receives the collection, he will hand it to the usher. The usher will take the collection to the sacristy. Together, the usher and the sacristan will bag the collection and place it in the safe. The usher returns to his/her place by way of the door near the piano. Note: if the ushers bring up the bread and wine, it is not necessary for another usher to take the collection to the sacristy.