

## Your Guide to the Tridentine Latin Mass



If you are new to the Latin Mass, you may notice the following:

**Language:** The priest prays most of the Mass in Latin, the official language of the Roman Catholic Church. A red booklet missal is provided that contains the prayers of the Mass in both Latin (on the left page) and in English (on the right page) to assist you as you pray the Mass. In addition, a worship aid is distributed each Sunday that gives all the changeable parts of the Mass for that particular Sunday, including the Scripture readings (the Epistle & the Gospel) of the day as well as the Proper (changeable) prayers of the Mass, in both Latin and in English. The priest will always preach his homily in English.

**Priest faces the altar:** The priest faces the tabernacle and the altar as he offers the Mass. Some may, at first, see this as the priest turning his back on the people. A more accurate theology relates, however, that the priest and congregation face the Altar **together** and unite their prayers during Mass. The priest faces the same direction as the people he shepherds and leads the people on their pilgrim journey

---

**Crucifix:** The crucifix behind the altar reminds us that the sacrifice of the cross and the holy sacrifice of the Mass are one and the same sacrifice.

**Silence:** Silence allows us to reflect upon our relationship with God and allows Him to speak to us. People are quiet as they come into the chapel before Mass, to show reverence for the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle and to prepare themselves for the Mass. There are also periods of silence during the Canon of the Mass (the Eucharistic Prayer) while the priest is praying very quietly at the Altar.

### **Following along with the Mass**

As mentioned above, there are red booklet missals that are distributed each Sunday for those who wish to follow along with the text of most of the Mass. In addition, a worship aid is distributed that gives all the changeable parts of the Mass for that particular Sunday, including the Scripture readings (Epistle and Gospel) of the day as well as the Proper prayers of the Mass, in both Latin and in English. Many of the faithful also purchase more complete missals that contain all the texts for the Mass, including the Epistles and Gospels for the entire year.

## What am I supposed to do?

**Standing, sitting, kneeling** : If you are unsure when to stand, sit, or kneel, you may follow the instructions in the red booklet missal. Follow the instructions for High Mass when the Mass is **chanted (sung)**, and follow the instructions for Low Mass when the Mass is **spoken (recited)**. When all else fails, simply follow those around you!

**Responses:** In the traditional Latin Mass, the altar servers say the responses to the priest. The most important form of participation for the congregation is **interior participation**, in which we pay close attention to the Mass and lift up our hearts and minds in prayer. However, if you wish to join in on certain responses and are familiar with the pronunciation of the Latin responses, you may do so where indicated in the red booklet missal or on the postcards at the Latin Mass table in the Narthex

## Holy Communion

At the Tridentine Latin Mass, one receives Holy Communion while kneeling (if you are capable) at the altar rail. At the Tridentine Mass, one receives the Host **on the tongue**, not in the hands. In addition, one does not respond "Amen" to the priest; he will make the "Amen" response on your behalf as you receive Holy Communion.

The Roman Catholic Church permits baptized Catholics who are in a state of grace (that is, those who have confessed all mortal sin to a priest) to receive Communion.



**Fasting** before receiving Communion is an act of penance and causes us to hunger for the Lord. The 1983 Code of Canon law calls for a Eucharistic fast of one hour; as with all Masses in the Ordinary Form, this is what is required for reception of Holy Communion at the Tridentine Mass (the Extraordinary Form). A longer devotional fast is optional, at the discretion of each individual, but it is not required by the Church.

## Dress

We ask everyone-men and women-to please come to Mass dressed modestly:

- We are in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.
- Our clothing should not be distracting to those around us.

While not required, ladies are welcome to wear a head covering or mantilla during Mass. Doing so is a traditional sign of humility and purity before God, though again, it is an optional, personal devotion.