

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS

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As most of you have probably heard, the Extraordinary Form of the Mass (Latin Mass) will be offered here at St. Josephs beginning in September. I would like to take the opportunity and explain the differences in the two forms of the Mass and provide some basic catechesis on the Latin Mass. I will do this periodically between now and September, and possibly beyond. My hope is to eliminate any confusion and to help you become comfortable and interested in attending the Latin Mass if you choose.

How do I refer to the Mass?

- The form of the Mass before the Council of Vatican II in the 1960's is referred to as any of the following: Traditional Latin Mass (TLM), the Extraordinary form of the Mass, the Tridentine Mass, or the Old Mass.
- The form of the Mass instituted by Pope Paul VI as a result of Vatican II is referred to as any of the following: The Novus Ordo (the New Mass), the Ordinary Form of the Mass, or the Mass of Paul VI.

Differences between Latin Masses: On Sunday's, there would only be one High Mass, usually the most attended Mass of the day. All other masses would be a Low Mass. Solemn High Masses are usually reserved for the more festive liturgical feasts.

- **Solemn High Mass:** A priest is assisted by a deacon and a subdeacon. Certain prayers and parts of the Mass are chanted, either by the priest or the deacon and subdeacon. The choir sings at this Mass, singing the Gloria, Creed, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei, as well as the antiphons for the Mass.
- **High Mass:** Commonly referred to as a Sung Mass. Like the Solemn High Mass, everything is chanted, but since there is no deacon or subdeacon, the priest chants everything. The choir sings at this Mass as they do in the Solemn High Mass.
- **Low Mass:** This is the simplest form of the Latin Mass, there is no deacon, subdeacon, or chanting by the priest. There is no choir for this Mass, everything is recited.

*The plan is for us to offer two weekday Masses in the Extraordinary Form, here at St. Josephs. This would begin in September and the Masses would be Low Masses, except for when Solemnities fall on those days; in this case they would be High Masses.

The current custom for the weekends here in Wichita, is every Sunday is a High (Sung) Mass, except the 2nd Sunday of the month is a Low Mass.

Attending the Latin Mass

- Unlike the New Mass, where external and active participation seems required on the part of the laity, in the Latin Mass the altar servers represent the congregation and respond to the priest on the congregation's behalf. As a result, the congregation does not respond vocally to the priest in the Latin Mass. The Church has always encouraged *actual* participation which is different than *active* participation. The focus should be on one's interior disposition, interiorly participating, assenting, and responding to the worship of the Mass.
 - In the Latin Mass, the more active participation happens when the congregation sings along with the choir and or follows along in their hand missal.