

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOUT PRESIDING AT MORE THAN ONE MASS ON THE SAME DAY (Based on 7/1/10 Memo to Pastors)

**Q: What is standard procedure for sending the additional stipends to the bishop? How often is it usually done? Monthly? Annually?**

A: Canon 951, §1 permits priests to keep one Mass stipend per day [except for Christmas, when he can accept the stipends for up to three Masses]. Additional stipends are to be transferred “to the purposes prescribed by the ordinary [Diocesan Bishop or Vicar General].” While Canon Law is silent on how often these additional stipends are to be sent to the ordinary, Bishop Lynch requests that excess stipends be sent to the Vicar General annually, *at the end of the fiscal year, June 30*. If a pastor wishes to send the excess offerings to a charitable cause which the parish is supporting [e.g. a parish with which you are “twinning,” a seminary in a poorer diocese, etc.], he must clarify this with the Vicar General and send him an annual report, *at the end of the fiscal year, June 30*, with a record of the contributions made to the entity.

**Q: If a priest offers an anticipated Sunday Mass on Saturday and Mass on Sunday, is this considered to be the same day?**

A: Canon 1248, §1 makes reference to Masses held “on the feast day itself or in the evening of the preceding day” as satisfying the obligation of participating in the Mass. Latitude is given to the priest who celebrates Masses on Saturday and Sunday. Therefore:

- If a priest offers the Vigil Mass (Saturday evening) and a Mass on Sunday, he may keep both Mass stipends, as he can apply the Vigil Mass toward Saturday, provided that he has not accepted any other Mass offerings for Saturday.
- If he offers the Mass of the day on Saturday morning, and the Vigil Mass on Saturday evening, he can apply the Vigil Mass to Sunday, and keep both Mass stipends.
- If he offers a Mass on Saturday morning and the Vigil Mass, then offers the Mass for the People [*missa pro populo*] on Sunday, he can keep both Mass stipends, applying the Vigil toward Sunday, since he takes no offering for the *missa pro populo*.
- If he offers the *missa pro populo* on Sunday, he can still offer another Mass on Sunday and keep the stipend for it.

Keep in mind that a Mass stipend does not include the required compensation which is given to a visiting priest for his mileage [In the Diocese of St. Petersburg, the compensation is \$35 for weekday Masses, \$75 for Sunday Vigil or Sunday Masses. This is in addition to the Mass stipend to which the priest is entitled].

**Q: Concerning the Mass for the People of the Parish: Is it required that the pastor offer that Mass or can any priest be assigned to it?**

A: Canon 534, §1 states that the pastor “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 [priest] or on other days himself.” Canon 534, §3 states that the pastor who has not satisfied the obligation of offering the *missa pro populo* “is to apply as soon as possible as many Masses for the people as he has omitted.”

This Mass is offered for both the living and deceased members of the parish. While the pastor has the obligation to offer the *missa pro populo*, he may entrust this Mass to another priest, when he is unable to offer it himself.