

A note on the CDF decrees *Cum sanctissima* and *Quo magis*, issued 25th March 2020

Optional Masses and offices

The decree *Cum Sanctissima* introduces a new sub-category of 3rd-Class feasts, which are listed in this Ordo as ‘III cl (Priv.)’—i.e. ‘privileged third-class feasts’. This decree creates new rules which I summarize under the following three headings:

The celebration of third class feasts in Lent

- 1 The Mass and office of privileged third-class feasts may (optionally) be celebrated on ferias of the third class within Lent and Passiontide, provided that a privileged commemoration of the feria is kept. (That is, the feria should be commemorated at all Masses, and at lauds and vespers).

The celebration of votive Masses and offices of the day’s saints on 3rd-class (and 4th-class) days.

- 2 On third-class vigils, on non-privileged third-class feasts, and on fourth-class days, the Mass of any saint inscribed in the Martyrology for that day—even one inscribed after 1962—may be celebrated as a votive ‘Festive Mass’ (*Rubrics* 302f). (That is, the Mass and office may be celebrated as if they were of a 3rd-class feast, with Gloria but no Creed).
- 3 If such a votive Mass is celebrated, the Divine Office may also be of the saint, in which case it is celebrated as an ‘Ordinary’ office.
- 4 If such a votive Mass (and optionally, office) is said on a 3rd-class day of the calendar, there should be an ‘ordinary’ commemoration of the omitted celebration. This means that the omitted saint(s), blessed(s), or vigil should be commemorated at low Mass (and at lauds). Whether the day of the calendar is of the 3rd or 4th class, its own commemorations should also be kept in such a votive Mass, provided that the total number of commemorations not exceed two.
- 5 Rules 2 and 3 do not apply where the celebration of a votive Mass would prevent the fulfilment of an obligation of a conventual Mass, or when the Mass of the rogations is to be said on the days of the litanies. (See *Rubrics* 304b).

The celebration of votive Masses and commemorations of new saints generally

- 6 On all days of the 3rd or 4th class, an ordinary commemoration of any saint or mystery may be made *ad libitum* at Mass on the day on which it is inscribed in a proper of saints ‘for certain places’, or in a new supplement, provided that it does not take the total number of commemorations celebrated above two.
- 7 Additionally, Masses of saints inscribed in the Martyrology after 1962 may be celebrated as votive Masses (in accordance with the pre-existing rubrics on votive Masses).

- 8 It falls to the heads of religious houses to decide how to apply these provisions to the celebration of conventual Mass, and to the choral or communal celebration of the Divine Office.

These rules create two oddities. First: a votive ‘Festive Mass’ of a saint (or group of saints) in the day’s martyrology may now be said on any non-privileged 3rd-class feast day within Advent, whereas such a Mass cannot be said on a 3rd-class feria of Advent—even though 3rd-class ferias of Advent rank lower than 3rd-class feasts. Second: local 3rd-class feasts continue to outrank universal 3rd-class feasts, even privileged ones. Hence when a local 3rd-class feast falls on the same day as, and outranks, a privileged (universal) 3rd-class feast, rules 2-7 apply locally.

Note furthermore that, even according to the original 1962 rubrics, the Mass of a third-class feast that is displaced by a higher-ranking 3rd-class feast, may optionally be said instead of the Mass of the higher-ranking feast. (See *Rubrics* 302f).

Optional prefaces

The decree *Quo magis* introduces seven new optional prefaces:

- **The Preface of Martyrs** may be said on the feast of any martyr who does not have a proper preface.
- **The Preface of the Dedication of a Church** may be said at any Mass of the dedication of a church (whether a Mass of actual dedication or Mass of the anniversary of a dedication), except the Mass of the dedication of St Mary of the Snows, and the Mass of dedication of St Michael the Archangel.
- **The Preface of All Saints and of Patron Saints** may be said on festive and votive Masses of All Saints, and on festive and votive Masses of primary and secondary patrons, and also on Masses of the titular saint of the church or oratory; but never on Masses of angels, or on Masses of saints that have a proper preface.
- **The Preface of the Most Holy Sacrament** may be said at the Masses of the feast of Corpus Christi, at votive Masses of the most holy sacrament, and at votive Masses of Our Lord Jesus Christ Eternal High Priest.
- **The Nuptial Preface** may be said on Masses ‘For Bride and Bridegroom’ (‘Pro Sponsis’)
- **The Preface of the Angels** may be said on Masses of angels and on the feast of the dedication of St Michael the Archangel on the 29th September.
- **The Preface of Saint John the Baptist** may be said on festive and votive Masses of St John the Baptist.

The official rubrics for these new prefaces seem to imply that it is possible for the ‘Preface of Martyrs’ and the ‘Preface of All Saints and Patron Saints’ *both* to be options on certain days. The compiler of this Ordo has assumed that this is indeed the case.