WHEN IS A PERSON LATE FOR MASS

One is late for Mass when one is not in the church when the priest enters the Sanctuary to begin the Mass. The Church obliges us to hear Mass on certain days, that is, Sundays and holy days of obligation. The Mass begins when the priest comes to the foot of the Altar and says the opening prayers. If one is not in the church at this time, evidently, one is late for Mass. Such a one is guilty of the same offense as he who leaves the church before the end of the Mass, that is, before the priest leaves the Sanctuary after the Mass has been said.   It is a sin to be late for Mass, but it is a greater sin to miss Mass, and one can be in the church during a part of the Mass and yet have missed'Mass and thereby be guilty of a grave violation of the law.   There are three parts of the Mass at which it is necessary to be present under pain of mortal sin.   These are the Offertory, the Consecration and the Communion. If a person is not present for these parts he is not only late for Mass, but he has missed Mass; he is guilty not only of some sin but of mortal sin, presuming, of course, that he is responsible for not being in the church at the proper time.   In confessing the fact that one had come into the church after the Offertory of the Mass, by telling the priest that he was "late" for Mass, a person would be making a bad confession.   He should say that he had missed Mass. This sin is evidently of a different character altogether from that of being late for Mass, though each is a sin.

A daily offering for the dying

An idulgenced prayer, by which all the Masses celebrated throughout the world are daily offered to God for sinners in their agony, is as follows:

My God, I offer Thee all the Masses this day celebrated throughout the world, for sinners in their agony, and for those who shall be overtaken by death to-day! May the Precious Blood of Jesus, Our Redeemer, obtain for them mercy! (Indulgence of 300 days.—Pius X., Dec. 18,   1907.)