

# Symmetry in the missal

Regensburg, 12.12.2023 (P. Klaus Schäfer SAC)

The missal reflects the liturgical year with the marked times and high feasts with inserts in the preface, in the high prayer and in the solemn final blessing. Tables 1 and 2 show the inserts of the missals currently in use - the red "Missal I" and the blue "Missal II".

<i>Memorable times</i>	<i>PI</i>	<i>PII</i>	<i>HI</i>	<i>HII</i>	<i>SI</i>	<i>SII</i>
Advent	X	5			X	X
Christmas time	W	3				
Easter penitential season / Lent	X	4				
Easter time	X	5			X	X
<i>Solemnities of the Lord</i>						
Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)	X				X	X
Apparition of the Lord (January 6)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Annunciation of the Lord (March 25)	O	O	X	X		
Easter						
Ascension	X	2	X	X	X	X
Pentecost	O		X	X		
Feast of the Holy Trinity	O	O				
Corpus Christi	E	E				
Feast of the Sacred Heart	O	O				
Feast of Christ the King	O	O				
<i>Solemnities of the Mother of God</i>						
conceived without original sin (Dec. 8)	O	O	X			
Mary, Mother of God (January 1)	W					
Assumption of Mary into Heaven (Aug. 15)	O	O	X	X		
<i>Solemnities of the saints</i>						
St. Joseph (March 19)	O	J				
Nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 24)	O	O	X	X		
Solemnity of St. Peter and St. Paul (June 29)	O	O				
All Saints' Day (November 1)	O	O	X	X		
All Souls' Day (November 2)	V	V				

Tab. 1 Insertions in the missal

**P = Preface / H = Insertion in the High Prayer / S = Solemn Final Blessing**

**I = Missal I / II = Missal II**

O = contained on the corresponding day; E = of the Eucharist; J = of St. Joseph; V = deceased; Christmas Preface; X = contained; number = number of texts in the missal

<i>otherwise available in the missal</i>	<i>PI</i>	<i>P II</i>	<i>HI</i>	<i>H II</i>	<i>SI</i>	<i>S II</i>
on New Year's Day					X	X
Passion of Christ / Passion of the Lord	X	2			X	X
on Sundays	X	8	X	X		
Holy Eucharist	X	2				
of the angels		X				
of St. Joseph		X				
of the Apostles		2				
of the saints		2				
of the martyrs		2				
of the shepherds of the Church		2				
of the holy virgins and religious		X				
of the days of the week		6				
the deceased	X	5				
Baptism of the Lord (Sunday after January 6)	O					
Fifth Sunday of Lent		O				
Palm Sunday	O					
Maundy Thursday	O					
Transfiguration of the Lord (August 6)	O	O				
Exaltation of the Cross (September 14)	O	O				
Annual commemoration of a church consecration	O					
From Christmas to New Year			X	X		
Easter Vigil to White Sunday			X	X		
on your own church consecration day	O	O	X	X	X	X
on Candlemas (February 2)			X	X		
on the Nativity of Mary		O		X		
on the conception of Mary				X		
Presentation of the Lord (February 2)	O	O				
of the Holy Spirit					X	X
In the annual cycle					6	6
of the Blessed Virgin Mary					X	X
of the apostles Peter and Paul					X	X
of the apostles						X
from all the saints					X	X
in masses for the deceased					X	X
Weather blessing					X	X

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The missal II has its own prefaces:

St. Boniface (05.06.); the memory of the pains of Mary (15.09.); St. Ruprecht and St. Virgil (24.09.); St. Nicholas of Flüe (25.09.); St. Hedwig (16.10.); St. Willibrord (07.11. ); Elisabeth of Thuringia (19.11.); wedding masses; at the consecration of virgins; at the profession of a religious order - perpetual profession; at an altar consecration; for the unity of Christians; of the Holy Spirit;

Special insertions in the High Prayer in Missal II:

At the consecration of virgins; at religious profession - perpetual profession;

Have your own solemn final blessing in Missal II:

At Confirmation Masses; Wedding Masses; At the Consecration of Virgins; At Religious Profession - Perpetual Profession; At an Altar Consecration.

## **Inventory**

A certain system can be recognized in the marked times (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter): the preface was usually placed with the other texts of the day for the high feasts (of the Lord, the Mother of God and the saints). The insertion at the high prayers and the final blessing seem to have been distributed arbitrarily. This lack of systematization contradicts the equal value of the high feasts.

The other feast days and the weekdays also show a certain systematic approach: If the occasion is celebrated only once a year, the preface is with the other text of the day; but if the feast is celebrated several times (e.g. Apostles and Saints), the preface is with the other prefaces.

The fact that the marked times do not have an insertion in the High Prayer could be justified in some way. However, the fact that not all solemnities have an insertion in the High Prayer contradicts the character of the solemnity. On the other hand, the fact that Candlemas, the Nativity of the Virgin Mary and the Conception of the Virgin Mary have an insertion in the High Prayer is an asymmetry.

It is incomprehensible that there is only an insertion in the High Prayer for the days from Christmas to New Year, but not until the end of the Christmas season - the Baptism of the Lord; the same applies to the Easter season.

Of the 18 Solemnities, 3 have their own final blessing, while the remaining 15 Solemnities refer to a final blessing that is also given in a different context.

The fact that the Blessed Virgin Mary, the apostles Peter and Paul, the other apostles and the saints have a final blessing detracts from the character of the 15 solemnities.

The different designations in the missals are irritating: sometimes it is the Paschal penitential season, sometimes Lent; sometimes it is the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, sometimes the New Year; sometimes it is the Passion of Christ, sometimes the Passion of the Lord.

Conclusion: When compiling Missal I and Missal II, the personal preferences of the authors seem to have taken precedence over a clear system. There is no other explanation for the gaps in Tables 1 and 2. The term "authors" refers not only to the persons who prepared the current version, but also to all those who prepared previous editions of the two missals.

## **Recommendations for the new missal**

The marked times are marked with purple or white as the liturgical color. They could therefore also have corresponding insertions - there would only be four in total - in the High Prayer. In this way, the marked times would be more clearly communicated to the faithful.

To ensure that the new missals contain less individualism and more systematization, a few basic rules for the new missals are recommended below:

1. All Solemnities should have their own preface and final blessing with the rest of the text of the day.
2. all solemnities should have their own insertion in the High Prayers.
3. insertions in the High Prayers and solemn final blessings should be reserved for High Feasts only.
4. Points 1 to 3 could also apply to the marked times.
5. if a feast is celebrated once a year (e.g. Presentation of the Lord), the preface is given with the other texts of the day.
6. if the feast is celebrated several times a year (e.g. Martyrs), the preface is to be placed before the High Prayers so that they can be used by other feasts in this group.

A clear system would distinguish the marked times and the high feasts more clearly from the saints' feasts. In addition, it would make handling the missals much easier, as it would mean you would know where the individual parts of the liturgy are located.

Table 3 was created as an example of stringent symmetry. May it be help and guidance to the creators of the new missals.

<i>Memorable times</i>	<i>PI</i>	<i>PII</i>	<i>HI</i>	<i>HII</i>	<i>SI</i>	<i>SII</i>
Advent	X	5	X	X	X	X
Christmas time	X	3	X	X	X	X
Easter penitential season / Lent	X	4	X	X	X	X
Easter time	X	5	X	X	X	X
<i>Solemnities of the Lord</i>						
Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)	O	O	X	X	O	O
Apparition of the Lord (January 6)	O	O	X	X	O	O
Annunciation of the Lord (March 25)	O	O	X	X	O	O
Easter	O	O	X	X	O	O
Ascension	O	O	X	X	O	O
Pentecost	O	O	X	X	O	O
Feast of the Holy Trinity	O	O	X	X	O	O
Corpus Christi	O	O	X	X	O	O
Feast of the Sacred Heart	O	O	X	X	O	O
Feast of Christ the King	O	O	X	X	O	O
<i>Solemnities of the Mother of God</i>						
conceived without original sin (Dec. 8)	O	O	X	X	O	O
Mary, Mother of God (January 1)	O	O	X	X	O	O
Assumption of Mary into Heaven (Aug. 15)	O	O	X	X	O	O
<i>Solemnities of the saints</i>						
St. Joseph (March 19)	O	O	X	X	O	O
Nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 24)	O	O	X	X	O	O
Solemnity of St. Peter and St. Paul (June 29)	O	O	X	X	O	O
All Saints' Day (November 1)	O	O	X	X	O	O
All Souls' Day (November 2)	O	O	X	X	O	O

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