

From: The best of Questions and Answers, Angelus Press 2009

Does a Saturday evening "vigil" Mass satisfy the Sunday obligation?

It is of the divine law, prescribed by the third commandment of God, that a day of rest be set aside in honour of God. The theologians teach that the precept that this be observed on the Sunday and no longer on the Saturday is of ecclesiastical law, since at the beginning of the Church the apostles continued to go to the temple on Saturday (Acts 3:1, 5:12). However, the apostles universally introduced the custom of sanctifying Sunday as the Lord's Day, so much so that it had become obligatory by the beginning of the second century (cf. Prummer (Dominicus Prummer, *Manuale Theologiae Moralis*], II, 386, §465).

It is certainly true that the liturgical days for Sunday and feast days have always started with First Vespers that are celebrated on the eve of the feast or on Saturday afternoon to prepare for Sunday. But it was never permitted to celebrate a Mass for the feast or for the Sunday on the eve of the day itself, at the time of First Vespers. In fact, the Church's law was explicit on this point, prescribing that Mass could not begin more than one hour before dawn or more than one hour after noon (Can. 821, §1). It was consequently just as inconceivable to celebrate Mass on the eve of a feast to satisfy the obligation of the feast as it was to claim that the law of abstinence from servile work obliged as of the afternoon before the feast. If it is true that in 1953 Pope Pius XII permitted the celebration of afternoon and evening Masses, this was on account of the shortage of priests, to allow for Masses on the afternoon or night of the feast or Sunday itself, rather than for the celebration of a "vigil" Mass to avoid the sanctification of the Sunday or holy day.

The novelty came with the 1983 Code of Canon Law, which permitted the faithful to satisfy their obligation of assisting at Mass on a Sunday or holy day either on the day itself or the afternoon or evening beforehand (Can. 1248, §1). What are we to think of this? It is certainly true that the highest legislative authority in the Church, the pope, technically has the right to modify the first precept of the Church, since it is of ecclesiastical law and not of divine law. It is this ecclesiastical law that obliges under pain of mortal sin, as defined by Pope Innocent XI, and so consequently a person could not be accused of mortal sin for simply availing himself of the privilege of assisting at Mass on the afternoon before a Sunday or feast day.

However, this is not the real issue at stake. The real question is whether this relaxation of the law is in conformity with Tradition, whether it helps protect the Faith, and whether it assures the keeping of the third commandment of God, as it was designed to do. Alas, the response must be negative on each count. Whereas those who were legitimately impeded from assisting at Mass (e.g., by work obligations) were freed from their obligation, there is no tradition in the pre-Vatican II Church of substituting Mass for the offices that are designed to prepare for the feast (with the sole exception being in the 1950's when Pope Pius XII authorised miners who had to work every Sunday to assist at Mass on Saturday evening). It certainly does not protect the Faith or help in the sanctification of Sunday, as experience has shown. What do those Catholics do to sanctify the Sunday, to study and pray their Faith, when they will not even go to Mass on Sunday but prefer Saturday afternoon so that their Sunday can be free for secular activities? Clearly, little or nothing. Gone are the Sunday catechism classes made obligatory by St. Pius X, the study of Scripture, the reading of spiritual books, meditation and prayer, and even the respect for Sunday as a special day, consecrated to the honour of Almighty God. To introduce such a measure into the Church's law is a major step in the secularisation of the Church, and in making Catholics' lives entirely indiscernible from those of anybody else in this pagan world.

Consequently, we have a duty to encourage our Novus Ordo Catholic friends to stand up against this lukewarm practice, so opposed to the sense of the Church and to the restoration of all things in Christ, and to truly honour the mysteries of the Resurrection and of eternal life that are symbolised by the Sunday rest. Let traditional Catholics not even dream of the hypocrisy of attempting to use this provision of the lax post-conciliar law, unless it be in the case where there is no alternative. For it is a manifest contradiction to pretend to be attached to the traditional Mass, and to the Church's traditional teachings, and to refuse to even make the effort to attend Mass on Sunday to sanctify the Lord's day.

— Fr. Scott, January 2002.

Our Lady of Fatima Church

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September 2024

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MASS SCHEDULE

Sun.	Sept. 1	Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost. 9:00 am Holy Mass (Servers: Ac1. D. Goldthorpe, Ac2. T. Garcia)
Fri.	Sept. 6	Ferial. First Friday 5:30 pm Holy Hour followed by Holy Mass (Servers: Ac1. Ca. Alkemade, Ac2. T. Walmsley)
Sat.	Sept. 7	Our Lady on Saturdays. First Saturday. 8:30 am Benediction & Rosary followed by Holy Mass (Servers: Ac1. B. Franssen, Ac2. T. Navidad)
Sun.	Sept. 8	Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost. Solemnity of St Pius X. 9:00 am Sung Mass (Servers: Mc. J. Walmsley, Ac1. T. Garcia, Ac2. T. Goldthorpe, Bb. T. Navidad, Cb. D. Goldthorpe, Tb. M. Garratt, Tb. C. Walmsley, Th. Ca. Alkemade)
Sat.	Sept. 14	Exaltation of the Holy Cross. 5:00 pm Holy Mass (Servers: Ac. S. Walmsley, Ac1. A. Garratt, Ac2. C. Walmsley)
Sun.	Sept. 15	Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. Comm. Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost. 9:00 am Holy Mass followed by Benediction - Holy Name. (Servers: Ac1/Mc1. J. Walmsley, Ac2/Th. T. Garcia)
Sat.	Sept. 21	St. Matthew Apostle & Evangelist. Comm. Ember Saturday. 5:00 pm Holy Mass (Servers: Ac1. B. Franssen, Ac2. J. White)
Sun.	Sept. 22	Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost. 9:00 am Holy Mass (Servers: Ac1. T. Goldthorpe, Ac2. Ca. Alkemade)
Sat.	Sept. 28	St. Wenceslaus. 5:00 pm Holy Mass (Servers: Ac1. N. Walmsley, Ac2. T. Walmsley)
Sun.	Sept. 29	Feast of St Michael the Archangel. Comm. Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost. 9:00 am Holy Mass (Servers: Ac1. D. Goldthorpe, Ac2. J. Walmsley)

CONFESSION TIMES

Sundays: 8am / **First Friday:** during Holy Hour / **First Saturday:** 8am / **Other:** 30mins before Mass

PARISH ROSTER

For the Sunday of	Done during the preceding week		On the Sunday	
	Flowers	Church Cleaning	Tea Stall	Rosary Leader
1 Sept.	M. Walmsley	Small/Kelly	Kennedy	Gerard Van Der Weerden
8 Sept.	P. Steinle	D'Oliveiro/Navidad	Kennedy	Brian Whiteley
15 Sept.	L. Murphy	Murphy	Kennedy	Eric Jellett
22 Sept	L. Kelly	D'Oliveiro/Garratt	Kennedy	David Garratt
29 Sept.	M. Tonner	Small/Walmsley	Kennedy	Kevin Higginson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Saturday Talk.

The First Saturday talk for this month will be for the SSPX 3rd Order Members. Open to all members and any others interested in the 3rd Order.

Eucharistic Crusade.

There will be a meeting on Sunday September 1st after Mass in the Bookshop.

Parish Catechism.

Adults and Post-Confirmation Sunday: 8th & 22nd. - First Communion: Sunday 1st, 15th & 29th.

Daylight Savings.

Daylight savings begins on Sunday 6th October 2024 - Clocks go forward 1 hour. Please be on time for Mass.

Joint Event In Tynong.

On the weekend of Sunday 13th October there will be a two-day event for children in the Eucharistic Crusade and the Archconfraternity of St Stephen. This weekend will be a wonderful opportunity for children to enrol or renew their commitments and be promoted. More information to come.

Faithful Departed.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of Bob Wilson, Johannes De Natris, Francis Massey, and Gloria Owen whose anniversaries occur in September.

Retreats at Holy Cross Seminary.

Women's Retreat: 14th - 19th October 2024; 12th - 17th May 2025

Men's Retreat: 10th - 15th March 2025; and 6th - 11th October 2025

For more information or to sign up please email: retreats@holycrossseminary.com