

REQUIEM LOW MASS

The particular rubrics for the Requiem Mass reflect in several ways the ancient Roman Mass before certain Gallicanizations¹ were introduced. Other changes are affected by the omission of signs of joy, and the general principle that all blessings are reserved to the deceased.

- A. Interwoven into the beautiful and spiritually consoling Requiem Rite is the principle that all blessings are reserved for the deceased soul for whose repose the Mass is being celebrated. This principle is put into action through the omission of these blessings:
- holy water is not taken before processing into the sanctuary.
 - the cross is not signed at the beginning of the Introit.²
 - C does not kiss the missal³ after reading the Gospel.⁴
 - during the Offertory, the water is not blessed before pouring some in the chalice.⁵
 - the Last Blessing is not given.
- B. Also, in the spirit of mourning, signs of joy are omitted, hence:
- All *solita oscula* not ritualistically essential⁶ are omitted, namely:
 - i. when giving and receiving the biretta.
 - ii. when presenting and receiving the cruets at the Offertory.
 - Also absent from the Requiem Mass are all *Gloria Patris*, namely during the Introit and *Lavabo*.
 - The Preparatory Prayers are said in an abbreviated form:
 - i. Psalm 42 (*Judica me*) is entirely omitted; consequently the prayers begin with the cross and then “*Adjutorium nostrum...*” is immediately said by C.
 - ii. then the Preparatory Prayers are continued as usual.
- C. The Sequence, *Dies irae* is said after the Gradual and Tract. Due to the length of the Sequence, the acolytes should know the cue at which to rise after the reading of the Epistle (i.e., “*Qui Mariam absolvisti*”). Also, during the *Dies irae*, the acolytes bow twice for the Holy Name.
- D. During the *Agnus Dei*, the acolytes do not strike their breasts, as the clause is changed to “*dona eis requiem*”.
- E. “*Ite, missa est*” is replaced with “*Requiescant in pace*” to which the response is “*Amen*.”

SERVING A REQUIEM LOW MASS

A Low Mass of Requiem is served as a usual Low Mass with the following cited exceptions.

PROCESSIONAL

- upon departing the sacristy, the acolytes do not take holy water.
- upon arriving at the foot, AcI does not give the *solita oscula* when taking the biretta.

PREPARATORY PRAYERS

- during the Preparatory Prayers, the acolytes sign themselves in unison with C and give the response for “*Adjutorium nostrum...*”
- C says his *Confiteor* with the acolytes returning the usual responses, starting with the *Misereatur*.

DURING THE INTROIT

- the acolytes do not sign themselves at the beginning of the Introit while C signs the missal; the *Gloria Patri* is omitted.

AFTER THE EPISTLE

- After the acolytes say “*Deo gratias*” to the conclusion of the Epistle, they do not stand immediately that Ac2 may retrieve the missal. Rather, they wait until C has said the Gradual, then during the Sequence, *Dies irae*, they stand when C says, “*Qui Mariam absolvisti*.”⁷ Ac2 then performs his actions alone as usual.
- during the remainder of the *Dies irae*, while the acolytes are standing, when C says the Holy Name, both turn towards the tabernacle and bow in unison with C.

¹ I.e., those rubrical importations from the Gallican Rite which in turn were probably derived from the Byzantine Rite.

² C signs the missal with a large Greek cross instead of himself.

³ I.e., the Gospel's pericope (the title or introduction).

⁴ An action which does not affect the duties of the acolytes.

⁵ Again, another action which does not affect the acolytes. This omission is made because the water represents Church Militant and its blessing symbolizes the merits that the saints on earth can obtain. A deceased soul though belongs to Church Suffering and thus cannot obtain further merits.

⁶ This embodies all of the *solita oscula* the servers would normally give.

⁷ Here “*Mariam*” refers to Mary Magdalene: “*Who did absolve Mary*”, hence no bow is made for this.

DURING THE OFFERTORY

-the acolytes perform the Offertory actions as usual, *except* the cruets are not kissed (and neither is the water blessed by C).

DURING THE AGNUS DEI

-while C says the *Agnus Dei*, the acolytes bow as usual, but they do not strike their breasts as the clause is "*dona eis requiem.*"⁸

AT THE END OF MASS

At the end of Mass, where "*Ite, missa est*" would normally be said, C will say instead, "*Requiescant in pace,*" to which the acolytes reply, "*Amen.*"

⁸ I.e., "*grant him rest*" and not "*have mercy on us.*"