

# Tridentine Community News

October 30, 2011

## *The Masses of All Souls Day*

For the fourth year in a row, we will be holding a special All Souls Day evening of three Masses. This year's event will take place at St. Josaphat Church. Today we are running an updated version of an explanatory column which first ran in 2008.

Four Low Masses, simultaneously celebrated at each of the four side altars of the church, will begin at 6:00 PM. Then, at 7:00 PM, a Solemn High Mass with Deacon and Subdeacon will be celebrated at the high altar, to be followed by Absolution at the Catafalque, in commemoration of all of the faithful departed.

## *Bination & Trination*

Under normal circumstances, Monday through Saturday, a priest is permitted to celebrate no more than two Holy Masses. The celebration of two Masses on the same day is called "bination." On Sundays and Holy Days, a priest may celebrate three Masses ("trination") if he has the permission of his bishop or because of necessity, which is increasingly become the norm in these days of scarcity of priests.

As with many other laws of the Church, this limitation makes common sense. Priests should celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with attentiveness and devotion. The more Masses that a priest must say on the same day, the greater the possibility that he may lose focus and concentration. Holy Mass must not be celebrated distractedly, absent-mindedly, or in a bored fashion.

All Souls Day is the only non-Sunday/Holy Day in the Church Year on which a priest is permitted to celebrate three Masses. This permission is a vivid symbol by which Holy Mother Church encourages us to pray for the Souls in Purgatory. The Tridentine Missal contains three distinct sets of Mass Propers to be celebrated, should a priest be able to celebrate all three. Note that no matter how many Masses are celebrated, the faithful may receive Holy Communion at no more than two Masses per day.

Our own situation is somewhat nuanced: Three priests will celebrate their Low Mass as the First Mass of All Souls Day, as that will be the only Mass he celebrates that day. Per the rubrics, one priest will celebrate his Low Mass as the Second Mass of All Souls Day, then he will celebrate the Solemn High Mass as the First Mass of All Souls Day, as the Sung Mass of the day must be the First Mass ("First" and "Second" referring to the Mass Propers set, not the sequence in which the Masses are said). The celebrant of the Solemn High Mass will binate, while the priests, who serve as Deacon and Subdeacon at the Solemn High Mass, will not binate, because the Deacon and Subdeacon at a Solemn High Mass are not concelebrants. Indeed, they do not need to be priests at all. Thus, we will have five Masses on All Souls Day, but we will not be using all three sets of Mass Propers unless we happen

to have a trinating priest, always a possibility in these post-*Summorum Pontificum* days.

## *Side Altars*

Many if not most churches built prior to 1965 incorporated one or more side altars. We are fortunate that our churches have several. Today, these altars serve mostly devotional purposes, in St. Josaphat's case as shrines to our Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, St. Casimir, and St. Francis d'Assisi. But they had and still have a primary purpose: To host the celebration of Holy Mass.

Mass may only be celebrated on an altar containing consecrated relics. Those relics are contained within an altar stone, placed in the middle of the altar. In fact, the altar stone itself is actually the "altar", whereas the table surrounding it is properly termed the "*mensa*." All of our side altars contain altar stones.

Each side altar also contains a functional tabernacle. The purpose of these tabernacles is not to serve as a primary repository for the Blessed Sacrament; that function is reserved for the main tabernacle on the high altar. Rather, these tabernacles can temporarily hold a ciborium with Hosts consecrated at the Mass celebrated at that altar until those Hosts can later be transferred to the main tabernacle; can contain pre-consecrated Hosts to be distributed at a Mass celebrated at that altar; can contain pre-consecrated Hosts needed for distribution at major event Masses that fill the church; and can serve as temporary repositories

when the high altar tabernacle must be kept empty, such as during a construction project or on Good Friday.

Every priest should celebrate one Mass per day. In the era when there were multiple priests assigned to a parish, and the parish may only have had one public Mass per weekday, the side altars were the places where the other priests in the parish would celebrate their daily Masses, often at the same time as Mass was being celebrated at the high altar. Nowadays, one only generally sees this happening at churches where there are many priests, such as St. Peter's Basilica in Rome; the Brompton Oratory in London, England; and at liturgical conferences.

## *Tridentine Masses This Coming Week*

**Mon. 10/31 7:00 PM:** Low Mass at *St. Josaphat* (Feria – Celebrant may choose a Votive Mass)

**Tue. 11/01 7:00 PM:** High Mass at *both Assumption-Windsor and St. Josaphat* (All Saints Day)

**Wed. 11/02 6:00 PM:** Masses at *St. Josaphat* (All Souls Day: Low Masses at Side Altars at 6:00 PM; Solemn High Mass at High Altar at 7:00 PM, followed by Absolution at the Catafalque)

**Sun. 11/06 Noon:** High Mass at *St. Albertus* (21<sup>st</sup> Sunday After Pentecost – the last Tridentine Mass at St. Albertus for 2011)

