

ARTICLES ON MISSA PRO POPULO | MASS FOR THE PEOPLE



Article: Pro Populo | June 16, 2013

by Father Michael from St. Catherine of Siena Parish in West Simsbury, CT

You might have noticed that listed in the bulletin, in the Mass Intention announcements, the term *Pro Populo* as the intention for a particular Mass. The term *Pro Populo* in Latin means “For the People” and Canon Law, the code of law which governs the Catholic Church, calls for the pastor of a parish to celebrate one Mass each week for the intention of the parishioners. This is an ancient tradition of the Church and of the priesthood, which is required to pray for the people in their charge. The *Pro Populo* Mass may be celebrated on the weekend or the weekday. The intention for a *Pro Populo* Mass can be for the “health of parishioners” or “for their happy marriages or for struggling marriages,” it may be for “those parishioners who have died or for a deceased family member,” for “their children in need” or for any particular intention.

Along with the *Pro Populo* Mass, a priest may also offer his daily breviary (from Latin *brevis*, 'short' or 'concise') is a liturgical book of the Latin liturgical rites of the Catholic Church containing the public or canonical prayers, hymns, the Psalms, readings, and notations for everyday use, especially by bishops, priests, and deacons in the Divine Office (i.e., at the canonical hours or Liturgy of the Hours, the Christians' daily prayer). These daily prayers of the Church which priests and religious (sisters and brothers) are required to pray each day, may also be offered for a host of reasons. I offer my morning prayers and Divine Office for the health of my parishioners and I offer Night Prayer for the repose of the souls of deceased parishioners and family members. The Church maintains that we are called to “pray unceasingly” and as a Church we do that by the public and private worship of the priests, religious, deacons and the laity who lift up their voices in prayer for the common good.

What Makes a Mass intention and who can offer them? The holy sacrifice of the Mass may be offered for any noble reason—for the remembrance of a departed loved one, for one’s good health, for someone undergoing a medical procedure, for an individual who is suffering a trial or tribulation in life, or as a birthday remembrance. Intentions may be announced to the public or be unannounced, simply listed as a ‘special intention.’ Whatever the reason, the Mass is offered for the praise and glory of God and in worshipping the Lord, we ask Him to be

with us in our need and to answer the prayer according to His Will. Mass intentions are schedule[d] through the parish office [...]

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Article: Missa Pro Populo | 2016

By the Diocese of Marquette

Recently, questions have been raised regarding the requirements of canon 534.

Can. 534 §1. After a pastor has taken possession of his parish, he is obliged to apply a Mass for the people entrusted to him on each Sunday and holy day of obligation in his diocese. If he is legitimately impeded from this celebration, however, he is to apply it on the same days through another or on other days himself.

§2. A pastor who has the care of several parishes is bound to apply only one Mass for the entire people entrusted to him on the days mentioned in §1.

§3. A pastor who has not satisfied the obligation mentioned in §§1 and 2 is to apply as soon as possible as many Masses for the people as he has omitted.

Every pastor is required to offer the Mass *pro populo*. For priests who have the care of several parishes there only needs to be one Mass for all the parishes.

The Mass *pro populo* should be listed in the bulletin as either “*pro populo*,” or “for the People of the Parish (Parishes if more than one parish).” One could also write out the names of the parish or parishes.

Parochial Administrators and Priest Moderators are also required to offer the Mass *pro populo* in accordance with cann. 540 §1 and 517 §2.

The Mass *pro populo* is not to be combined with other intentions. It is not required that the Mass *pro populo* be celebrated in parish church, for example if a pastor is on a scheduled vacation away from his parish he could celebrate the Mass *pro populo* at another location.

As is stated in can. 534 §1 if a legitimate reason prevents the pastor from this obligation he is to apply it on the same days through another or on other day himself.

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