

# THINGS USED DURING THE MASS

I find taking part in the mass an extraordinary experience. As I say and listen to the readings and prayers, I wonder at the strategies used to create such wonderful writing.

When trying to explain it to my grandchildren, I found myself mentioning the names of the books and equipment used during Mass. I had to explain to them what these were and why they were used.

I then wondered how many ordinary Lay-Catholics have heard of them. The following is a simple explanation of some of them:

## MANUALS USED

During the **Holy Sacrifice of the Mass**, two manuals are used. These contain all the prayers and readings used during a Mass. There is a third, but this is not always used. These manuals are called:

### **ROMAN MISSAL. LECTIONARY. BOOK OF THE GOSPEL.**

THE ROMAN MISSAL or Sacramental.

This is a large book containing all the words and prayers used by a priest during the celebration of the Mass, but not the **READINGS**.

LECTIONARY

This is also a large book. It contains a **three year cycle** of READINGS, PSALMS and GOSPELS from the Bible to be used during the Mass.

These three years are called A, B, and C.

2023 is Year A, 2024 is Year B, 2025 is Year C, and 2026 is back to A.

**NOTE: IN 2024, A NEW LECTIONARY IS BEING INTRODUCED.**

BOOK OF THE GOSPEL

This Book contains readings from all four gospels, but its use is not obligatory as the gospel readings are also included in the standard Lectionary.

Being heavy, the ROMAN MISSAL and LECTIONARY need places upon which they can be put while being read from. Three of these are:

### **AMBO and ALTAR for the Roman Missal LECTURN for the Lectionary**

AMBO and ALTAR

The Ambo is the stand used to hold the Roman Missal during part of the Mass. As the congregation faces Sanctuary, it is on the left of the altar.

This where it's placed at the start of the Mass and up until the end of the Liturgy of the Word. It is then placed on the altar during the Liturgy of the Eucharist, until the end of the Mass.

### LECTURN

This is the stand used to hold the Lectionary, which contains the Readings, Psalms, gospel, and Bidding Prayers read out during Mass. As the congregation faces the Sanctuary, it is to the right of the altar.

The contents of a Mass change due to differences such as the Time of the Year, Weddings, Funerals, and types of Feast days. Priests need guidance about what will be used during these differences in the Mass, which is provided by what is called an ORDO.

### ORDO

The Holy See maintains a LITURGICAL CALENDAR of all the feast days of saints, martyrs and special days throughout the year.

Each country has its own special saints, martyrs, and days, and therefore, from this Liturgical Calendar of the Holy See, a National Calendar called an ORDO is produced.

This must be easily accessible by priests, and in many churches, can be found in the Sacristy. It provides them with all the information about what is required at mass for each day of the year, such as:

Is the day a Feast, Memorial or Solemnity?

What colour vestments to wear.

Name of the Saint's feast day.

What special prayers to say.

It provides information showing how the Catholic Church remembers its Saints, Martyrs and special days of remembrance. These days are identified as:

**FEASTS** - identified with an F.

**MEMORIALS** - identified with an M.

**SOLEMNITIES** - identified with an S.

### MEMORIALS

These are known as the lowest ranked of all celebration days and are used to celebrate many saints.

The GLOREA is not said during Mass on these days.

### FEASTS

These refer to specific saints or feasts of Archangels and some of the Apostles.

The GLORIA is said on these days during Mass, but not the CREED.

#### SOLEMNITY

These are the highest-ranked celebration days. They cover such remembrances as Easter, All Saints Day, Corpus Christi, the Ascension, events in the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and specific Saints.

The CREED and GLORIA are said on these days.

These are just a few ways the Catholic Church helps us all know what's happening during Mass.

Over the years, the Mass and other services have evolved into the magnificent ones we know today, and the Internet is full of wonderful explanations of them, plus other things relating to Roman Catholicism.

**BE A RESEARCHER OF YOUR RELIGION. NEVER BE STUCK FOR ANSWERS ABOUT IT, ITS CLERGY AND SERVICES.**