

Mass offerings: Source of Life and Love

Christ exhorts us: “Remain in my love!” (Jn 15:9). He has given us the Holy Eucharist – his Golgotha and the gift of his presence – so that we can indeed remain in his love.

In 2016 you gave 1,435,888 Mass offerings to assist poor priests overseas, helping one priest in every five around the world by your offerings.

Their profound gratitude for this is expressed in their numerous letters to us, promising joyfully to offer these Masses for you and your intentions. In most cases the money you give them in the form of these offerings is used for vital basic necessities, not just for the priests themselves but also for others still poorer than they are, and for the sick and elderly. And sometimes this money is also invested in the spiritual life.

This is the case with the 29 priests of the diocese of San Martín in Argentina. They have written personally to thank you for your Mass offerings, which meant they could take part in a theological seminar on God’s mercy. Father José Giacomello is 85 and was ordained in 1957 by the then Patriarch of Venice, who later became Pope John XXIII. A year later he arrived in Buenos Aires.

It means so much to him to gather with his brother priests and experience the solidarity of the Universal Church, the Communion of the Saints. Father José Calnera also warmly thanks you for this opportunity “to revitalise the sacerdotal bond with my fellow priests”. Other priests tell us about the “difficult economic situation” in the country – without actually mentioning that Argentina is on the brink of bankruptcy.

Your Mass offerings allows many priests to survive in Crimea. The Ukrainian territory of Crimea was annexed by the Russian Federation on March 18th 2014 resulting in wider unrest across southern and eastern Ukraine. People are unable to buy very much as they can only afford the cheapest of goods, says Bishop Jacek Pyl of Odessa-Simferopol. “Unemployment is incredibly high, and food imports from Ukraine have been blocked. Travelling in and out of the peninsula by car is practically impossible.” Nobody knows how long the current situation will last. So now he is planning an emergency aid programme to help the poorest families here. But it won’t be possible without the priests. Already they are sharing all they have with their parishioners and with the poorest of the poor – and when they have nothing else, then they console them, providing their prayers and counselling. The auxiliary bishop has asked for more help, and we have sent your Mass offerings to assist his priests. For Jesus has said, “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Mt 28:20).

In your kindness you are helping to fulfil this promise, and thereby helping the people of Crimea both materially and spiritually.

To the end of the world ... Priests celebrating Holy Mass for you and your intentions in India, Columbia, Brazil and Argentina



“We are liberated by your sacrifice”

Your Mass offerings are also missionary works. This point is made by Father Marcelo (pictured above) of the diocese of Barra in Brazil, in his letter thanking ACN. Your sacrifices, he says, liberate the priest from the poverty that makes life a battle for survival – “above all when they are given with such joy as they are by you”, so that “we can work all the more to spread the Good News and work to extend the Kingdom of God on earth”.

What is a Mass offering?

A Mass offering is a gift or alms offered to the priest who celebrates Holy Mass for our intention. We cannot purchase the spiritual fruits of the Mass, but the offering does unite the donor more intimately with the Holy Sacrifice. This practice has its roots in the early Church. Canon law lays down how such offerings must be administered.

Saint Paul says ...

“Do you not know ... that those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings?” (1 Cor 9:13). He says this not only to the Corinthians, but also to us. Your Mass offerings are a part of this. Of course we cannot “buy” the spiritual graces of the Mass. But the offering made to the priest unites the giver, by virtue of his intention, more intimately with the Holy Sacrifice.

Every 22 seconds, somewhere in the world, Mass is offered for the intentions of our benefactors, and one priest in every five is supported in his priestly ministry. Last year you gave 1.4 million Mass intentions. Yet the need is still great, above all for priests in the Islamic countries. We could even distribute 2 million intentions, if we had them...

The above picture shows Father Werenfried offering holy Mass before his death in 2003.

When sending us your Mass Offerings

- Please tell us how many Masses you wish to have offered by priests in need.
- You may add your intentions but this is not necessary. God knows them and the priest offers Mass for the intention of the donor.
- In Australia the customary offering that accompanies your request for each Mass to be celebrated is \$10.00. However we will always continue to offer Masses for the intention of our benefactors, irrespective of the amount offered.
- The Mass offerings that Aid to the Church in Need sends to poor priests overseas are as follows:

\$10.00	for each Mass
\$36.00	for a Triduum of 3 consecutive Masses
\$108.00	for a Novena of 9 consecutive Masses
\$400.00	for a Gregorian series of 30 consecutive Masses
- Unfortunately we are no longer able to have Masses offered on a specific date due to the administrative workload and costs involved in personally finding priests who are free to celebrate Masses on specific dates.

You can now donate and request Mass offerings online at www.aidtochurch.org



Aid to the Church in Need PO Box 7246, Baulkham Hills BC NSW 2153

Phone/Fax No: (02) 9679-1929 E-mail: info@aidtochurch.org Web: www.aidtochurch.org

* I would likeMass/es offered for my intentions and I enclose as an offering \$..... to support poor priests overseas to enable them to proclaim the Good News of Christ.

* Charity donation for the Projects of Aid to the Church in Need (optional) \$.....

Total enclosed \$.....

I enclose a cheque/money order payable to Aid to the Church in Need OR please debit my Visa or Mastercard:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Expiry Date _____ / _____

Signature

BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Sr/Rev

Address

Postcode

Phone Email

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