

**CEREMONIES
FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF
ROGATION DAYS**

The English word ‘rogation’ comes from the Latin word ‘*rogare*’ which means to ask, petition or beg. Rogation Days have long been set aside as a special time of penance, prayer, procession, and Mass.

The origins of Rogation Days can be traced back to the fifth century when St. Mamertus, the bishop of Vienne, France, instituted penitential processions with public supplications on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Ascension. He did this as a response to earthquakes and other calamities which had afflicted his territory. This practice spread throughout France, and by the eighth century reached Rome. From there it was dispersed throughout the territories where the Roman Rite was celebrated.

On the Great Plains of the United States of America, Rogation Days have long had an agricultural tone. Rural parishes would incorporate the blessing of fields. There would also be prayers for a bountiful harvest, protection from storms, and timely rains. But Rogation Days were never intended to be an exclusively rural practice. They were born from calamity and have always had a penitential character. They have always been a summons to personal conversion and to trusting confidence in God’s mercy and goodness. In an age of great technological advances, it is easy to forget human frailty and ignore one’s utter dependence upon God, and Rogation Days can be an effective antidote.

Liturgical prayers for Rogation Days have not been included in the revised Roman Missal. Nevertheless, it is still possible to celebrate them by stitching together several resources.

The prayers in the 1952 Roman Ritual may still be used for the procession.¹ An English translation is provided in this booklet.

Mass formularies may be taken from one of the Masses for Various Needs and Occasions. Readings may be taken from either the Mass of the day, or the appropriate place in the Lectionary:

Suggested Masses for Various Needs and Occasions	
Roman Missal:	Lectionary for Mass: Vol. IV,
#48. In Any Need (A, B, or C) #35-37. Collects specifically for Rain, for Fine Weather, and for an End to Storms *If this Mass is chosen, violet vestments are appropriate	#938-942. In Time of Earthquake or for Rain or for Good Weather or to Avert Storms or for Any Need
#27. At Seedtime	#912-916. For Productive Land Or #907-911. For the Blessing of Human Labor
#26. For the Sanctification of Human Labor	#907-911. For the Blessing of Human Labor
#28. After the Harvest	#917-921. After the Harvest
<i>*The numbering of Masses for Various Needs and Occasions does not correspond between the Roman Missal and the Lectionary for Mass. The Mass and its corresponding readings are listed side by side.</i>	

¹ Pontifical Commission Ecclesia Dei, Instruction on the application of the Apostolic Letter *Summorum Pontificum*, April 30, 2011. #35, 31, and 28.

There is no specific date for Rogation Days either on the General Roman Calendar or the Liturgical Calendar for the United States, but they could be celebrated on any day when Masses for Various Needs and Occasions are permitted.² The following days are suggestions:

- The three days leading up to the Solemnity of the Ascension. Traditionally there was a procession and Mass on each day; it is possible to do it on only one day. In the Diocese of Fargo, the Ascension of the Lord is celebrated on the 7th Sunday of Easter.
- On one of the weekdays following Pentecost (this was the Ambrosian tradition.)

The traditional blessing of land, seed and animals may be integrated into the Rogation Days procession. The following prayers come from the Book of Blessings:

- **Fields and Flocks** (#981): O God, from the very beginning of time you commanded the earth to bring forth vegetation and fruit of every kind. You provide the sower with seed and give bread to eat. Grant, we pray, that this land, enriched by your bounty and cultivated by human hands, may be fertile with abundant crops. Then your people, enriched by the gifts of your

² Masses for Various Needs and Occasions may not be celebrated on the following days: Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter, Solemnities, days within the Octave of Easter, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day), Ash Wednesday, and during Holy Week. (Cf. GIRM #372 and 376)

goodness, will praise you unceasingly now and for ages unending. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

- **Seeds (#999):** Lord of the harvest, you placed the gifts of creation in our hands and called us to till the earth and make it fruitful. We ask your blessing as we prepare to place these seeds in the earth. May the care we show these seeds remind us of your tender love for your people. We ask this through Christ our Lord.
- **Animals (#958):** O God, you have done all things wisely; in your goodness you have made us in your image and given us care over other living things. Reach out with your right hand and grant that these animals may serve our needs and that your bounty in the resources of this life may move us to seek more confidently the goal of eternal life. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

AT THE PROCESSION

ANTIPHON

(All gather in the church to pray. At a certain point the priest stands and the cantor/reader begins the antiphon.

All stand)

Arise, O Lord, assist us, and make us free because of Your name. We have heard with our ears O God, and our fathers have announced it to us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Arise, O Lord, assist us and make us free because of Your name.

(All kneel)

LITANY OF THE SAINTS

Lord, have mercy on us. **Christ, have mercy on us.**

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us. **Christ, graciously hear us.**

God, the Father of Heaven, **have mercy on us.**

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, **etc.**

God, the Holy Spirit,

Holy Trinity, one God,

(All rise and begin procession. The order is: Cross, faithful, clergy, priest. The procession may go around the church grounds, or another suitable route)

Holy Mary, **pray for us.**

Holy Mother of God,

Holy Virgin of Virgins,
St. Michael,
St. Gabriel,
St. Raphael,
All you holy Angels and Archangels,
All you holy orders of blessed spirits,
St. John the Baptist,
St. Joseph,
All you holy Patriarchs and Prophets,
St. Peter,
St. Paul,
St. Andrew,
St. James,
St. John,
St. Thomas,
St. James,
St. Philip,
St. Bartholomew,
St. Matthew,
St. Simon,
St. Thaddeus,
St. Matthias,
St. Barnabas,
St. Luke,
St. Mark,
All you holy Apostles and Evangelists,

All you holy Disciples of the Lord,
All you Holy Innocents,
St. Stephen,
St. Lawrence,
St. Vincent,
SS. Fabian and Sebastian,
SS. John and Paul,
SS. Cosmas and Damian,
SS. Gervase and Protase,
All you holy Martyrs,
St. Sylvester,
St. Gregory,
St. Ambrose,
St. Augustine,
St. Jerome,
St. Martin,
St. Nicholas,
All you holy Bishops and Confessors,
All you holy Doctors,
St. Anthony,
St. Benedict,
St. Bernard,
St. Dominic,
St. Francis,
All you holy Priests and Levites,
All you holy Monks and Hermits,

St. Mary Magdalen,

St. Agatha,

St. Lucy,

St. Agnes,

St. Cecilia,

St. Catherine,

St. Anastasia,

All you holy Virgins and Widows,

All you holy Saints of God, **intercede for us.**

Be merciful, **spare us, O Lord.**

Be merciful, **graciously hear us, O Lord.**

From all evil, **Lord, deliver us, we pray.**

From all sin, **etc.**

From Your anger,

From a sudden and unexpected death,

From the snares of the devil,

From anger, and hatred, and every evil will,

From the spirit of fornication,

From lightning and storms,

From the scourge of earthquakes,

From plague, famine, and war,

From everlasting death,

Through the mystery of Your holy Incarnation,

Through Your coming,

Through Your Nativity,

Through Your Baptism and holy Fasting,

That You would deliver our souls, and the souls of our
brethren, relatives, and benefactors from eternal damnation,

That You would vouchsafe to give and preserve the fruits of
the earth,

That You would vouchsafe to grant eternal rest to all the
faithful departed,

That You would vouchsafe to answer our prayers,

Son of God,

**(As the end of the Litany of the Saints approaches, the
celebrant returns to the foot of the altar, and all kneel,
including the celebrant.)**

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,

spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,

graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,

have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us,

Christ, graciously hear us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father...

(The cantors/reader begins psalm 70 (69))

O God, come to my assistance;

O LORD, make haste to help me!

Let there be shame and confusion
on those who seek my life.

O let them turn back in confusion,
who delight in my harm;
let them retreat, covered with shame,
who jeer at me and mock.

O let there be rejoicing and gladness
for all who seek you.
Let them say forever, "God is great,"
who love your saving help.

As for me, wretched and poor,
hasten to me, O God.
You are my rescuer, my help;
O LORD, do not delay.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world
without end. Amen.

**(the celebrant sings/says the versicles and the choir (or
people) give the responses)**

- ℣. Save Your servants.
- ℟. Who hope in You, O my God.
- ℣. Be unto us, O Lord, a tower of strength.
- ℟. In the presence of the enemy.
- ℣. Let not the enemy prevail against us.
- ℟. Nor the son of evil have power to harm us.
- ℣. O Lord, deal not with us according to our sins.
- ℟. Nor requite us according to our iniquities.
- ℣. Let us pray for our Sovereign Pontiff N.

R̄. The Lord preserve him, and give him life, and make him happy on earth, and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies.

℣. Let us pray for our benefactors.

R̄. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to repay with eternal life all those who do good to us for Your name's sake. Amen.

℣. Let us pray for the faithful departed.

R̄. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

℣. May they rest in peace.

R̄. Amen.

℣. For our brethren who are absent.

R̄. Save Your servants, O my God, who put their trust in You.

℣. Send them help, O Lord, from Your holy place.

R̄. And from Sion watch over them.

℣. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R̄. And let my cry come unto you.

**(Here the celebrant rises, and remains standing till the end.
All the rest remain kneeling)**

℣. The Lord be with you.

R̄. And with your spirit.

Let us pray.

O God, whose nature it is ever to show mercy and to forgive, receive our petition, that we and all your servants, bound by the fetters of sin, may by your tender mercy, be graciously pardoned.

We beg You, O Lord, hear the prayer of your suppliants and pardon the sins of your penitents; and deign to grant us equally your tender mercy and peace.

Show us, O Lord, your ineffable mercy, that blotting out our transgressions, you would vouchsafe to snatch us from the condemnation they deserve.

O God, our sins offend you, but our penance reconciles us. Look graciously on the entreaties of your people, and turn away the scourge of your anger which our sins deserve.

Almighty and eternal God, have mercy on your servant, N., our Sovereign Pontiff, and direct him, according to Your mercy on the way to eternal salvation, that by Your grace, he may both desire those things that are pleasing to You, and may perform them with all his strength.

O God, from whom proceed all holy desires, good counsels, and just works, give to Your servants that peace which the world cannot give, so that our hearts may be dedicated to the keeping of your law, and free from the fear of our enemies, we may, under your protection, live our days in peace.

Inflame, O Lord, our affections and our hearts with the fire of the Holy Spirit, that we may serve You with a chaste body, and please You with a clean heart.

O God, Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of the faithful departed the remission of all their sins, so that by our devoted prayers they may obtain the pardon they have always desired.

We beseech You, O Lord, direct our actions by Your holy inspirations, and carry them out by Your gracious assistance, so that every prayer and work of ours may always begin with You, and through You be happily ended.

Almighty everlasting God, who has dominion over the living and the dead and are merciful to all whom you foreknow will be yours by faith and good works; we humbly plead of you, that they for whom we resolve to pour out our prayers, whether this present age still detains them in the flesh, or whether the world to come has already received their souls, may, through the prayers of all Your saints and by Your benign goodness obtain the remission of all their sins. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

R/. Amen.

Ψ. The Lord be with you.

R/. And with your spirit.

Ψ. May the almighty and merciful God graciously hear us.

R/. Amen.

Ψ. And may the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

R/. Amen.

(The celebrant leaves the sanctuary and vests for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Please see pg. 2 for suggestions for Mass formularies)



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