**New to the Latin Mass?**

**Welcome**

Welcome to Mass in the Extraordinary Form. Attending the extraordinary form of the Mass (AKA: the Traditional Latin Mass, or TLM) can be a deeply rich experience, but it can also be overwhelming as you get oriented to a different way of hearing and praying the Mass. Please know that most people attending here were in the same position as you not long ago.

An Overview of the TLM

**Some Background and Terms**

First a little background: The Mass (under any form) ultimately traces the roots of its development to the Last Supper and Our Lord’s Passion. Over time, different prayers and different rituals have been adopted, but the core has remained constant since the time of Christ. The Latin Mass is sometimes referred to as the *usus antiquor* (the ancient use of the liturgy) or the Tridentine Mass since it became normative in the Roman Church at the Council of Trent. Today, you will hear it most commonly referred to as the Extraordinary Form (i.e. outside the ordinary) since the normal form of the Mass (also called the Novus Ordo, or “new order”) is the one said in the vernacular.

The theologians who wrote the Novus Ordo thought about the Mass in a different way than had previously been done, so there are some key differences. In the Novus Ordo, for example, participation is key, so a lot of emphasis is put on understanding and consciously participating in every aspect of the Mass. In the TLM, however, there is no script for how we are to pray. The emphasis is on the Eucharist as the unbloody sacrifice, with the priest ascending to the altar to offer Jesus' sacrifice to the Father on our behalf.

In the TLM, we are witnesses to an amazing miracle taking place on the altar and we are free to speak to God from our hearts however we are moved. Some people follow along with the Missal and pray along with the priest. Some unite their intentions with the priest's sacrifice. Some pray the rosary or speak to God from their hearts. Some just kneel in silence and awe.

**Following the Mass**

To help you follow along with the Mass, there is a red handbook available in the back of the church. On the left are the Latin prayers and on the right is the English translation. That said, you aren't necessarily expected to hear a lot of the prayers the priest is reciting as he is addressing them to God on our behalf. The key to following along is to look for liturgical cues. Often these cues are the phrases the priest speaks loud enough for you to hear. For example, when he sings out, "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" everyone stands. Similarly, when he says, "Dominus vobiscum" before the Gospel, everyone stands. And when he says, "Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus" and bells are run, everyone kneels.

As with the Novus Ordo, there are certain times in the Mass when the congregation sits, stands, or kneels. Strictly speaking, these are not a “requirement,” but long-established traditions reflecting the understanding that we are each a union of body, mind, and soul, all of which we are dedicating to the Lord.

**Receiving on the Tongue**

Many people today are used to receiving communion in the hand, but this is a relatively recent practice. The older practice (and the one that is used in the Latin Mass) is receiving communion on the tongue while kneeling. We kneel as a sign of reverence before Jesus in the Eucharist and we receive on the tongue in order to ensure that no particles (all of which are 100% the body and soul of Jesus) are accidentally lost.

Step 1: Kneel along the altar rail.

People will file out of their pews (it need not be in exact order) and approach the altar rail or kneelers. Once one person stands up after receiving communion, the next person in line is free to kneel down and wait for the priest to approach.

Step 2: Stick out your tongue.

The priest walks down the altar rail, giving communion to each person before looping back to the beginning. When he comes to you, an altar boy will put a gold plate called a paten underneath your chin. As soon as they are in front of you, you may stick out your tongue.

You may feel self-conscious about sticking out your tongue and hesitate to stick it out all the way. Know that the bigger target you make of your tongue, the easier it is for the priest to give you communion. You can stare straight ahead while you receive or you can close your eyes if it makes you feel more comfortable. The priest will come to you and say in Latin, “May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ guard your soul on its journey to eternal life” and then place the host on your tongue. The host naturally sticks to your tongue and you will be able to receive Our Lord without ever touching the host with your hands. If the host does not stick to your tongue, the paten is there to catch Him.

Step 3: Return to your pew

Once you have received, you can get up from the altar rail or kneeler and go back to your seat and pray. You will find you have more space to do this in the TLM than you might have at a Novus Ordo, so take advantage of that time with Our Lord.

**Some women are wearing chapel veils on their heads.**

You will notice many women wearing veils on their heads. This is a practice that traces back to St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 11, in which he says that men should bare their heads in church and women should veil theirs. These veils are called mantillas or chapel veils. This was a common practice throughout the history of the church but did not continue with the Novus Ordo. Please feel free to adopt the practice as a way to be more reverent.

**A chance to experience the ancient form of the Mass**

We hope this experience of the Latin Mass leads to a powerful encounter with Jesus Christ. This is an ancient form of the Mass and the way many of the great saints prayed. For centuries, Jesus Christ has descended to earth at the words, "Hoc est Corpus meum," (This is My Body) and He still does today. We hope that, like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, your eyes too might be opened today as you recognize Him “in the breaking of the bread.”

Quick Tips

* The priest faces the altar when addressing God. The prayers addressed to God are not said so as to be heard by the congregation, so do not feel like you need to strain your ears or understand Latin. The missals (or red books) can tell you what the priest is saying.
* While you are welcome to follow along with the text of the Mass in the missal, Mass can also be fruitfully attended by simply watching and praying.
* Unlike in the novus ordo, the congregation is not responsible for saying the responses of the Mass. This job belongs to the servers.
* There is no requirement that you either speak or understand Latin in order to attend the Latin Mass.

Quick Tips on Following a Missal

*For those who wish to follow along with the prayers the priest says at Mass, we offer the following tips.*

* To follow the missal, be sure to follow what the priest is saying and doing rather than what the choir is singing. Except for during the Gloria, the priest will continue moving forward with the Mass even while the choir is singing. This is most notable at the beginning of Mass (the priest continues to pray while the Introit and Kyrie are sung) and at the Sanctus, where the priest begins the prayers of consecration while the Sanctus is being sung.
* Be aware that some parts of the Mass change depending on the day in the liturgical calendar. These are called propers and are available on a separate sheet at the table in the narthex. They are the introit, collect, epistle, gradual, alleluia, gospel, offertory antiphon, secret, preface, communion antiphon, and post communion prayer. When you get to these parts, do not be thrown off when the representative text in your missal or red book does not match what the priest is saying.
* The pace at which the priest goes through prayers will vary over the course of the Mass. Those prayers that the priest says silently to himself are said very quickly. Those places where there is a call and response go more slowly. There are also points at which the prayers pause, such as while the Gloria finishes or during the ablutions after communion when the priest purifies the sacred vessels.

Traditional Postures During the TLM

* Entrance procession – Stand
* The Asperges (sprinkling) – Stand
* While the priest is vesting – Sit
* Priest walks to the foot of the altar - Stand
* Mass begins: *In Nomine Patris*… - Kneel
* Gloria – Stand
* Epistle: *Lectio epistoli…* - Sit
* Gospel – Stand
* Sermon – Sit
* Creed: *Credo in unum Deum* – Stand
  + *Et Incarnatus est…Et homo factus est* – Genuflect
  + Remainder of the Creed – Stand
* Offertory verse – Sit
* Incensing of the people – Stand
* After incensing – Sit
* Dialogue before Preface – Stand
  + *Dominus Vobiscum…Dignum et justum est*
* *Sanctus,* Consécration, Elevation – Kneel
* Our Father : *Pater Noster* – Stand
* Mixture of Body and Blood, *Agnus Dei*  - Kneel
* Communion: after *Domine non sum dignus* - Walk to the altar rail, kneel and receive on the tongue (do not say Amen), return to pew and kneel
* Post communion: *Dominus Vobiscum* – Stand
* After *Ite Missa est*: Final blessing – Kneel
* Last Gospel – Stand
  + *Et Verbum Caro Factum Est*  - Genuflect
  + Remainder of the Last Gospel – Stand
* Exit of the Priest – Stand