

CANDLEMAS (before a Missa Cantata)

References are to the 1962 editions of Fortescue and the *Missale Romanum*

NOTE BENE:

"If the blessing of the candles is carried out the procession may not be omitted. The arbitrary mutilation of a rite is quite unlawful." Fortescue, pg. 262, ff. 1. "If the procession is not made, the candles should not be blessed; it is not lawful to mutilate a rite to suit one's own convenience." Fortescue, pg. 265.

SACRISTY & SANCTUARY PREPARATIONS:

-the liturgical color is white and festive.

-in the Sacristy: white cope, stole and cincture, alb and amice for C.

-on the Sedilla: white chasuble and maniple in vesting order.

-on the Main Credence: the usual items for a *Missa Cantata*, (including the *Lavabo* dish and towel) plus:

- Silver ewer and basin set¹, filled half way with warm water
- Silver tray with a clean bar of soap
- Small absorbent white towel
- Silver aspersory and aspergill
- An extra Missal with a red ribbon set for the candle blessing ceremony

-on the Altar: prepared as usual for a *Missa Cantata*; except flowers are not to be put on the Altar until *after* the *Candle Procession*².

-table with candles: The table should be placed on the Epistle side of the Sanctuary or the Chancel³, with a white linen covering the top and a white frontal covering the front and sides. Those candles that need to be blessed for future use on the Altar, the candles for the laity⁴, and a special candle for C⁵ should be neatly lain out on the table. These candles are to be covered with a clean white cloth⁶.

SYNOPSIS OF THE CEREMONY

1. PROCESSION (as usual for High Mass)⁷
2. BLESSING OF CANDLES
 - A. 5 Orations
 - B. Blessing of incense
 - C. Blessing of candles first with holy water then with incense while *Asperges* is said.
3. DISTRIBUTION OF CANDLES
 - A. C goes to the Predella, "*ante medio altare*".
 - B. Highest ranking cleric gives candle to C or MC1 puts it to the side.
 - C. Clerics receive candles from C *cum solita oscula* on Predella.
 - D. Servers receive candles from C *cum solita oscula* on Predella.

¹ A small, simple set should be used rather than a fancy one, since it is not for a Pontifical Mass and it is needed for one washing only.

² Pgs. 262 and 263. Fortescue also recommends on pg. 262, that the Altar Cards should not be placed on the Altar until this time.

³ Fortescue says on pg. 260 that this table may even be prepared in the center of the Sanctuary.

⁴ Which for purposes of practicality, should be lain out on a large, silver serving-tray. The surface of the tray should also be covered with a linen. In larger churches, two trays might be necessary, especially if two priests will be distributing candles. In this case, Cb should hold the second tray of candles and accompany the second priest since the Acolytes must be available for other duties.

⁵ A 7/8's candle with a draft resister is ideal, especially if the *Candle Procession* is to be held outdoors. This candle may also be appropriately decorated either with a white ribbon, or with painted, applied and / or carved symbols. Stehle in *Episcopal Ceremonies, Vol II*, pg. 58, section 225, refers to this candle as "*richly ornamented*".

⁶ Cf. *M.R.*, which states: "*aliqua mappa munda*" and Fortescue, pgs. 260 (ff. 2) and 263. It is a principle in the Roman Rite that items to be blessed (candles, palms and ashes) are covered to foreshow their sacramental character.

⁷ If Candlemas falls on a Sunday, the *Asperges* rite is performed first. Fortescue, pgs. 260 and 263. This means that the Aspersory / Aspergill will need to be carried in by Th as usual, instead of being initially set up on the Credence.

- E. Laity receive candles from C *cum solita oscula* at Communion Rail.
4. *LAVABO IN PLANO* ON EPISTLE SIDE
 5. ORATION: *EXAUDI, QUAESUMUS*
 6. IMPOSITION AND BLESSING OF INCENSE
 7. CANDLE PROCESSION
 8. HIGH MASS AS USUAL, except candles are held lighted:
 - A. During the reading of the *Gospel*
 - B. From the *Sanctus* to the *Agnus Dei*⁸

PROCESSION

-the *Procession* to the Altar takes place with C in cope and Th gently swinging the thurible. During the *Procession*, MC1 should be on C's right hand side holding the ophrey⁹. Otherwise, all process in as usual for a High Mass.

-upon reaching the Sanctuary, all make the appropriate reverences and go immediately to their places.

BLESSING OF THE CANDLES¹⁰

5 Orations

MC1

-after going with C at the Foot, MC1 leads C to the candle table. He uncovers the candles (putting the cover to the side of the table), opens the book for C and indicates the proper text. During the five orations, MC1 holds the ophrey only when C signs the cross over the candles¹¹. During the orations, all make the various bows towards the Altar¹². C sings all of the orations in the second ferial tone.

MC2

-upon arriving at the Foot, MC2 goes, goes to the Epistle side of the Sanctuary and ensures that the duties described below are carried out correctly.

TH and BB

-upon MC2's direction, both Th and Bb form at the Credence to make a box formation with MC2 and Ac2.
-at MC2's lead, all proceed to the candle table and take position at MC2's discretion.

ACOLYTES

-as soon as the Acolytes have placed their Processional Candles on the Credence, Ac1 picks up the book (with the opening facing left) and Ac2 picks up the aspersory/aspergill.

-Ac1 goes immediately to the Epistle side of the candle table, holding the book against his chest.

-Ac2 however, goes to stand in front of his stool.

CB

-Cb does not at anytime during the blessing of the candles close the Communion Rail gate, as it will need to remain open to allow access for the Acolytes to light the candles of the laity and for the candle procession that follows.

Blessing of the incense

MC2

-while C is reciting the first of the 5 orations, MC2 forms Th, Bb and Ac2 into a box formation in front of the Credence.

⁸ Pg. 262

⁹ This is done in imitation of the Deacon.

¹⁰ Cf. ff. 5 on these sheets, if Candlemas falls on a Sunday.

¹¹ Pg. 260

¹² Pg. 260

- during the last of the 5 orations¹³, MC2 leads Th, Bb and Ac2 to the candle table.
- MC2 arranges Th and Bb nearest to the table, while Ac2 is positioned behind or to the side of them while incense is imposed.
- after incense has been imposed and blessed, MC2 ensures that Th and Bb step out of the way, and simultaneously directs Ac2 to step forward to MC1 with the Holy Water.
- meanwhile during all of this, MC2 remains discretely out of the way.

MC1

- when C has finished the last oration, MC1 closes the book and indicates Ac1 to depart. Incense is then imposed and blessed as usual *cum solita oscula*. MC1 then returns the boat to Bb and Th retains the thurible.

TH and BB

- immediately after incense is imposed, Th and Bb return to stand slightly behind the table, so as to be out of C's way.

AC1

- when MC1 has closed the book, Ac1 returns it to the Credence, Then he returns to his normal position.

AC2

- upon MC2's direction, Ac2 goes to the Credence and takes position in a box formation with MC2, Th and Bb.
- at MC2's lead, all proceed to the candle table and take position according to MC2's discretion.
- upon MC2's signal, Ac2 goes to MC1's right, and presents the aspersion/aspersion to him. Ac2 remains at MC1's right hand side until the Holy Water is returned.

Blessing of the candles

MC1

- after the above actions have occurred, MC1 presents the aspersion to C *cum solita oscula*, goes to C's right and holds the ophrey while C sprinkles the candles three times fanned¹⁴ while saying¹⁵ only the *Asperges* antiphon (*i.e.*, no *Gloria Patri*, etc.).
- when C has finished sprinkling the candles, MC1 receives the aspersion back *cum solita oscula*, and returns it to Ac2.
- Th steps forward and presents the thurible to MC1, who presents it to C *cum solita oscula*. While C incenses the candles, MC1 holds the ophrey.
- C incenses the candles with three singles fanned¹⁶ saying nothing.
- MC1 then receives the thurible back *cum solita oscula*, and returns it to Th.

MC2

- as soon as Ac2 has received the aspersion from MC1, he directs Th to go to the right hand side of MC1. Th remains there until incensing is completed.
- when Th has received the thurible back from MC1, MC2 forms up Th, Bb and Ac2 into a box formation again and leads them back to the Credence, where Ac2 returns the aspersion.

TH and BB

- upon MC2's direction, Th goes to MC1's right hand side and presents the thurible to him. He remains there, until MC1 returns the thurible back.
- meanwhile, Bb remains next to MC2.
- Th then follows the directions of MC2 and returns with Bb to their normal position behind MC2.

AC2

- after Ac2 has received the aspersion back from MC1, he follows MC2's directions for where to stand. When Th has received the thurible back, MC2 will lead Ac2, Th and Bb back to the Credence. Upon arriving there, Ac2 will return the aspersion to the Credence and resume his normal position.

¹³ Which is the *second* oration prefaced with "*Domine Jesu Christe...*".

¹⁴ M.R.: "*Cum ter aspergit.*"

¹⁵ M.R.: "*Sine cante et sine psalmo.*"

¹⁶ M.R.: "*Et ter adolet incenso.*"

DISTRIBUTION OF CANDLES

MC1

- when MC2 has lead the servers back to their normal positions, MC1 picks up the tray containing the laity's candles (having placed C's candle on it first), leads C to the Foot, gfs with him and accompanies C "*in medio altare*" (i.e., the center of the Predella), crossing to the Epistle side of the Predella¹⁷ while ascending.
- the highest ranking cleric, "*not wearing a stole*", then receives C's candle from MC1 and presents it *sine solita oscula*¹⁸.
- during the distribution of candles, MC1 remains at C's right hand side, and holds the tray for C. At the Communion Rail, each time MC1 and C reach the center, both must turn to face the Altar, gf and then they may continue the distribution.

MC2

- after leading the servers back to their normal positions, MC2 ensures that the clergy have begun to line up in pairs¹⁹ in the Chancel and are approaching the Foot.
- MC2 then ensures that the highest-ranking cleric goes to the Predella first, and presents C's candle to C "*sine solita oscula*" (if no other clerics are present, MC1 simply places it in the middle of the mensa).
- while the clerics are receiving their candles, MC2 ensures that the servers on the Epistle side have formed a single file and are ready to proceed to the Foot. He should then ensure that the Tbs in the Chancel have knelt down to receive their candles as they would for Communion²⁰.
- when the last cleric has left the Foot, MC2 leads the Epistle side servers to the Foot *recta linea*, taking his place on the far Gospel side of the line, signals a gf, ascends to the Predella, and signals a kneel as for *Communion*. There each server receives a candle, kissing the *candle first*, and then C's hand²¹.
- after all of the servers on the Predella have received their candles, MC2 signals all to rise, descends to the Foot, signals a gf and directs them to return to their normal positions, where they remain standing.
- afterwards, MC2 oversees and ensures that all carry out their duties during the distributing of candles as described below.

TH and BB

- after Th has received his candle and returned to his normal position, he should ensure that his thurible is sufficiently prepared for the *Candle Procession*, especially if it will be a rather long one. Charcoals should also be started for the Mass that will immediately follow the *Candle Procession*²².
- Bb should ensure that there is an ample supply of incense in the boat.
- both should leave their candles in the Sacristy as they will not be able to carry them for the *Candle Procession*.

ACOLYTES

- when the first five pews of the laity have received their candles, both Acolytes go to the Credence, put their tapers to the side and retrieve their Processional Candles.
- both proceed to the Foot, gf, and light the candles of the clergy first, and then the servers in the Chancel²³. Afterwards, the Acolytes take position in the center of the Chancel.
- at an appropriate moment, the Acolytes, gf, exit through the gate and proceed to the *side aisles*²⁴ (each Acolyte splitting of to his respective side) of the pews and light the candles of those nearest the pew ends of the first two pews.

¹⁷ I.e., C's right when *facing the people*.

¹⁸ Cf. Fortescue, pg. 261 on both accounts. This has changed from the description given in the *Memoriale Rituum*. The 1962 *Pontificali Romano* has now reduced the ceremony of the senior cleric presenting the candle to C kneeling and *cum solita oscula*, to a mere presenting.

¹⁹ The clerics should be formed from the highest to the lowest ranking cleric beginning from the front to the back of the paired line (i.e., in the type of formation that the Tbs make before going to the Sacristy to obtain their torches).

²⁰ Or they may form a paired line and receive their candles at the Predella like the clerics. In this case, they should form up immediately after the clerics have left their stalls (the clergy will go around them upon returning to their stalls), and be ready to proceed to the Foot when the last cleric has returned to his stall.

²¹ Fortescue, pg. 261. This is because they are receiving a sacramental.

²² The *First Incensation of the Altar* will be the first action of the Mass, so fresh charcoals must be ready immediately for Mass.

²³ The Acolytes should not light their own candles, nor those of the MCs, Cb, Th, or Bb, as they will not be carried during the *Candle Procession*, since they are already carrying items of their office.

²⁴ Not the *center* aisle in this case, or the traffic way for the laity will be blocked.

-the Acolytes return to the Foot at an appropriate moment, gf, return their Processional Candles to the Credence and resume their normal positions.

-when the distribution of the candles has nearly come to a conclusion, both Acolytes return to the Credence, Ac1 takes the towel and tray with soap²⁵, while Ac2 takes the ewer and basin. Both remain at the Credence facing the Sanctuary.

LAVABO TO ORATION: EXAUDI, QUAESUMUS

MC1

-when the distribution of candles is completed, MC1 leads C *per longiorem* to the Epistle side *in plano* of the Sanctuary (near the Credence), where C washes his hands, facing the Credence.

-MC1 gives the tray to MC2, and takes his position slightly behind and to the left side of C and holds the ophrey during the *Lavabo*.

-immediately after the *Lavabo*, MC1 leads C to the Missal on the Epistle side of the Altar. MC1 takes his normal Epistle side Missal position and indicates the oration: *Exaudi, quaesumus*.

MC2

-when MC1 returns from the distribution of candles for C's *Lavabo*, MC2 goes to the left of and slightly behind C and holds the ophrey during the *Lavabo*.

-after the *Lavabo*, MC2 signals the Tbs to line up as they would at the *Offertory* for the *Candle Procession*.

-MC2 then ensures that the other servers perform their duties as described below.

TH and BB

-Th and Bb should be at their normal positions by the time C begins the *Lavabo*.

-after the Acolytes and Cb have lined up for the *Candle Procession*, Th and Bb go to the Epistle side of the Foot as at High Mass for the imposition of incense.

ACOLYTES

-when C arrives at the Credence, the Acolytes perform the *Lavabo* with the usual bows.

-after the *Lavabo*, the Acolytes return the *Lavabo* items to the Credence and immediately pick up their Processional Candles.

-when Cb has joined them at the Credence, the Acolytes and Cb proceed to the Foot to line up for the *Candle Procession*.

CB

-when MC1 returns from the distribution of candles for C's *Lavabo*, Cb takes the tray from him and puts it back on the candle table

-immediately after the *Lavabo*, Cb retrieves his Processional Cross, takes his place in formation at the Credence, and accompanies the Acolytes to the Foot as usual.

TORCHBEARERS

-upon MC2's signal, the Tbs (with their candles still lighted), take up their *Offertory* formation and remain there facing the Altar.

IMPOSITION AND BLESSING OF INCENSE

MC1

-when C has finished reading the oration, MC1 descends *in planum*, receives the boat from Bb, and ascends with Th to the 2nd Altar step²⁶ to have incensed imposed and blessed as usual *cum solita oscula*.

-when Th and Bb have departed, MC1 ensures that C has retrieved his candle from the mensa, and then leads him *per breviorum* to the center of the Foot.

-MC1 takes C's candle *cum solita oscula*, lights it from Ac1's Processional Candle and returns it to C *cum solita oscula*.

-C then turns towards the people and chants, "*Procedamus in pace*", to which all respond, "*In nomine, Christij, Amen.*"²⁷

²⁵ The best method in which to do this is to hold the tray by both hands with the long edge of the towel between the tray and hands.

²⁶ Fortescue says that this should be done from the Epistle corner, without C having moved from the Missal after the oration.

-MC1 signals a genuflection for all, and the *Candle Procession* begins.

MC2

-while incense is being imposed and blessed, MC2 ensures that all are lined up correctly for the *Candle Procession* (i.e., the same formation as for the *Recessional* at Mass). If necessary, during this time, MC2 should have the clergy line up in two parallel lines on the *outside* edges of the Tbs (i.e., closest to the Chancel walls) in order of precedence. The position of the clerics in the *Candle Procession* is after the servers²⁸.

During the *Candle Procession*, everyone should be holding their candles in their outside hand.

-MC2's position during the *Candle Procession* should be in front of the Tbs' formation with his hands folded (i.e., empty).

TH and BB

-after the oration, Bb presents the boat to MC1 and Th ascends to the 2nd Altar step with MC for the imposition and blessing of incense, which is performed as usual.

-when MC1 holds out the boat, Bb retrieves it and follows Th to the Chancel to lead the *Candle Procession*.

PROCESSION WITH CANDLES

MC1

-during the *Candle Procession*, MC1 remains at the right side of C and holds the ophrey. MC1 does not hold a candle during the *Candle Procession*²⁹.

MC2

-during the *Candle Procession*, MC2 ensures that the procession takes place in an orderly fashion, with each pair of servers remaining at a distance of at least four pews apart. MC2 does not hold a candle during the *Candle Procession*.

TH and BB

-during the *Candle Procession*, Th gently swings the thurible.

SERVERS in general

-upon their arrival back into the Sanctuary, the servers make the reverence that is appropriate to their position, and perform the following actions:

MC1

-at the Foot, MC1 signals a gf and leads C to the Sedilla to vest for Mass.

-MC1 receives C's candle *sine solita oscula*³⁰, extinguishes it, gives it to Ac2 (if available) to put on the Credence, and gives the cope to Ac1 (if available) to take to the Sacristy.

-MC1 assists C to vest Mass as usual, leads C to the Foot, and signals a gf.

-after gfing, MC1 immediately goes to the Epistle side of the Foot and meets Th for the *First Incensation of the Altar*.

MC2

-at the Foot, he gfs and goes to the Epistle side to ensure that the various duties are carried out as described below, filling in if and where ever necessary (e.g., assisting with the removal of the candle table, or with the cope).

TH and BB

-Th should immediately prepare the thurible with fresh charcoals for the *First Incensation of the Altar*, which will take place momentarily, will Bb should refill the boat.

²⁷ After this point, the church bells should be rung during the *Candle Procession*. Cf. Fortescue, pg. 262. They ringing should ceased when C returns to the Sanctuary.

²⁸ If there is a liturgical schola (i.e., in cassock and surplice), their position in the *Candle Procession* is between the servers and the clergy.

²⁹ Pg. 262 in reference to the Deacon who accompanies C.

³⁰ Fortescue (on pg. 263) does not specifically say that *solita oscula* are given as the MC receives the candle, though he does specifically when at the other times. It should therefore be assumed that the *solita oscula* are omitted at this point due to the revisions to the rite of Candlemas.

ACOLYTES

- after returning their Processional Candles to the Credence, Ac2 retrieves C's candle and places it on the Credence (allowing the wax to cool first), while Ac1 retrieves the cope and returns it to the Sacristy.
- afterwards, the Acolytes should remove the candle table from the Sanctuary, if not done so already by the Sacristans³¹. Upon removing the table, the Acolytes resume their normal positions.
- if possible, the Acolytes should also remove the extra Missal, tray of soap, absorbent towel and the ewer and basin, since they will no longer be needed.

CB

- after returning the Processional Cross to its stand, Cb returns to his normal position. If necessary, Cb can assist with the removal of unneeded items from the Credence.

MASS

Mass is as usual with these exceptions:

- The *Preparatory Prayers at the Foot of the Altar* are omitted inclusive to *Aufer a nobis* and *Oramus te*. Instead, the *First Incensation of the Altar* takes place immediately.
- **ACOLYTES:** After C has been seated for the sung³² *Gradual / Alleluia*, the Acolytes retrieve their Processional Candles, and light the candles of the clergy, servers in the Chancel and the laity in the first two pews as they did after the distribution of the candles. However, this time they may light the laity's candles from the center aisle. Upon finishing these duties, they go to the Foot, gf and:
 - if time allows, they return to the Credence and await Th to arrive for the *Gospel* action.
 - if time *does not* allow, they go to the Foot, gf and remain there for MC1, MC2 and Th to arrive to form the box formation.
- **MC2 and MC1: *Gospel motion and C's Candle***
 - after the Acolytes have departed from the Credence, MC2 goes to the Credence, retrieves C's candle and resumes his normal position at the Sedilla with MC1. The candle is held in his outside hand, but remains momentarily unlighted³³.
 - MC2 does everything as usual for the *Gospel* motion, except upon arriving at the *Gospel* side, MC2 lights C's candle from Ac1's Processional Candle, and gives it to MC1. MC2 then retrieves the thurible and assists C as usual for the *Gospel* incensation action.
 - meanwhile, MC1 switches the Missal as usual, then goes *per longiorem* to *Gospel* side of the Altar and takes C's candle from MC2.
 - MC2 presents the thurible as usual to C, and when MC2 receives the thurible back, MC1 goes *per longiorem* to the right hand side of C and presents the candle to him *cum solita oscula*.
 - MC1 then goes *per breviorum* to his normal *Gospel position with a MC2* (*i.e.*, Epistle corner *in plano*), gfing in the center of the Foot along the way.
 - after C has been incensed, and MC2 ascends to the Predella to move the Missal to the *Canon* position, receives the candle from C *cum solita oscula*³⁴, extinguishes it and descends *in planum* with C as usual.
 - sometime afterwards, MC2 signals the clergy, servers in the Chancel and the laity to extinguish their candles.
- **MC1:** The *Preface* is of the *Nativitate Domini*, but the *Canon* is as usual.

³¹ This also holds true if the flowers or Altar Cards were not set up on the Altar before the *Candle Procession*, unless the Sacristans completed this task, *during* the *Candle Procession*.

³² If this is sung in psalm tone mode only, then the Acolytes should do this immediately after the *Epistle*. In fact, it is recommend that they retrieve their Processional Candles and line up at the Foot while the *Epistle* is still being read. But, for symbolic purposes, they should not gf and begin lighting the candles until the *Epistle* is completed.

³³ Unless the Acolytes arrive back early. If this is the case, MC2 can light C's candle then.

³⁴ Cf. ff. 29 of these notes.

- **CB:** After the Tbs have been led into the Sanctuary with their torches, Cb should wait to close the gate until the Acolytes have returned from lighting the candles of the laity.
- **ACOLYTES:** After the bells have been rung for the *Sanctus* (and the Tbs are already kneeling with their torches), the Acolytes repeat the same procedure for lighting the various candles of the clergy and laity. These candles stay lit inclusive to the *Agnus Dei*³⁵.

³⁵ *I.e.*, at the *Pax*. Pg. 264, ff. 7.