

THE CEREMONIAL

The ceremony of Holy Thursday celebrated by the Bishop in his Cathedral

Objects to be prepared.

- In addition to all that is required for a regular Pontifical Mass, it is necessary to prepare three urns filled with the purest olive oil: the urn of Holy Chrism is covered with a white veil, the two others with veils of different colours.
- The balm is to be placed in a special container.
- For the priests that are to take part in the ceremony twelve white chasubles with stoles and maniples are prepared, for the deacons seven white dalmatics with stoles and maniples, and for the subdeacons seven white tunics with maniples.
- Besides all that which is indicated further on, it is necessary to prepare an empty chalice which will serve for the purification of the Bishop's fingers after the Blessing of the Oil of the Infirm. The Bishop's chalice is prepared with three hosts; a ciborium containing hosts for the communion of the clergy is placed on the credence table.

THE MASS

The Pontifical Mass is celebrated after None which is recited simply. The Bishop comes solemnly to the altar vested in pontifical vestments: at the head of the procession is the thurifer, followed by the acolytes carrying their candles, the seven subdeacons two by two with three in the last place, the seven deacons two by two with three in the last place, the twelve priests two by two, the dressed canons, the subdeacon of the Mass carrying the evangelium with the maniple of the Bishop, the deacon and at his right the assistant Priest, and finally the Bishop between his two deacons of honour.

The Mass is celebrated as usual. The Bishop omits the psalm *Judica*, as well as the *Gloria Patri* at the Introit and the *Lavabo*. While he recites the *Gloria in excelsis*, the acolyte rings the bell, and the bells are rung during the singing of the hymn.

At the Offertory, the MC places on the altar the ciborium containing the hosts to be consecrated. The subdeacon takes off the humeral veil after having poured the water into the chalice; he assists at the blessing of the incense, and the incensing of the altar and the Bishop; at the elevation, he does the incensing as at *Requiem* Masses.

The torchbearers remain from the *Sanctus* to the end of the ceremony: they take their places/stand at each side of the altar during the procession and accompany the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar of Repose.

BLESSING OF THE OIL OF THE INFIRM

At *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*, the MC places on the altar the chalice prepared for the purification, the subdeacon comes to the right of the deacon, and the acolyte carries the cruet of water.

Before *Per quem...*, the Bishop genuflects with the sacred ministers and goes to the Epistle side; the deacon holds the chalice upon which the Bishop places his fingers and the subdeacon pours the water to purify them; the deacon presents the purificator and then places chalice and purificator on the altar.

The Bishop returns to the middle of the altar, genuflects with the sacred ministers and descends to the first step where he receives mitre and crozier. He then goes to the place prepared for the Blessing of the Oil of the Infirm: he is preceded by the Assistant Priest and accompanied by the deacon and subdeacon; the two deacons of honour remain at the altar. The two acolytes follow without their candles.

When the Bishop is seated, the Assistant Priest says in the Lesson Tone: *Oleum infirmorum*. One of the subdeacons advances; with the two acolytes, he reverences the Blessed Sacrament with a genuflection on two knees and goes to get the urn containing the oil for the infirm. He returns between the two acolytes, reverences the altar as at his departure and gives the urn to the Archdeacon saying: *Oleum infirmorum*. The Archdeacon presents it to the Bishop saying the same words. The deacon lifts the cover.

The Bishop recites the exorcism standing and wearing the mitre; he removes the mitre for the following prayer. The deacon covers the blessed oil, the Archdeacon presents the urn to the subdeacon who carries it: the latter carries it to the sacristy with the same ceremonies. The Bishop washes his hands, takes the crozier, genuflects on two knees on the bare floor, goes up to the altar with the deacon and Assistant Priest, and genuflects on the predilla; the subdeacon stays at the base of the steps.

CONTINUING MASS

There is no Kiss of Peace. After having taken the Precious Blood, the Bishop places the host consecrated for the next day into the chalice prepared for this purpose.

Then the communion of the clergy takes place. The deacon chants the *Confiteor*, the Bishop says the *Misereatur, Indulgentiam*. The Bishop gives communion first of all to the deacon and subdeacon, then to the Assistant Priest, the deacons of honour, the dressed canons, the twelve Priests, the seven deacons, the seven subdeacons and the other members of the clergy.

The Bishop performs the ablutions as usual. Then, he again goes to the place where the Blessing of the Oils takes place, following the same rubrics as the first time.

BLESSING OF THE HOLY CHRISM AND OIL OF THE CATECHUMENS

When the bishop is seated, the Assistant Priest says in the Lesson Tone: *Oleum ad sanctum Chrisma, Oleum catechumenorum*. The thurifer has the incense blessed by the Bishop.

Then the procession gets ready to go get the urns from the sacristy. At the head of the procession is the thurifer, the crossbearer accompanied by two acolytes carrying their candles, two cantors, then the seven subdeacons, the seven deacons, and the twelve priests; all genuflect on both knees as they leave their places. At the sacristy, one deacon takes the urn of the Holy Chrism, another the urn of the Oil of Catechumens, a subdeacon takes the special urn containing the balm.

They return in the following order: the thurifer, crossbearer and acolytes, the cantors, the subdeacons two by two, the subdeacon carrying the balm, the deacon carrying the Holy Chrism,

having at his left the deacon carrying the Oil of the Catechumens, and finally the twelve Priests. The cantors intone the verse *O Redemptor* which the choir repeats, and sing the hymn *Audi judex*.

Returning to the sanctuary, the crossbearer and acolytes stand near the altar at the Epistle corner; the subdeacons, deacons and priests resume their places after having revered the Blessed Sacrament on both knees. The deacons carrying the urns, as well as the subdeacon carrying the balm, remain behind the Bishop, while the priests return to their places.

The deacon carrying the urn of the Holy Chrism gives it to the Assistant Priest who places it before the Bishop; the subdeacon carrying the balm gives it also to the Assistant Priest.

The Bishop blesses the balm, mixes it with the oil and recites a final prayer.

He then blows three times in the form of a cross over the opening of the urn of the Holy Chrism; the twelve vested Priests come one after another to perform the same ceremony. The Bishop reads the exorcism, chants the preface, pours the balm into the urn, and reverences the Holy Chrism with a triple bow saying each time *Ave, sanctum Chrisma*; then he kisses the opening of the urn. The twelve priests, after having revered the altar and the Bishop, come one after another to make three genuflections before the urn, at three different places, chanting *Ave, sanctum Chrisma* et lifting their voices each time; after having chanted these words for the third time, each one kisses the opening of the urn.

The deacon of the Bishop replaces the cover on the urn of the Holy Chrism, and the urn of the Oil of the Catechumens is brought forward.

The ceremonies are the same as those for the Holy Chrism: the twelve priests come to blow over the oil, and when the blessing is finished, they reverence the urn with three genuflections saying each time *Ave sanctum oleum*, and kiss the opening of the urn.

The Bishop again blesses the incense, and the procession returns to the sacristy in the same order in which it came. The Bishop washes his hands and returns to the altar.

THE END OF THE CEREMONY

The Mass continues observing the rules prescribed for the Blessed Sacrament exposed; for the blessing, the Bishop takes his crozier without mitre.

On returning to the throne, the Bishop removes the Mass vestments and takes a cope. Without blessing it he places incense into the two thuribles presented to him by two thurifers.

The deacon and subdeacon of the Mass may depart; the deacons of honour assist the Bishop during the procession. The first deacon of honour presents the chalice to the Bishop before the departure; it is also he that receives it at the altar of repose, places it into the tabernacle of which he closes the door only after the incensation.