

POLICY No. 25

OFFERINGS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MASSES

1. Term definitions

Mass offerings: a gift freely given by the faithful to a parish for the celebration of Mass for a specific intention.

"Announced" Mass: a Mass that is publicly announced, indicating the place, day and time of celebration, as well as the intention for which it is being offered, and at which there is the participation of the faithful.

Stipend: the amount paid to the celebrant of a Mass.

2. Intent of the directive

To make certain that the intentions of the faithful are duly respected when offerings are made for the celebration of Masses.

To avoid any semblance of trafficking or trading in the distribution of Mass offerings (Canon 947).

To implement CRA rules concerning offerings and honoraria and provide for greater transparency and accountability. Such stipends are to be reported as income and the appropriate deductions, where applicable, are to be made.

3. Policy

- a. 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 (Canon 945, §1).
- b. Where the faithful are informed and accept the policy, an announced parish Mass may be celebrated for more than one intention. However, in such cases, the celebrant only receives the customary stipend.
- c. In the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, offerings for a Mass have a suggested maximum donation of \$15.00. (Appendix VII) The celebrant may celebrate for up to three intentions during one mass. Of these paid intentions, the celebrant receives the stipend for one Mass daily and must remit the bination funds to the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, and all other intentions to The Clergy Benefit Fund of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, under the Multiple Stipend heading. This regulation also applies to parishes served by religious priests. (Appendix VIII)
- d. The stipend for a Mass celebrated privately is retained by the celebrant and is to be reported as income with the appropriate deductions, where applicable, made.

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- e. Mass obligations and their offering must not be retained for more than one year. Any surplus masses obligations must be forwarded to the diocesan financial administration office to distribute them to the parishes, missions or priests (Canon 956).
- f. In the case of a sum of money left in a Last Will and Testament for Masses to be celebrated, without any indication of the number of Masses, the following formula shall apply.
 - 1. No last will and testament shall bind for more than thirty consecutive Masses (based on the age-old custom of the month's mind Mass).
 - 2. If the amount received totals less than the usual Mass offering for thirty (30) Masses, Masses are celebrated according to the usual Mass offerings available.
 - 3. If the amount received totals more than the usual Mass offering for thirty (30) Masses, then the thirty Masses are celebrated. The celebrant receives the customary stipend, the parish or institution which received the bequest retains fifty (50) percent of the surplus and the remaining fifty (50) percent is to be sent to the office of the financial administrator to be put into the appropriate fund.
 - 4. Executors of last wills and testaments are to be informed of this policy before the legacy is accepted. If objections are raised, the chancellor and the diocesan financial administrator are to be consulted.
 - 5. If the number of Masses where a donation accepted is specified, then that number of Masses must be celebrated. Canon 956 is also to be observed.
- g. Parish priests are required to celebrate the "missa pro populo" on Sundays and on other holy days of obligation. A parish priest who is lawfully impeded from this celebration is to have someone else satisfy the obligation on these days or apply it himself on other days (Canon 534, §1). No offering may be received for this Mass, however, in view of the present diocesan legislation, a bination Mass may be used for this purpose.
- h. A visiting priest invited to celebrate a marriage shall receive the mass stipend. Any other expenses are to be assumed by those who invited the celebrant.
- i. On the occasion of a parish concelebration, each concelebrant is entitled to receive one "Community Mass" or "Mass without participation" offering. In the case of a community Mass, (3c) of the policy is to be observed, however, according to Canon 951, §1, a priest who, on the same day, celebrates a second Mass may not accept an offering for that Mass.
- j. See Policy No. 26 "Honorarium for Funerals and Weddings". A distinct policy is in place for the honorarium to be given on the occasion of funerals and weddings.

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- k. The norms relating to Mass offerings of Canons 945-958 are to be observed.
- l. In case of doubt as to the intention of the donors, the chancellor is to be consulted.

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