

Why Sing The Proper Of The Mass?

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Nothing renders us so much satisfaction as the splendid cooperation which the reverend pastors and our choir directors throughout the archdiocese are giving us in the matter of singing the Proper of the Mass.

The difficulty anticipated by all in regard to the Proper has practically vanished and, as a matter of fact, never was quite as great as previous anticipation had figured it. The simple settings of Tozer and Laboure have reduced the burden to the matter of the words and this inconvenience a little patience has completely eliminated.

And so *our archdiocese stands forth with a record of ninety-five per cent of its churches singing the Proper every Sunday.* Of the week-day High Mass the percent is just a bit lower. We should put it at seventy per cent.

By degrees we are sure that the attitude of the Sacred Congregation of Rites,—no Proper—no High Mass, will become the rule every where in the archdiocese.

For the convenience of our readers we append several answers of the Sacred Congregation to queries regarding the singing of the Proper and it will become clear to all that the Proper is never to be omitted.

On August 7th, 1875, the Bishop of Cloud asked the Sacred Congregation of Rites as follows: "Since in our diocese it is the custom at High Mass to omit the Gradual, Tract, Offertory, Sequence and Communion, we would like to know whether or not this agrees with the rubrics." The Sacred Congregation of Rites answered: "It does not agree with the rubrics."

The Bishop of Turin, Italy, on September 11th, 1849, asked if the custom of omitting the singing of the Introit, Offertory, Communion and Sequence is a legitimate one, also if it be allowed at a Requiem Mass to shorten the Dies Irae, the Offertory and Libera. The Sacred Congregation of Rites answered the first question by saying: "The custom is an abuse and not legitimate." The second, by saying: "No, these parts may not be shortened."

On June 25th, 1898, the Bishop of Block, Poland, asked: "Is it of obligation at High Mass for the choir to sing the Proper?" And received the answer: "It is of obligation."

On May 21st, 1897, the Vicar-General of the diocese of Briocen, asked: "Is the Dies Irae always to be sung at High Mass." He received the answer: "It is always to be sung."

On January 16th, 1885, the Bishop of Lucon, France, put the following condition of his diocese before the Sacred Congregation of Rites: "Here in Lucon exists the custom of having High Masses daily. At these High Masses the choir omits the Gloria, Credo, Gradual, Tract and Sequence because the singers are usually one person and the people who attend are of the working class and we do not wish to detain them. May the method of singing High Mass above described be continued or must it be done away with?" The Congregation answered: "The method is an abuse and must be done away with."

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