

COLLECTION OF MASSES OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Volume I
MISSAL

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Volume I
MISSAL

APPROVED FOR USE IN THE
DIOCESES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
AND CONFIRMED BY THE APOSTOLIC SEE

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FOREWORD

Throughout its history the Church has shown a special love and devotion to Mary. The Council of Ephesus bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin her highest and most significant title, *Theotokos*—“God-bearer,” that is, Mother of God. Century after century Mary has been praised as being “higher than the cherubim and more glorious than the seraphim” because she said yes to God and through her the Word became flesh and lived among us.

As the Church has reflected on the person and life of Mary, it has come to a deeper realization of what it is to follow Christ. In fact, the early Church saw her as the model—the ideal Christian—who faithfully follows the Lord in word and action. The Second Vatican Council referred to her as the Mother of the Church, since her cooperation in God’s plan for the salvation of all helped to make the existence of the Church a reality in this world.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Mary cried out with joy that “From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.” Mary’s prophecy has become reality as the Church in the East and the West has glorified God for the humble virgin whom God has exalted for her ever-faithful love.

This collection of Masses in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been a helpful resource as witness to the many ways and reasons Christians have honored Mary. We are happy to re-issue this collection with revisions and adaptations to conform to *The Roman Missal, Third Edition*, so that these Masses will continue to be a source of inspiration and to foster devotion to Mary. Whereever these prayers coincide with prayers in *The Roman Missal, Third Edition*, they were replaced with the new translation. Other adaptations to the language and style of *The Roman Missal* involved the concluding formula of the orations, the Preface dialogue, the introductory formula of the Prefaces, and the Order of Mass. These Masses are a meditation on the history of our salvation in Christ and the very nature of the Christian life. Through the use of this resource of Scripture, prayer, and praise may we join Mary in proclaiming the greatness of the Lord and ever rejoicing in God our Savior.

✠ Gregory M. Aymond
Archbishop of New Orleans
Chairman, Committee on Divine Worship
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

Prot. no. 309/86

DECREE

In celebrating the mystery of Christ, the Church also frequently and with deep reverence honors the Blessed Virgin Mary, because of her close bonds with her Son. She is revered by the Church as the new Eve, who, in view of the death of her Son, received at the moment of her conception a higher form of redemption. She is revered as mother, who through the power of the Holy Spirit gave virginal birth to her Son. She is revered as the disciple of Christ, who treasured in her heart the words of Christ the Master. She is revered as the faithful companion of the Redeemer, who, as God had planned, devoted herself with selfless generosity to her Son's mission.

The Church also sees in the Blessed Virgin a preeminent and unique member, graced with all virtue. The Church lovingly cherishes her and never ceases to ask for her protection, for she is the Mother entrusted to us by Christ on the altar of the Cross. The Church proclaims Mary as companion and sister in the journey of faith and in the adversities of life. In Mary, enthroned at Christ's side in the kingdom of heaven, the Church joyfully contemplates the image of its own future glory.

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council thoroughly reviewed the Church's teaching on the place of the Blessed Virgin Mary within the mystery of Christ and his Church, and also issued principles and norms for the reform of the liturgy. As a consequence, the particular Churches as well as a number of religious institutes have composed new Mass propers. These Masses have been created on the basis of the study of ancient liturgical sources and of the writings of the Fathers of the Church of both the East and the West, on an examination of the documents of the Church's magisterium, and on a judicious balancing of the old and the new. As a result of this work of reform, existing Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary have been accurately revised and corrected and new Masses composed.

Because of the great number of requests from pastors and the faithful and especially from rectors of Marian shrines, it seemed opportune to publish a collection selected from existing Marian Mass formularies, many of which are outstanding for their teaching, piety, and the significance of their texts. The collection was arranged to cover the cycle of the liturgical year, so that this new organ of the liturgy might foster both in communities and in individuals a genuine devotion toward the Mother of the Lord.

By his apostolic authority Pope John Paul II has approved the *Collectio Missarum de beata Maria Virgine* and has ordered its publication.

Therefore, by special mandate of the Pope, this Congregation for Divine Worship publishes the *Collectio Missarum de beata Maria Virgine*. The Latin text may be used as soon as the book appears. After the Holy See has reviewed the vernacular version, its use will be authorized on the date determined by the Conference of Bishops.

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the office of the Congregation for Divine Worship, 15 August 1986, solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Augustin Cardinal Mayer
Prefect

✠ Virgilio Noè
Archbishop of Vercara
Secretary

CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS

Prot. N. 778/89

DECREE

At the request of His Excellency, the Most Reverend Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Archbishop of Cincinnati and President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a letter dated November 28, 1989, and by virtue of the faculties granted to this Congregation by the Supreme Pontiff, Pope John Paul II, we gladly approve, that is, confirm *ad interim* the English text of the book *Collectio Missarum de Beata Maria Virgine* (Green Book), as it appears in the attached copy.

This decree, by which the requested confirmation is granted by the Apostolic See, is to be included in its entirety in the published text. Two copies of the printed text should be sent to this Congregation.

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 20 March 1990.

Eduardo Cardinal Martinez

Prefect

✠ Lajos Kada
Titular Archbishop of Tibica
Secretary

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DECREE

In accord with the norms established by the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites in *Cum, nostra aetate* (27 January 1966), this edition of the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* is declared to be the vernacular typical edition of *Collectio Missarum de Beata Maria Virgine* in the dioceses of the United States of America, and is published by authority of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* was canonically approved for use *ad interim* by the Administrative Committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on 27 September 1989 and was subsequently confirmed by the Apostolic See by decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship on 20 March 1990 (Prot. N. 778/89).

As of 8 September 1992 the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* may be published and used in the liturgy. The solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, 8 December 1992, is hereby established as the effective date for the use of the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* in the dioceses of the United States of America. From that day forward no other English version may be used.

Given at the General Secretariat of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC, on 31 May 1992, the feast of the Visitation.

✠ Daniel E. Pilarczyk

Archbishop of Cincinnati

President

National Conference of Catholic Bishops

Robert N. Lynch
General Secretary

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1 In its presentation of Catholic teaching on the veneration due to Mary as the Mother of Christ, the Second Vatican Council in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* “counsels all the Church’s children to foster wholeheartedly the cultus—especially the liturgical cultus—of the Blessed Virgin.”¹ In the Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* the Council explains the focus and intent of the universal Church in its liturgical cultus of the Blessed Virgin: “In celebrating the annual cycle of Christ’s mysteries, the Church honors with special love Mary, the Mother of God, who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son. In her the Church holds up and admires the most excellent effect of the redemption and joyfully contemplates, as in a flawless image, that which the Church itself desires and hopes wholly to be.”²

2 Prompted by the call of the Second Vatican Council and guided by the ageold practice and wisdom of the Church, the Apostolic See has gladly devoted its energies to the right promotion of devotion to the Mother of God. Accordingly, in the Roman Liturgy veneration toward the Blessed Virgin Mary is expressed in many wonderful ways, as the General Roman Calendar integrates commemorations of her into the cycle of the liturgical year.³

3 Thus on the basis of the arrangement of the Calendar the Roman Liturgy frequently in the course of the year provides the faithful with the opportunity of remembrance of the Blessed Virgin’s participation in the mystery of salvation. Clear witnesses to Catholic devotion toward Mary are to be found not only in *The Roman Missal* and *The Liturgy of the Hours*, but also in other liturgical books that contain special celebrations as commemorations to honor the lowly, now glorious Mother of Christ.⁴

I. THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST

4 Through its sacred signs the liturgy celebrates the work of salvation that God the Father accomplished through Christ in the Holy Spirit. This salvation is a work that God the Father has carried on through the ages.

¹ No. 67: AAS 57 (1965), p. 65; English tr., ICEL, *Documents on the Liturgy, 1963–1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts*, hereafter DOL (The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn., 1982) 4, no. 161.

² Art. 103: AAS 56 (1964), p. 125; DOL 1, no. 103.

³ Cf. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis cultus*, no. 2: AAS 66 (1974), p. 117; DOL 467, no. 3900.

⁴ Cf., for example, the Roman Ritual, *Book of Blessings* (English edition, 1987), ch. 29, “Order for the Blessing of an Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” nos. 1004–1017. Cf. also *Order of Crowning an Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (English edition, 1986).

This is the salvation announced by the patriarchs and prophets. “The divine plan for the Old Testament was above all arranged so as to prepare, to proclaim in prophecy (cf. Luke 22:44; John 5:39; 1 Peter 1:10), and to prefigure through types (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:11) the coming of Christ, the Redeemer of all, and of his messianic kingdom.”⁵

This is the salvation that was fully revealed in Christ Jesus. In the womb of the Virgin of Nazareth, Jesus the Son of God took our human nature and became the Mediator of the Old and the New Covenant. In his Paschal Mystery he brought about our reconciliation with the Father (cf. Colossians 1:22; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19) and through the Spirit of adoption given to us (cf. Romans 8:15-17; Galatians 4:5-6) he joined us closely to himself, so that in spirit and in truth (cf. John 4:23) we might offer worship acceptable to the Father.

This is the salvation that comes to pass in the “age of the Church” through the proclamation of the Gospel and the celebration of the Sacraments (cf. Matthew 28:18-20), which through the centuries make it possible for all to hold fast to the word of salvation and to enter into the Paschal Mystery.

This is the salvation that will reach its consummation in Christ’s glorious Second Coming (cf. Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:11), when, having destroyed death, he will subject all things to himself and deliver his kingdom to the Father (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

5 When the Church celebrates the sacred mysteries, it celebrates the entire, integral work of salvation. By celebrating things past the Church in a certain sense brings about their presence and in the “mystical today”⁶ accomplishes the salvation of the faithful, who as pilgrims through life are in search of that city which is to come (cf. Hebrews 13:14).

Mary, who by the plan of God for the sake of Christ and the Church “was intimately involved in the history of salvation,”⁷ was actively present in various, wonderful ways in the mysteries of Christ’s life.

6 Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary have their meaning and purpose from her close participation in the history of salvation. Therefore when the Church commemorates the role of the Mother of the Lord in the work of redemption or honors her privileges, it is above all celebrating the events of salvation in which, by God’s salvific plan, the Blessed Virgin was involved in view of the mystery of Christ.

*Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary
celebrate the action of God for our salvation*

7 Among these events of salvation the Church at the beginning of the liturgical year celebrates the work of God in preparing the Mother of the Redeemer. In her “after the long wait for the fulfill-

⁵ Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, no. 15: AAS 58 (1966), p. 825; DOL 14, no. 217.

⁶ Cf., for example, *The Liturgy of the Hours*, 25 December, Christmas, Evening Prayer II, antiphon for the Cantic of Mary; 6 January, Epiphany, Evening Prayer II, antiphon for the Cantic of Mary; 2 February, Presentation of the Lord, Evening Prayer II, antiphon for the Cantic of Mary; Ascension, Evening Prayer II, antiphon for the Cantic of Mary.

⁷ Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*, no. 65: AAS 57 (1965), p. 64.

ment of the promise, the time at last came to pass and the new divine economy was established.”⁸ God came with his grace to Mary and from the first instant of her conception preserved her from all stain of sin, filled her with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and continued to shelter her with his love, doing great things for her (cf. Luke 1:29) for the sake of our salvation.

8 The Church also celebrates God’s intervention in human history in the celebration of the Incarnation of the Word, the birth of Christ and its revelation to the shepherds and the Magi (the first Jewish and the first Gentile converts to the Church, cf. Luke 2:15-16; Matthew 2:1-12), and in the celebration of other events of Christ’s infancy. Mary was intimately involved in all of these saving deeds of God. For this reason many of the Mass formularies, a number of which are of great antiquity and liturgical significance, in celebrating the mysteries of Christ’s infancy at the same time honor his Mother’s part in them.

9 The Church’s liturgical celebration of the public life of our Savior, which was marked by the glorious deeds of the Father, is also a commemoration of the Blessed Virgin, “who shared in the mysteries of Christ.”⁹ For “in Jesus’ public life Mary appears on significant occasions. She was present at its beginning, when at the wedding feast of Cana, moved by compassion, she interceded and brought about the first miracle of Jesus the Messiah (cf. John 2:1-11). During his preaching mission, Mary welcomed the words in which her Son extolled the kingdom of God as transcending considerations and bonds of flesh and blood and proclaimed that the truly blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it (cf. Mark 3:15; Luke 11:27-28), in the way that she herself heard the word of God and faithfully kept it in her heart (cf. Luke 2:19 and 51).”¹⁰

10 The Church above all celebrates God’s wonderful deeds in Christ’s Paschal Mystery and in this celebration finds Mary intimately joined to her Son. During his Passion, “she suffered deeply with her Only Begotten Son and, by consenting to his offering himself as Victim, she united her maternal heart to the sacrifice of the one to whom she had given birth.”¹¹ God filled her with joy at the Resurrection of her Son.¹² After Christ’s Ascension into heaven, remaining at prayer in the upper room with the Apostles and the first disciples, she implored “the gift of the same Holy Spirit who had come upon her at the moment of the Annunciation.”¹³

The presence of Christ in celebrations of the liturgy

11 After Christ’s glorious Ascension the work of salvation is carried on above all through celebration of the liturgy, which with good reason may be called the final age in the history of salvation, since in the liturgy Christ is present to the Church in many ways.¹⁴ He is present as the Head of the Mystical Body who presides over the worshiping assembly and whose members are

⁸ Ibid., no. 55: AAS 57 (1965), p. 60.

⁹ Ibid., no. 66: AAS 57 (1965), p. 65; DOL 4, no. 160.

¹⁰ Ibid., no. 58: AAS 57 (1965), p. 61.

¹¹ Ibid., no. 58: AAS 57 (1965), p. 61.

¹² Cf. *The Liturgy of the Hours*, Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Evening Prayer I and II, intercessions, alternate formulary.

¹³ Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*, no. 59: AAS 57 (1965), p. 62.

¹⁴ Cf. Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (hereafter SC) art. 6–7: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 100–101; DOL 1, nos. 6–7.

marked as a kingly people. He is present as the teacher who continues to proclaim the message of his Gospel. He is present as the Priest who offers the sacrifice of the New Law and who by his power acts in the Sacraments. He is present as the Mediator who without ceasing intercedes for us with the Father (cf. Hebrews 7:25). He is present as the firstborn brother (cf. Romans 8:29) who joins his voice to the voices of his countless brothers and sisters.

The faithful who hold fast to the word of faith and “in the Spirit” take part in the celebration of the liturgy meet the Savior and are joined vitally to the event that brings his salvation.

12 Taken up gloriously into heaven and exalted at the side of her Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords (cf. Revelation 19:16), the Blessed Virgin “did not put aside the saving role given her by God the Father, but by the many ways of her intercession continues to obtain gifts for our eternal salvation.”¹⁵ Because of its bonds with Mary, the Church wishes “to live the mystery of Christ”¹⁶ with her and like her and, above all in the liturgy, continually finds that the Blessed Virgin is ever present as the Mother of the Church and its advocate.

13 By its very nature the liturgy wonderfully fosters, effects, and expresses not only the communion existing between the particular Churches throughout the world, but also the communion between the Church on earth and the Angels and Saints in heaven, above all the glorious Mother of God.

Thus in union with the Blessed Virgin¹⁷ and in imitation of her reverent devotion,¹⁸ the Church celebrates the divine mysteries by which “God is perfectly glorified and the participants made holy.”¹⁹ The Church joins its voice to Mary’s and praises God with her song of thanksgiving.²⁰ The Church wishes to hear the word of God as she did and to dwell upon it.²¹ With Mary it desires to become a sharer in Christ’s Paschal Mystery²² and to join in his redeeming work.²³ In imitation of Mary at prayer in the upper room with the Apostles, the Church ceaselessly implores the gift of the Holy Spirit.²⁴ The Church invokes her intercession, flies to her protection,²⁵ prays that she

¹⁵ Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*, no. 62: AAS 57 (1965), p. 63.

¹⁶ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis cultus*, no. 11: AAS 66 (1974), p. 124; DOL 467, no. 3909.

¹⁷ Cf. *The Roman Missal*, Eucharistic Prayer I (The Roman Canon), “In communion with those whose memory we venerate.”

¹⁸ Cf. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis cultus*, nos. 16–20: AAS 66 (1974), pp. 128–132; DOL 467, nos. 3914–3918.

¹⁹ SC, art. 7: AAS 56 (1964), p. 101; DOL 1, no. 7.

²⁰ Cf. *The Roman Missal*, 31 May, Visitation, Collect; cf. also Preface II of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

²¹ Cf. Roman Ritual, *Book of Blessings*, ch. 4, “Orders for Blessings That Pertain to Catechesis and to Communal Prayer,” intercessions, no. 383.

²² Cf. *The Roman Missal*, 15 September, Our Lady of Sorrows, Collect; Roman Ritual, *Book of Blessings*, ch. 34, “Order for the Blessing of Stations of the Cross,” intercessions, no. 1108.

²³ Cf. *The Roman Missal*, Votive Mass of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, Prayer over the Offerings.

²⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, Preface.

²⁵ Cf. *Liturgia Horarum*, the Marian antiphon for the end of night prayer *Sub tuum praesidium* (not included in the English translation of the *Liturgia Horarum*).

visit the faithful people and fill them with the gifts of grace,²⁶ and, under her watchful and gracious gaze upon its progress, goes confidently forward with her to meet Christ.²⁷

The power of Mary's example in celebrations of the liturgy

14 The liturgy, which possesses the wonderful power of bringing to mind the realities and events of the past and of making them present here and now, often presents to the faithful the image of the Virgin of Nazareth, who “dedicated herself totally, as handmaid of the Lord, to the person and the work of her Son, serving the mystery of redemption under him and with him.”²⁸

Thus the Mother of Christ, especially in liturgical services, shines radiantly as the “exemplar of the virtues”²⁹ and of faithful cooperation in the work of salvation.

15 In doctrine and language deriving from the Fathers of the Church, the liturgy finds many ways to express the power of the Blessed Virgin as exemplar of the Christian life. Particularly when the liturgy seeks to highlight her sanctity and to present her to the faithful as the devoted handmaid of the Father (cf. Luke 1:38; 2:48) and the perfect disciple of Christ, the liturgy calls her the *exemplar*. It calls her a *figure* when it seeks to indicate that her manner of life as virgin, spouse, and mother provides a portrait of the life of the Church and shows the path it must take in its journey of faith and its following of Christ. Finally, the liturgy refers to her as *image*, in order to make it clear that in the Blessed Virgin, who is already perfectly fashioned in the likeness of her Son, the Church “joyfully contemplates, as in a flawless image, that which the Church itself desires and hopes wholly to be.”³⁰

16 In the liturgy, therefore, the Church invites the faithful to imitate the Blessed Virgin, above all for the faith and obedience with which she lovingly embraced the divine plan of salvation. The hymns and eucharistical texts of the liturgy unfold the beautiful panoply of virtues in the Mother of Christ that the Church, led by the Holy Spirit, has discovered in its prayer and has learned in its contemplation.

17 The powerful example of Mary that shines out in the celebration of the liturgy urges the faithful to become like the Mother, in order that they might be fashioned more completely in the likeness of her Son. Her example also prompts the faithful to celebrate the mysteries of Christ with that same spirit of reverent devotion with which she took part in the birth of her Son, in his epiphanies, and in his Death and Resurrection. In particular, Mary's example urges the faithful: to treasure the word of God in their hearts and dwell upon it assiduously; to praise God exultantly and thank him joyously; to serve God and neighbor faithfully and offer themselves generously; to pray with perseverance and make their petitions with confidence; to act in all things with mercy and humility; to cherish the law of God and embrace it with love; to love God in everything and above everything else; to be ready to meet Christ when he comes.

²⁶ Cf. *Liturgia Horarum*, 31 May, Visitation, Office of Readings, the hymn *Veni, praecelsa Domina* (not included in the English translation of the *Liturgia Horarum*).

²⁷ Cf. *The Roman Missal*, Votive Mass of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, Preface.

²⁸ Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*, no. 56: AAS 57 (1965), p. 60.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 65: AAS 57 (1965), p. 64.

³⁰ SC, art. 103: AAS 56 (1964), p. 125; DOL 1, no. 103. Cf. also *The Roman Missal*, 15 August, Assumption, Preface.

18 In the celebration of Masses of the Blessed Virgin, Priests and all others who have pastoral responsibilities are to strive above all to teach the faithful that the Eucharistic Sacrifice is the memorial of the Death and Resurrection of Christ and to move them to take part in it actively and fully. But Priests and others are not to fail to point out the power of Mary's example that can do so much for the sanctification of the faithful.

II. NATURE OF THE *COLLECTION OF MASSES*

19 The *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, approved by Pope John Paul II and promulgated by the Congregation for Divine Worship, has a specific purpose with regard to the *cultus* of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Collection seeks to promote celebrations that are marked by sound doctrine, the rich variety of their themes, and their rightful commemoration of the saving deeds that the Lord God has accomplished in the Blessed Virgin in view of the mystery of Christ and the Church.

20 The *Collection of Masses* is made up principally of the texts for Marian Masses that are found in the propers of the particular Churches or of religious institutes or in *The Roman Missal*.

21 The *Collection of Masses* is intended for:

Marian shrines where Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary are celebrated frequently, in accord with the provisions to be indicated in nos. 29–33;

ecclesial communities that on the Saturdays in Ordinary Time desire to celebrate a Mass of the Blessed Virgin, in accord with the provision to be indicated in no. 34.

As will be pointed out in no. 37, use of the *Collection of Masses* is permitted on days on which, according to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, the Priest is free to choose which Mass he will celebrate.³¹

22 Promulgation of the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* introduces no change in the General Roman Calendar, issued 21 March 1969, in *The Roman Missal*, second *editio typica*, issued 27 March 1975, in the *Lectionary for Mass*, second *editio typica*, issued 21 January 1981, or in the system of rubrics currently in force.

III. STRUCTURE OF THE *COLLECTION OF MASSES*

23 Within the cycle of a year the Church in an orderly pattern unfolds the whole mystery of Christ. This mystery begins with the eternal plan of predestination, in which Christ, the Word made flesh, stands as principle and head, as end and fulfillment of the human race and of all creation; it extends to his glorious Second Coming, when all things will be brought to completion in him, "that God may be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:28)."³²

³¹ *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, hereafter GIRM, no. 355 c).

³² Cf. SC, art 102: AAS 56 (1964), p. 125; DOL 1, no. 102. Cf. also *Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar*, ch. 1, no. 1: DOL 442, no. 3767.

24 Since Mary is so closely linked with the mystery of Christ, the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* is arranged in accord with the divisions of the liturgical year. With the mystery celebrated as the primary criterion, therefore, the forty-six formularies in the *Collection of Masses* are distributed over the seasons of the liturgical year: Advent (three formularies), Christmas Time (six formularies), Lent (five formularies), Easter Time (four formularies), Ordinary Time (twenty-eight formularies).

The formularies for Ordinary Time are divided into three sections. The first section contains eleven formularies for celebrations of the Mother of God under titles that are derived chiefly from Sacred Scripture or that express Mary's bond with the Church. The second section contains nine formularies to honor the memory of the Blessed Virgin Mary under titles that refer to her cooperation in fostering the spiritual life of the faithful. The third section contains eight formularies to celebrate the memory of the Blessed Virgin under titles that suggest her compassionate intercession on behalf of the faithful.

As a result of this arrangement of Masses, the occasions and manner of Mary's cooperation in the work of salvation will be celebrated and in the most appropriate liturgical season; in addition the Blessed Virgin's close connection with the mission of the Church will be clearly expressed.

25 In accord with the practice of the Roman Liturgy the *Collection of Masses* is made up of two volumes.

The first contains the euchological texts, the Entrance and Communion Antiphons, and, in an appendix, several formularies for Solemn Blessings at the end of Mass.

The second volume contains the biblical readings assigned for each Mass, together with the Responsorial Psalms and the *Alleluia* verse or verse before the Gospel reading.

26 In Volume 1 a historical, liturgical, and pastoral introduction precedes each formulary, in order to assist the preparation for the Eucharistic celebration. Each brief introduction indicates the origin of the memorial or title of the Blessed Virgin, provides, in some cases, the sources of the formulary, and explains its teaching, which is based on biblical and euchological texts.

IV. USE OF THE COLLECTION OF MASSES

27 If the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* is to achieve the objective intended, it must be used properly everywhere and by all.

Observance of the seasons of the liturgical year

28 For the correct use of the *Collection of Masses* the Priest Celebrant must respect the seasons of the liturgical year. As a rule, therefore, the Mass formularies are to be used during the liturgical season to which they have been assigned. But for a just reason certain formularies may be used in some other liturgical season. For example:

The Mass, "Our Lady of Nazareth," which is included among the Masses for Christmas Time (no. 8), may rightly be celebrated during Ordinary Time when a group of the faithful wish to commemorate the life led by the Virgin of Nazareth and the power of its example.

The Mass, “The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Reconciliation,” which is included among the formularies assigned to the season of Lent (no. 14), may also be properly used during Ordinary Time, when the Eucharist is celebrated for the purpose of arousing a spirit of reconciliation and concord.

On the other hand such Masses as the Mass, “The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Epiphany of the Lord” (no. 6) or the Mass, “The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Resurrection of the Lord” (no. 15), may not be celebrated outside the seasons to which they have been assigned, because of their specific congruence with these seasons.

A. Use of the “Collection of Masses” in Marian sanctuaries

29 As indicated already in no. 21, the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* is intended first of all for use in Marian shrines, in order to foster authentic devotion to the Virgin at these shrines and to suffuse it with the true spirit of the liturgy.

This purpose will be of great advantage for the particular Churches, since their pastoral concerns are to such a great extent sustained and nurtured by the initiatives and programs carried out in shrines dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. As the *Code of Canon Law* directs, “at shrines more abundant means of salvation are to be provided the faithful; the word of God is to be carefully proclaimed; liturgical life is to be appropriately fostered, especially through the celebration of the Eucharist and Penance; and approved forms of popular piety are to be cultivated.”³³

30 Celebration of the Eucharist is the high point and center of all pastoral activity at a shrine. Participation in the Eucharistic celebration is the principal intent of large pilgrimages of the faithful to a shrine, or of groups that meet there for study or prayer, or of individuals who go there to implore some special favor of God or for quiet contemplation.

In accord with the individual circumstances of the faithful or groups of the faithful, then, every measure is to be taken to ensure that the liturgy is celebrated in an exemplary way and that in its celebration of the divine mysteries the worshiping community will itself become the faithful image of the Church.³⁴

31 Accordingly, it has been the practice of the Congregation for Divine Worship to grant permission to Marian shrines for a more frequent celebration of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The following norms are to be observed in the use of the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.

a) As long as the liturgical season is respected, the Masses provided in the *Collection of Masses* may be celebrated on any day except those listed in nos. 1–6 of the Table of Liturgical Days.³⁵

³³ *Code of Canon Law*, can. 1234.

³⁴ Cf. SC, art. 2: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 97–98; DOL 1, no. 2.

³⁵ In the *Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar*, no. 59 (DOL 442, no. 3825), Table of Liturgical Days, nos. 1–6 are as follows:

1. The Paschal Triduum of the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord.
2. The Nativity of the Lord, the Epiphany, the Ascension, and Pentecost.

- b) The permission stated in paragraph a) is granted only for the Priests who are part of a pilgrimage or for Priests who celebrate Mass for the benefit of the members of a pilgrimage.
- c) During the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, the biblical readings are to be those assigned in the *Lectionary for Mass* for each day of the particular season except in the case of a celebration in the manner of a Feast or Solemnity.

“Proper Mass” of a shrine

32 Because of the relevance of the texts of the “proper Mass” of a shrine to the title under which the Blessed Virgin is honored there, the Priests and faithful on pilgrimage usually wish to celebrate that Mass.

But care must be taken to respect the different liturgical seasons, so that the “proper Mass” of a shrine is not the only Mass celebrated there. Rather the Mass formularies are to be intelligently varied, so that the celebration of the Eucharist provides the faithful with an overview of the entire history of salvation and of the bonds that have joined Mary to the mystery of Christ and the Church.

33 The following is an indication, by way of example, of circumstances in which the formularies of the *Collection of Masses* may opportunely replace the “proper Mass” of a shrine:

- a. during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, when the formularies provided in the *Collection of Masses* are so perfectly relevant to the mystery of Christ then being celebrated;
- b. during a pilgrimage that is to spend a number of days at a shrine or that is made up of pilgrims who visit the shrine frequently.

**B. Use of the “Collection of Masses” for a memorial
of the Blessed Virgin on Saturday**

34 As already mentioned in no. 21, the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* is also intended for ecclesial communities that “on Saturdays in Ordinary Time when no Obligatory

Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter.

Ash Wednesday.

Weekdays of Holy Week from Monday up to and including Thursday.

Days within the Octave of Easter.

3. Solemnities inscribed in the General Calendar, whether of the Lord, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or of Saints. The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed.

4. Proper Solemnities, namely:

- a) The Solemnity of the principal Patron of the place, the city or state.
- b) The Solemnity of the dedication and of the anniversary of the dedication of one’s own church.
- c) The Solemnity of the Title of one’s own church.

Memorial occurs³⁶ often celebrate a memorial of the Blessed Virgin and therefore wish to have available a number of Mass formularies.

35 The custom of dedicating Saturday to the Blessed Virgin Mary arose in Carolingian monasteries at the end of the eighth century and soon spread throughout Europe.³⁷ The custom also was incorporated into liturgical books of the particular Churches and became part of the heritage of the religious orders of evangelical and apostolic life that were founded early in the thirteenth century.

In the liturgical reform following the Council of Trent, the custom of celebrating a memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday was incorporated into the *Missale Romanum*.

The liturgical reform initiated by the Second Vatican Council clarified the meaning of the memorial of the Blessed Virgin on Saturday and gave it new vigor by making possible a more frequent celebration of this memorial, increasing the number of formularies and biblical readings, and revising the euchological texts.

36 A number of ecclesial communities celebrate the memorial of the Blessed Virgin on Saturday as a kind of introduction to the Lord's Day. As they prepare to celebrate the weekly remembrance of the Lord's Resurrection, these communities look with great reverence to the Blessed Virgin, who, alone of all his disciples, on that "great Sabbath" when Christ lay in the tomb, kept watch with full faith and hope and awaited his resurrection.³⁸

This "ancient and . . . , as it were, humble memorial"³⁹ of Mary recurring each week is in a certain way a reminder of the unfailing presence of the Blessed Virgin in the life of the Church.

C. Use of the "Collection of Masses" on days when Masses ad libitum may be celebrated

37 On days when, according to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, the choice of Masses is left open,⁴⁰ a Priest celebrating Mass, whether with or without a congregation, has the option of using one of the formularies in the *Collection of Masses*. But "the first concern of a Priest celebrating with a congregation is the spiritual benefit of the faithful and he will be careful not to impose his personal preference on them. Above all he will make sure not to omit too often or without suf-

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- d) The Solemnity either of the Title
or of the Founder
or of the principal Patron of an Order or Congregation.

5. Feasts of the Lord inscribed in the General Calendar.
6. Sundays of Christmas Time and the Sundays in Ordinary Time.

³⁶ *Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar*, no. 15: DOL 442, no. 3781.

³⁷ Cf. Bernold of Constance, *Micrologus de ecclesiasticis observationibus*, ch. 60: PL 151, 1020.

³⁸ Cf. Humbert of Romans, *De vita regulari*, ch. 24, "Why Saturday is the day assigned to the Blessed Virgin": vol. 2 (A. Befani, Rome, 1889), pp. 72–73.

³⁹ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis cultus*, no. 9: AAS 66 (1974), p. 122; DOL 467, no. 3907.

⁴⁰ GIRM, no. 355 c).

ficient cause the readings assigned for each day in the weekday Lectionary; the Church's desire is that a more lavish table of the word of God be spread before the faithful."⁴¹

Priests and faithful should keep in mind that genuine Marian devotion does not demand the multiplication of Masses of the Blessed Virgin, but that in their celebration everything—readings, songs, homily, Universal Prayer, the offering of the sacrifice—be done with propriety, care, and a vital liturgical spirit.

V. THE WORD OF GOD IN THE FORMULARIES OF THE *COLLECTION OF MASSES*

38 The particular objective of every liturgical memorial is expressed and defined through both its euchological texts and its biblical readings. It is therefore clear why even from the earliest times the greatest care has been taken in the choosing of passages of Scripture. It is also clear why each formulary in the *Collection of Masses* has been assigned its own plan of readings for the celebration of the word of God.

39 The biblical readings of the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* constitute a rich and varied corpus that in the course of the centuries has been created by the ecclesial communities of both the past and the present.

Within this biblical corpus it is possible to distinguish three types of readings:

- a. readings from both the Old and the New Testament that relate to the life or mission of the Blessed Virgin or that contain prophecies about her;
- b. readings from the Old Testament that from antiquity have been applied to Mary. The Fathers of the Church have always regarded the Sacred Scriptures of both the Old and the New Covenant as a single corpus that is permeated by the mystery of Christ. Accordingly certain events, figures, or symbols of the Old Testament foretell or suggest in a wonderful manner the life and mission of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the glorious daughter of Zion and Mother of Christ;
- c. readings of the New Testament that, while not referring to the Blessed Virgin, still are assigned to the celebration of her memorial in order to make clear that all the virtues extolled in the Gospel, faith, charity, hope, humility, mercy, purity of heart flourished in Mary, the first and most perfect of Christ's disciples.

40 The following points are to be noted with regard to the readings assigned to each formulary in the *Collection of Masses*.

- a. Only two readings are provided; the first is from the Old Testament, from an Apostle (that is, from the Epistles or from Revelation) or, in Easter Time, from Acts or Revelation; the second reading is from one of the Gospels.

⁴¹ *Lectionary for Mass* (2nd editio typica, 1981), General Introduction, no. 83; cf. also GIRM, no. 355c. SC, art. 51: AAS 56 (1964), p. 114; DOL 1, no. 51.

b. But in special, more solemn celebrations when the Priest and the faithful wish to have three readings proclaimed at Mass, the additional reading is taken from the texts provided in the *Lectionary for Mass*, the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or from the texts contained in the appendix of the Lectionary for the *Collection of Masses*. The provisions of the *Lectionary for Mass*, General Introduction, nos. 78–81 (“Principles to Be Followed in the Use of the Order of Readings”), are to be observed.

c. The readings that are indicated in the *Collection of Masses* for each Mass formulary will be most appropriate for the celebration of some special memorial of the Blessed Virgin. Still, celebrants have the option of replacing these readings with other appropriate readings, taken at will from those contained in the *Lectionary for Mass*, Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or in the appendix of the Lectionary for the *Collection of Masses*.⁴²

41 The following are to be observed with regard to the liturgy of the word.

a. During the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter (except for the concession in no. 31 c), the readings are to be those assigned in the seasonal *Lectionary for Mass* for each day of these seasons, lest the “continuous reading” of Scripture be interrupted or readings that express the particular character of a season be neglected.

b. During Ordinary Time it is up to the Priest Celebrant “in harmony with those who exercise some part in the celebration, including the faithful,”⁴³ to decide which is more beneficial: to take the readings from the *Collection of Masses* or to take them from the seasonal *Lectionary for Mass*.

VI. ADAPTATIONS

42 It belongs to the Conference of Bishops to see to the vernacular translation of the *Collection of Masses*, in accord with the existing norms provided for such translations,⁴⁴ so as to ensure that the translation is consonant with the idiom of the various languages and the genius of the various cultures. Whenever opportune, melodies suitable for singing should be added to the translation.

43 It also belongs to the Conference of Bishops to include as an appendix to the vernacular edition previously approved formularies for Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary under titles by which she is venerated by the faithful of an entire nation or region or of a large section of the nation or region.

⁴² Cf. *Lectionary for Mass* (2nd editio typica, 1981), Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, nos. 707–712; cf. also vol. 2 of the *Collection of Masses*, Appendix, nos. 1–21.

⁴³ GIRM, no. 352. Cf. *Lectionary for Mass* (2nd editio typica, 1981), General Introduction, no. 78.

⁴⁴ Cf. Consilium for the Carrying Out of the Constitution on the Liturgy, Instruction on the translation of liturgical texts for celebrations with a congregation, 25 January 1969: *Notitiae* 5 (1969), pp. 3–12; DOL 123, nos. 838–880. Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship, Circular Letter to presidents of the conferences of bishops, on the use of the vernacular in the liturgy, 5 June 1976: *Notitiae* 12 (1976), pp. 300–302; DOL 133, nos. 911–917.

SIGLA

Documents of Vatican II and Papal Documents

- LG Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*
 MC Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis Cultus*, on rightly grounding and increasing Marian devotion
 SC Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*

Bibliographical Abbreviations

- AAS *Acta Apostolicae Sedis. Commentarium officiale* (Vatican City, 1909–)
 ASS *Acta Sanctae Sedis. Ephemerides Romanae. Authenticae et officiales* (Rome, 1865–1908)
 CSEL *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Vienna, 1866–)
 LH *Liturgia Horarum*
 MR *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia emendata* (2008)
 OLM *Ordo Lectionum Missae*
 Pa *Sacramentarium Paduense* (The Sacramentary of Padua)
 PG *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, J.P. Migne, ed., 161 v. (Paris, 1857–66)
 PL *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series latina*, J.P. Migne, ed., 222 v. (Paris, 1844–55)
 Sch *Sources chrétiennes*, H. de Lubac et al., ed. (Paris, 1941–)
 Ve *Sacramentarium Veronense* (The Verona Sacramentary)

Abbreviations for the Identification of Texts

- All *Alleluia*
 Ant *Antiphon*
 Col *Collect*
 Com Ant *Communion Antiphon*
 Ent Ant *Entrance Antiphon*
 Gos *Gospel Reading*
 Gos Ver *Gospel Verse*
 1 Read *First Reading*
 PC *Prayer after Communion*
 PO *Prayer over the Offerings*
 Pref *Preface*
 Resp *Responsorial Psalm*

ADVENT

During Advent the Roman Liturgy celebrates the two comings of the Lord: the First Coming in lowliness, when in the fullness of time (cf. Galatians 4:4) the Lord took flesh of the Blessed Virgin Mary and came into the world to save the human race; the Second Coming in glory, when at the end of time the Lord will come “to judge the living and the dead” (*Creed*) and to lead the just into the house of his Father where Mary has preceded them in glory.

MASS FORMULARIES

1. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Chosen Daughter of Israel
2. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Annunciation of the Lord
3. The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1. THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, CHOSEN DAUGHTER OF ISRAEL

During Advent the Roman Liturgy celebrates the plan of salvation by which the merciful God called the patriarchs, united them to himself in a covenant of love, established the Law through Moses, raised up the prophets, and chose David as the one from whose line the Savior of the world was to be born. The books of the Old Testament, in foretelling the coming of Christ, “gradually bring into clearer light the figure of a woman, the Mother of the Redeemer” (LG, n. 55): she is the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom the Church proclaims as the joy of Israel and the noble daughter of Zion.

Our Lady, who undid the sin of Eve by her sinlessness, “is by nature the daughter of Adam” (Pref; in believing the message of the angel she conceived the Son of God in her virginal womb: “she is by faith the true child of Abraham” (Pref); “she is by descent the branch from the root of Jesse, bearing the flower that is Jesus Christ our Lord” (Pref).

In her sincere obedience to the Law and her wholehearted acceptance of God’s will, she is, in the words of the Second Vatican Council, “exalted among the humble and poor of the Lord, who trustingly hope in him for salvation and from him receive it. After the long period of waiting for the fulfillment of the promise, in her at last the fullness of time is reached, and a new order of providence is begun, when the Son of God takes from her a human nature in order to free the human family from sin through the mysteries of his earthly life” (LG, no. 55).

This Mass in honor of our Lady, chosen daughter of Israel, recalls and celebrates this mystery of God’s mercy and our salvation.

The first reading appropriately commemorates either God’s promise to Abraham (“All the communities of the earth shall find blessing in you”: 1 Read, Genesis 12:1-7; cf. Luke 1:55) or God’s promise to David through the prophet Nathan (“Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever”: 1 Read, 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-11, 16; cf. Luke 1:32-33). The Gospel reading proclaims the ancestry of Christ (Gos, Matthew 1:1-17), showing that our Savior is son of David and son of Abraham (cf. Matthew 1:1).

Entrance Antiphon

Cf. Zephaniah 3:14; Haggai 2:8

Rejoice and be glad with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem;
the Desired of all nations is coming,
and the house of the Lord will be filled with glory.

COLLECT

- A** O God, who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary,
foremost among the poor and humble,
to be the Mother of the Savior,
grant, we pray, that, following her example,
we may offer you the homage of sincere faith
and place in you all our hope of salvation.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
- B** O God, who, fulfilling the promise made to our Fathers,
chose the Blessed Virgin Mary,
the noble daughter of Zion,
grant that we may follow her example,
for her humility was pleasing to you
and her obedience profitable to us.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept, O Lord, these offerings,
and by your power change them into the Sacrament of salvation,
in which, fulfilling the sacrifices of the Fathers,
is offered the true Lamb, Jesus Christ your Son,
born of the ever-Virgin Mary in a way beyond all telling.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Preface P 1, page 80.

Communion Antiphon

Rejoice and be glad, O joy of Israel!
Through the angel you received the world's joy!
Rejoice and be glad, for you brought to birth for us the Bread of Life!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Refreshed, Lord God, by this life-giving Sacrament,
we call out to you and pray
that as we see in Christ, born of the Virgin,
the promise to Israel fulfilled,
so in his Second Coming we may attain
the joyful fulfillment of all our hope.
Through Christ our Lord.