

Tridentine Community News

January 6, 2008

The Feast of the Epiphany

In many dioceses, the Feast of the Epiphany in the Novus Ordo calendar is transferred to the Sunday between January 2 and January 8. In the Tridentine calendar, however, Epiphany always occurs on its traditional date of January 6, which this year happens to fall on a Sunday. Epiphany is the last day of the Twelve Days of Christmas, and therefore is the day after which many parishes take down their Christmas decorations.

The Tridentine calendar actually views Epiphany as the start of a new Octave, or eight days with a consistent theme. This is seen most vividly in the use of the Preface of the Epiphany through January 13. Presumably because this is considered a joyful season, the Church prohibits the use of Votive Masses for the Dead during throughout Christmastide and the Octave of the Epiphany.

Blessing of Chalk and Epiphany Water

On this Feast of the Epiphany, it is fitting that we discuss the Epiphany tradition of blessing chalk, water, and occasionally incense.

The European custom is then to take the blessed chalk home and use it to write over the door of the house, 20 + C + M + B + 08, where the letters stand for the names of the Magi, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar.

If blessed incense was also distributed, the door of the house is to be incensed at this point.

“Three Kings Water” is blessed, if time allows, with an elaborate ceremony from the *Rituále Románum*. Time limitations may dictate the use of the regular exorcism and blessing of Holy Water. Epiphany Water is then taken home and sprinkled in the rooms of the house as a protection against evil.

Liturgical Kisses

A reader has asked for an explanation of liturgical kisses during the Tridentine Mass.

The rubrics state that an altar server is to kiss an object before handing it to the priest, and after taking an object from the priest. In a typical Sung Mass, these objects include the biretta, or priest’s hat; the cruets; and the thurible.

The rubrics recommend, but do not require, that the hand of the priest be kissed before handing him the kissed object; and after taking an object from him, prior to kissing the object. Nowadays, this is generally only done if the celebrant requests it.

Note that a liturgical kiss, or *óscula*, is not a “smack”, but rather a simple bouncing of the object off the server’s lips. The purpose is to acknowledge to sacredness of objects employed in the Holy Mass.

Also note that objects used, but not handed to the priest, are not kissed. For example, at the Offertory, the servers kiss the cruets of wine and water before handing them to the celebrant, but those same cruets are not kissed after Communion, when the servers pour water and wine over the priest’s fingers, because they do not hand the cruets to him.

The faithful themselves offer a liturgical kiss on Palm Sunday, when kneeling at the Communion Rail to receive a blessed palm; on Good Friday when venerating the Cross; and when venerating relics.



Msgr. Michael Schmitz to Visit Flint

Msgr. R. Michael Schmitz, North American Superior of the Institute of Christ the King, Sovereign Priest, will celebrate a Tridentine Mass at All Saints Church in Flint on Sunday, January 27, 2008, at 4:00 PM. A joint Assumption-St. Josaphat Choir will provide the music. Monsignor will speak at a light lunch which will precede the Mass at noon. The lunch will be held at nearby Holy Redeemer Church, 1227 Bristol Road in Burton, Michigan. All Saints Church is located at G-4063 West Pierson Road, one

block east of I-75.

Tridentine Mass Workshop at the University of Windsor

The Newman Club of the University of Windsor is sponsoring a Workshop on the Extraordinary Form Mass on Saturday, February 9, starting at 9:00 AM. The morning will begin with a presentation on the history and format of the Mass and its accompanying music, along with a discussion of our Holy Father’s recent Motu Proprio, *Summórum Pontíficum*. A special Tridentine Sung Mass (Solemn Missa Cantata) will follow at neighboring Assumption Church at 10:45 AM. If you are new to the Tridentine Mass, or want to gain a better understanding of this historic liturgy, this workshop is meant for you.

All are welcome to attend. Admission is \$10 for adults; students and children under 18 are free. Refreshments will be served starting at 8:30 AM. The workshop will be held in the Ambassador Auditorium on the second floor of the CAW Student Centre, located behind Assumption Church. Free parking is available in the lot adjacent to Assumption Church; tell the gate attendant that you are attending the Latin Mass Conference. For further information, e-mail the address at the bottom of this page.