

*This decision is made by the Archbishop after having heard the Council of Priests on this matter. He promulgates this policy which becomes effective as of Sunday, November 16th, 2014.
May the gifts of the Holy Spirit help each and everyone of us, to build the Body of Christ in Love.*



+ Albert Le Gatt

☒ **Albert Le Gatt,**
Archbishop of Saint Boniface



Archidiocèse
de Saint-Boniface
Archdiocese



**POLICY REGARDING OFFERINGS
MADE DURING THE CELEBRATION OF
WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS ,
AND MASS OFFERINGS**

SECTION A

The offerings made for the celebration of weddings and funerals, and other honorariums

"The offering for weddings and funerals celebrated in all parishes of the diocese shall be fixed at \$ 300, of which \$ 100 shall be paid by the parish to the celebrating priest or deacon, \$ 200 shall be retained by the parish for its expenses."

(From the minutes of the meeting of the Saint Boniface Diocesan Council of Priests, held on November 28, 2013.)

1. This is a policy, not a guideline.
2. Laypersons without financial means shall be informed that they are not obligated to pay the full amount.
3. The full amount indicated above shall be given directly to the parish. It is the parish's responsibility to give \$ 100 to the priest or deacon.
4. **Definition of terms - Gift/Gratuity:** An in kind gift or gift of money, over and above payment due for service. Something given without claim or demand.

If a layperson makes a gift/gratuity to the priest or deacon for the occurrence of a celebration, this amount must be declared by the latter as revenue in his annual income tax return. The best way to treat a gift/gratuity is for the priest to remit the amount to the parish and add it to his semi-monthly salary and take the appropriate source deductions.

With the exception of the honorariums received by the priest for funerals and weddings (see 15.2.1), it is agreed that all of his other responsibilities, including the celebration of all other sacraments, are covered by his monthly salary.

SECTION B

The offerings made for the celebration of Mass

V. MASS OFFERINGS (Canons 898, 945-958, 1264)

(Diocesan Regulations)

- 137 **Purpose** (Canon 946) — The faithful who make an offering for a mass to be said for their intentions contribute to the support of the Church and share by their offering in its concern for the support of its ministers and its works. The pastor, parochial administrator or priest-moderator should explain to the faithful the ecclesial meaning of this gesture.
- 138 **Mass offerings** — The offering for a Mass is set at \$10.00 (C. 952 §1, 1264 2^o). The total amount goes to the celebrant, for him to use in supporting the Church's charitable works, in keeping with the Code of Canon Law (C. 946). It is fitting that the priest inform the interested persons of the day on which mass will be offered for their intentions, by means of the parish bulletin.
- 139 **Binating or Trinating** (C. 951) — The stipends received from bination or trination are to be applied to the mutual aid of priests as determined by the Ordinary [Bishop]. Any diocesan or religious priest who celebrates in a parish more than one mass on one day must remit the offering for these additional masses to the Diocesan Administration Office, when sending in the monthly remittances. Priests who are not in parish work must also remit the offerings monthly to the Diocesan Administration Office. However, the priest can apply twelve (12) of these masses each year, without offerings, for his personal intentions.
- 140 **Mass offerings record** (Cc. 955 – 958) — The priest who receives an offering for a mass is obligated in justice to celebrate the mass for the intention specified. He will carefully record it in a register, giving the day of reception of the offering and the day on which the mass was celebrated.
- 141 **Examination of mass stipends record** (C. 958) — The record of the masses and stipends will be made available to Archbishop, or his delegate, when he makes his pastoral visitation.
- 142 The number of non-celebrated masses and the total offerings will be entered on the parish financial report, at the end of each year.
- 143 **Surplus of mass offerings** (c. 956) — On December 31st of each year, the priest must send to the Diocesan Administration Office the offerings for masses received before January 1st and not celebrated during the year. The Diocesan Administration Office will have the responsibility of redistributing these offerings to priests who may not have any.

SECTION C

Catechetical perspectives

- The Code of Canon Law** (canons no. 945-958):
“In accordance with the approved custom of the Church, any priest who celebrates or concelebrates a Mass may accept an offering to apply the Mass for a specific intention.” (c. 945 §1)
“It is earnestly recommended to priests that, even if they do not receive an offering, they celebrate the Mass for the intentions of Christ's faithful, especially of those in need.” (c. 945 §2)
- The amount suggested by the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface for Mass offerings is currently \$ 10, the same as in the Archdioceses of Winnipeg and Keewatin-Le Pas and the diocese of Churchill - Hudson Bay.
A donor can choose to offer more than \$10. The priest can accept this offering provided that the donor understands that it will only be applied to one Mass.
- Any supplementary offerings collected at a funeral or received by the parish office shall be sent to the diocesan Administration Office, and the parish shall publish the names and amounts transferred to the diocese in its weekly bulletin.
- If a collection is taken up during a funeral Mass, the presiding priest shall deliver a short catechesis beforehand to remind the assembly that the donations collected are for Masses to be assigned to retired priests, parishes without Mass offerings, and to missionary priests, thereby associating the memory of the deceased with the on-going work of Christ's salvation that His Church continues to carry out.
- The parish priest or parochial administrator assigned by the Archbishop to assume the responsibility of the ministry in a given church shall celebrate, free of charge, Sunday Masses “Pro populo” (for the people), as well as on holy days of obligation.
In parishes without a resident priest, to which the Archbishop assigns a parish life director, the priest moderator may postpone the obligation of celebrating the Mass “Pro populo” to the following Monday (or other day of the same week), allowing him to celebrate locally Mass for the intention offered by a parishioner. This Mass offering shall be published in the parish bulletin for all to read.
Priests assigned as parochial administrator assignments are invited to celebrate “Pro populo” Masses, just as do their parish priests.
- On his accepting to celebrate a mass, a priest can accept a smaller offering, or even none at all. Those who cannot afford a mass offering are still encouraged to ask their parish priest or any priest to celebrate a mass for their intention. Instead of giving alms for the mass, they could do charitable work to express their gift of self to God.

“From the very beginning Christians have brought, along with the bread and wine for the Eucharist, gifts to be shared with those in need. The custom of taking up collection, still a fact in many parishes, finds its origin in Christ who became poor to make us rich.

Those who are well off, and who are also willing, give as each chooses. What is gathered is given to him who presides to assist orphans and widows, those whom illness or any other cause has deprived of resources, prisoners, immigrants and, in a word, all who are in need.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, §1351, St. Justin, Apol. 1, 67:PG 6)

The Church continues to offer the Holy Eucharist, faithful to the words of the Lord Jesus during the Last Supper: *Do this in memory of me.*

Since the beginning, the Church has invited its faithful to bring their goods to share, among others, with the poor. This tradition was established early and is evident in the texts of the New Testament.

Throughout the centuries, this custom came to take the form of offerings (*Mass offerings*) that a person offers to a priest requesting from him the prayers of the Church for a particular intention.

This engagement taken by the priest is sacred!

When the Liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated, the entire human family is embraced, including those here on earth and those who have passed away. This gesture is not limited to one person or to any single intention. The benefits of the Eucharist are infinite and embrace the entire universe.

As Catholics, we believe that to request the celebration of a Mass for a particular intention has inestimable value. We are thus presenting to the Lord this special intention over and above the intentions already included in each celebration of the Eucharist; for example, for the Pope, the local bishop, the clergy, and *“the entire people [He] has gained for [His] own”* (3rd Eucharistic Prayer). The people for whom the Mass is offered specifically, participate in a special way in the grace of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

The offering given for the celebration of a Mass is thus an expression of the donor's desire to share in the fruits of the Mass. This material gift not only provides for the needs incurred by the Eucharistic celebration and the support of the priest, but it also expresses the gift of his own self which the donor makes to God, He who welcomes our prayers and responds in the way of an all-loving Father full of grace.