



# GREGORIAN MASS INFORMATION



The custom of offering thirty (30) Masses over thirty days for the repose of a departed soul, known as 'Gregorian Masses', likely dates back to the year AD 590, gaining support from a narrative in the *Dialogues* of St. Gregory the Great. In this narrative, Pope Gregory counsels the Abbot of St. Andrew's Monastery in Rome to offer thirty Masses for the soul of one of monastery's errant monks, Justus, who has recently died. At the end of the thirty days, a private revelation comes by way of Justus's close friend to assure the community that, on account of the Mass offerings, Justus has been released from sufferings of purgatory.

The Church's official legislation on indulgences, the *Enchiridion of Indulgences* & related documents, does not promise the complete remission of temporal and eternal punishment due to sin, i.e., a plenary indulgence, for the offering of Gregorian Masses. Instead, there are four pious works, namely the Rosary, half-hour devotional reading of Sacred Scripture, half-hour Eucharistic Adoration, and walking the Stations of the Cross, which the Church recommends for obtaining a plenary indulgence. The Church provides Her official assurance in the *Enchiridion* that any faithful member of the Church can obtain a plenary indulgence for a departed soul on any day of the year by completing one of these four pious exercises, as long as certain necessary dispositions and conditions accompany the work. Nevertheless, as a service to those who wish to request, the Monastery of Christ in the Desert accepts requests for Gregorian Masses.

## *Customary Guideline about the Offering of Gregorian Masses*

Because the practice of offering Gregorian Masses is not formally described in current Church law, Gregorian Mass requests are officially regulated only by the Church's rubrics governing the offering of Mass generally. However, long-standing custom establishes the following major guidelines which the Monastery affirms:

- The offering of Gregorian Masses must consist of thirty Masses, one offered each day over the course of thirty (30) consecutive days. (The succession of consecutive days can be interrupted for the Sacred Triduum, Easter Sunday, Christmas Day, when Mass is either not offered, or where the priest has liberty to offer a special intention other than the intention for the beneficiary of the Gregorian Masses.)
- A priest offering a Gregorian Mass must have, as his principal intention, only the benefit of one soul in Purgatory. (I.e., a series of Gregorian Masses cannot be, strictly speaking, divided for the benefit of two or more souls.) *It is possible to request 30 consecutive Mass offerings for two or more souls together, but this arrangement does not fall within the strict definition of 'Gregorian Masses'.*

- If the soul for whom Mass is being offered is not in Purgatory (whether in Heaven or in hell), then the Gregorian Masses will apply to another soul instead.

#### *Additional Practical Considerations with Respect to the Monastery*

In addition to the customary regulations mentioned above, there are some additional pragmatic concerns that bear on the Monastery's acceptance of Gregorian Mass requests:

- In general, all Mass requests at the Monastery of Christ in the Desert are queued in the order in which they are received, unless a particular date is specified. If a requested date is impossible to honor, then the Monastery will presume permission to choose another date unless the request explicitly states that the date is non-negotiable. In order to give right priority to Masses requested in the past, no more than two series of Gregorian Masses will be offered at a given time. If the Monastery's calendar of scheduled Masses is full beyond what can reasonably accommodate a Gregorian Mass request, the request will be either scheduled for a few weeks later; otherwise, we will need to negotiate the request or decline it. (Feel free to submit a preliminary inquiry about our calendar in the e-mail inquiry box at [christdesert.org/mass-requests/inquire](http://christdesert.org/mass-requests/inquire) ).
- Ideally, one priest will be dedicated to offer all thirty Masses for a specific Gregorian Mass request. However, there may be cases where a priest offering Gregorian Masses will need to ask a fellow priest to offer the intention on his behalf for a few days.
- Please enclose the form behind (pg. 3) in an envelope with your stipend. (The proper value of a stipend for Gregorian Masses is \$300.00. *We will accept a reduced stipend on case-by-case bases if accompanied by a note to share with us a bit about yourself and about the life of the one for whom the Masses will be offered, if our calendar can accommodate the request.*)

You may submit the envelope in person, or under the Guestmaster's door, or mail to\_

Mass Requests, PO Box 270, Abiquiú, NM 87510-0270



# GREGORIAN MASS REQUEST



Thirty Gregorian Masses are requested for the repose of the soul of

<b>Full Name</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Dates (from)</b>	<b>(until)</b>
<b>Comments</b>	<input type="text"/>

YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION	MASS CARD RECIPIENT INFORMATION
	<u>Send to someone besides yourself? If so, fill this info below</u>
FIRST NAME <input type="text"/>	FIRST NAME <input type="text"/>
LAST NAME <input type="text"/>	LAST NAME <input type="text"/>
EMAIL* <input type="text"/>	*Recipient MAILING ADDRESS <input type="text"/>
*YOUR MAILING ADDRESS <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
CITY <input type="text"/>	CITY <input type="text"/>
STATE <input type="text"/>	STATE <input type="text"/>
ZIP <input type="text"/>	ZIP <input type="text"/>
COUNTRY <input type="text"/>	COUNTRY <input type="text"/>

\*MASS CARD WILL BE SENT BY U.S. POSTAL SERVICE.

You may submit this request in an envelope with the stipend in person, or under the Guestmaster's door, or mail to\_

Mass Requests, Christ in the Desert Monastery  
PO Box 270, Abiquiú, NM 87510-0270

You may also make Mass requests online at [www.christdesert.org/mass-requests](http://www.christdesert.org/mass-requests)

*If requesting online, please leave a comment indicating that your request is a Gregorian Mass request.*