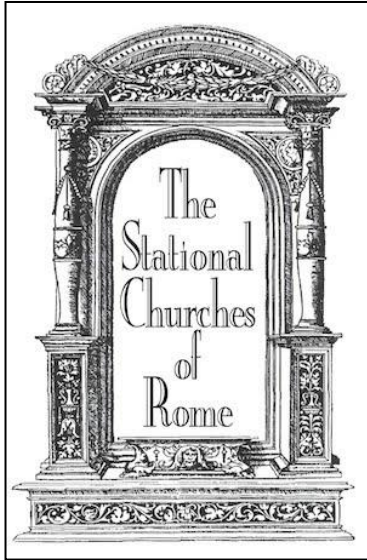


Tridentine Community News

March 31, 2019 – Fourth Sunday of Lent

The Stational Churches of Rome

You may have noticed in liturgical calendars or in hand missals that every day in Lent and the Octave of Easter is assigned a “station”, a church in Rome. For example, the church assigned to the Fourth Sunday of Lent is the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem (in Rome despite the name).



In the first centuries of the Church, the Bishop’s liturgy was considered the most significant in the diocese. The Bishop made his way to each of the stational churches on the set days. After evolving over preceding centuries, a standardized list of Rome’s stational churches was published by Pope St. Gregory the Great in the sixth century. In the ninth century, Pope Leo III expanded the list to comprise 94 churches in all, spread over 92 days, though the ones designated for Lent and Easter remain the best-known.

Today, the stational churches present an opportunity for a Lenten pilgrimage. On its designated day, each stational church offers a procession, praying of the Litany of the Saints, and veneration of relics. While we are not aware of a published listing of the times of these services, the Pontifical North American College [Seminary] in Rome offers Mass in English at each of the stational churches each morning; a schedule is published at: <http://www.pnac.org/station-churches/the-roman-station-liturgy/>

The Church enriches pilgrimages to the stational churches as follows: “...a plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful who assist in the sacred functions held in any stational church on its designated day; if they merely visit the church devoutly, the indulgence will be partial.” [Excerpt from the 2006 Manual of Indulgences]

For people in our era, the stational churches remind us of how many significant and truly historic churches there are in the Eternal City. The depth and commitment of our ancestors’ faith and the Communion of the Saints are made vivid when one participates in ancient devotions and customs in these edifices.

A more elaborate description of the stational churches is found in an article by Fr. Scott Haynes of Chicago’s St. John Cantius Church: <https://adoremus.org/2009/03/15/roman-stational-churches/>. The tradition is explained in detail in a book entitled, fittingly enough, *The Stational Churches of Rome*, by Fr. Frank Phillips, C.R., and available at: <https://www.birettabooks.com/for-the-faithful/stational-churches-of-rome/>.

The complete list of stational churches, with photos, is available at: <http://www.frcoalter.com/pics/station-churches/index.html>

Veiling of Statues and Images in Passiontide

Some churches follow the laudable custom of placing violet veils over the (reachable) statues, crucifixes, and paintings in the church from Passion Sunday through the Easter Vigil [photo below of Old St. Mary’s, Cincinnati, Ohio]. In the Tridentine calendar, Passion Sunday is one week before Palm Sunday, thus the veiling persists for almost two weeks.



This veiling represents our Lord hiding Himself away as the crowds cast stones at Him (Gospel of Passion Sunday), and it prepares us for the Sacred Triduum, when He was taken away from us. It would not be befitting to let a statue or image of a saint eclipse our hidden Lord during this period, so those sacred images are covered as well. For the same reason, Psalm 42, the *Júdica me*, is omitted from the Prayers at the Foot of the Altar at the beginning of Mass during this period. Holy Mother Church wants us to miss something from the Liturgy while our Lord’s Divinity was hidden during His Passion.

Technically, such veiling is required in the Extraordinary Form, while optional in the Ordinary Form. Modern day practicalities and politics do not always permit this in parishes that also host the Ordinary Form, nor are the requisite veils always, or all, available. In addition, there is a limit to what is reasonable to set up before, and take down after, every Tridentine Mass.

Tridentine Masses This Coming Week

Tue. 04/02 7:00 PM: Low Mass at *Holy Name of Mary, Windsor* (Tuesday in the Fourth Week of Lent)

Fri. 04/05 7:00 PM: High Mass at *Old St. Mary’s* (Friday in the Fourth Week of Lent) – Devotions to the Sacred Heart precede Mass. Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament follows Mass. Reception in the social hall afterwards.

Sat. 04/06 8:30 AM: Low Mass at *Miles Christi* (Saturday in the Fourth Week of Lent)