



NATIONAL CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

CENTENARY HOUSE, NEAR TETTEH QUARSHIE CIRCLE

Tel: 233-21-500491/2-500082

Fax: 233-21-500493/505078

E-mail: info@ghanacbc.org

P. O. Box KA 9712

Airport - Accra

Ghana/West Africa

DATE: 21ST DECEMBER 2022

TO: ALL PRESIDENTS OF NUGDPA LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

OFFERINGS (ENVELOPES CONTAINING MONEY) AT MASS

At the just ended November Plenary Assembly of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference (GCBC) held in Donkorkrom, many issues on liturgical celebrations were discussed. Certain liturgical aberrations were presented to the GCBC by the National Liturgical Commission for correction and implementation. Prominent among them was the mode of offertory during the celebration of Holy Mass.

Catholics are required to contribute to the financial support of the Church. According to Canon 222.1, "The Christian faithful are obliged to assist with the needs of the Church so that the Church has what is necessary for divine worship, for the works of the apostolate and of charity, and for the decent support of ministers". According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (par. 2043), "The faithful also have the duty of providing for the material needs of the Church, each according to his abilities". It is for these reasons that offertory is presented by the lay participants during the celebration of the Eucharist on Solemnities, Feasts, Memorials and also during the weekdays. These can either be in cash or in kind (items of foodstuff, e.g. fruits, yams, etc.) and are intended to serve the needs of the poor as well as the upkeep of the priests.

It has been observed for some years now by the GCBC that there is the practice according to which parishioners line up with their offerings during Holy Mass. Some however, bring envelopes during the offertory procession. The contents of these envelopes are used differently from diocese to diocese. Even within the same diocese, different parishes handle these envelopes differently, for example, some dioceses and parishes, the content of these envelopes are taken by the priest(s) celebrant as personal money intended for him. To bring clarity to this issue and to

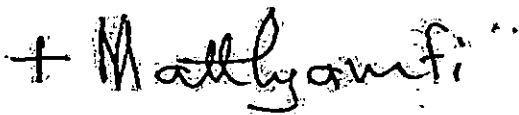
respect the intention of the offerer (during liturgy of the Mass), all offerings are to be counted as part of the collection and the money added to the parish collection.

Please, note that this directive in no way stops parishioners from making personal monetary donations to priests if they wish. However to avoid confusion, such personal donations should not be made in the context of the Mass. We urge you, our Priests, to educate the faithful accordingly.

It is our hope and prayer that this liturgical correction will be implemented as soon as possible in all dioceses, archdioceses, parishes and outstations but certainly by the beginning of the New Year, 2023.

Counting on your understanding and cooperation.

With best wishes of the Season.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew K. Gyamfi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

MOST REV. MATTHEW K. GYAMFI
BISHOP OF SUNYANI AND PRESIDENT,
GHANA CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

CC: All Arch/Bishops