

Tridentine Community News

January 22, 2012 – The Third Sunday After Epiphany

Next Tridentine Mass at Ss. Peter & Paul West Side

One week after the news that St. Hyacinth Church has decided to hold an additional Mass in the Extraordinary Form, Ss. Peter & Paul (west side), Detroit has announced that it will hold another Tridentine High Mass at 12:15 PM on Sunday, March 18, the Fourth Sunday of Lent (Lætáre Sunday). As with St. Hyacinth, your support of the first Mass there in December demonstrated that there is sufficient interest to continue scheduling Tridentine Masses. Additional Masses may be scheduled in the future if demand continues.

We ask your prayers for, and words of thanks to, the priests and people of Ss. Peter & Paul, St. Hyacinth, St. Albertus, and our own St. Joseph and Sweetest Heart of Mary, for hosting these periodic Masses. They are in the vanguard of the growing presence of the Extraordinary Form in ordinary parish life.

“Commemoration” of the Baptism of the Lord

A reader asked why the Feast on January 13 is entitled the “Commemoration” of the Baptism of the Lord, rather than just “The Baptism of the Lord”. Two observations might offer some insight:

First, the Proper Antiphons and Epistle of the Mass are the same as those of the Feast of the Epiphany. The *Liber Usualis*, the book of chants used by the cantor at the Tridentine Mass, does not even have an entry for the Mass of the Commemoration of the Baptism of the Lord; it is presumed that the user knows to turn to the Mass of the Epiphany. The Orations and Gospel of the Mass are those of the Mass of the Octave of the Epiphany, which was removed from the Calendar by Pope Pius XII as part of the 1955 revisions to the Missal; clearly the Epiphany remains the dominant theme. It would therefore not seem “proper”, as it were, to represent the Propers of this Mass as being something unique unto themselves. In effect, this is a commemoration of the historical event of the Baptism of the Lord during a partially repeated Mass of the Epiphany of the Lord.

Second, the Baptism of the Lord, along with the Wedding Feast at Cana, are actually incorporated into the Propers of the Second Vespers of Epiphany. These plus the visitation of the Magi provide the three main themes of the Feast of the Epiphany. This is reflected in the English Epiphany hymn, *Songs of Thankfulness and Praise*, whose lyrics address all three events. There does not seem to be a reason to separate entirely a concept that is already a part of the main Feast.

This scenario is also a reminder that there is more to the Propers of a given Feast than just those Propers used at Holy Mass. We must remember that the Divine Office contains its own Propers which ought to be considered when reflecting upon the theme of a particular Feast.

Titles Assigned to Saints

Every Saint in the calendar is assigned one or more titles. These titles are most frequently found in missals and listings of weekday Masses. For example, “St. John Chrysostom, Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor”. Let’s explore what these titles mean:

Bishop: Self-explanatory

Confessor [of the Faith]: A male champion of the Faith who has not been martyred. Effectively the catch-all term for male Saints not classified by another title.

Doctor [of the Church]: One who has made an important contribution to theology or doctrine

Holy Abbot: Superior of a monastery

Holy Woman: A female champion of the Faith. Can be used as a catch-all in the absence of another title.

Martyr: One who died for the Faith

Pope: Self-explanatory

Virgin: Only used for female Saints

The Propers (Readings, Orations [prayers], and Antiphons) for a given Saint’s Mass can range from being entirely unique, to being entirely generic, to being a mixture of unique and generic components.

The generic parts are taken from the Commons Masses. There are Commons Mass Propers for, for example, the “Common of a Martyr Bishop” the “Common of a Martyr Not a Bishop”, and the “Commons of Many Martyrs Not Bishops”. There are also Commons for the Feasts of the Blessed Virgin and for the Dedication of a Church. Some of the Commons are subdivided into ones to be used during certain liturgical seasons, such as “Common of a Martyr Not a Bishop – Outside Paschal Time”. Many Saints’ Feast Masses contain unique Collects or Readings but use the remainder of the Commons’ Propers. (Confused yet? We are.) Fortunately, no one needs to understand all of this fully, because hand missals and altar missals contain clear directions as to which parts of which Commons need to be used for a particular Feast.

Some Saints are given additional titles such as Widow, Priest, or Hermit, but those titles do not refer to specific Common Masses.

Tridentine Masses This Coming Week

Mon. 01/23 7:00 PM: Low Mass at *St. Josaphat* ([Mandated] Votive Mass for Peace)

Tue. 01/24 7:00 PM: Low Mass at *Assumption-Windsor* (St. Timothy, Bishop & Martyr)