Overview

The Mass Offering App, developed by Restore God’s Kingdom (RGK), is a transformative digital platform with dual purposes:

Front End: Enables Catholics worldwide to request Masses easily, rapidly, and reverently.

Back End: Functions as a CRM and accounting/auditing tool for dioceses and parishes, ensuring fair distribution of Mass offerings, particularly to priests in persecuted or mission territories.

The app reflects Catholic sacramental theology, pastoral responsibility, financial transparency, and the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity. It is a global sacramental ministry platform rooted in justice, stewardship, and mission.

Development Approach (New): The project will follow a phased development roadmap:

Phase 1 (MVP): Parish account creation, Mass availability upload, search/booking engine, Stripe payments, basic email notifications, and admin dashboard.

Phase 2: Parish login portal, diocesan forwarding, recurring Masses, advanced CRM/accounting.

Phase 3: WhatsApp/SMS integration, third-party CRM/accounting integrations (e.g., Salesforce, QuickBooks), and advanced analytics.

Technical Requirements (New):

Tech Stack: React Native (mobile), Node.js/Express (backend), PostgreSQL (database), AWS (hosting with auto-scaling), Redis (caching).

API Standards: RESTful APIs (GraphQL for future phases).

Security: End-to-end encryption, OAuth 2.0 authentication, PCI-DSS and GDPR compliance.

Scalability: Cloud-based architecture to support millions of users and bookings.

1. Parish Account Creation (CRM Backend)

Required Details:

Parish Name

Diocese (linked field, validated against diocesan database)

Address (with geolocation support)

Contact Email

Phone Number

Parish Contact Person (e.g., Parish Priest)

Preferred Language(s) (support for multi-language and RTL)

Account Creation Responsibility:

Initially RGK Admin only.

Phase 2: Self-sign-up with RGK Admin approval.

User Roles:

Parish Admin (full access)

Parish Staff (limited access, e.g., view bookings)

Diocese Admin (read-only or oversight)

RGK Admin (super admin)

Approval Requirement: All accounts require RGK Admin approval.

Diocesan Association: Each parish must be linked to a diocese.

Security (New):

Encrypt sensitive fields (e.g., contact details) at rest.

Multi-factor authentication (MFA) for admin accounts.

2. Mass Availability Upload

Data Fields:

Date, Time (timezone-aware)

Mass Type (e.g., Requiem, Healing, Anniversary, Thanksgiving; configurable by diocese)

Language

Availability Status (Available, Booked, Blocked)

Upload Responsibility:

Phase 1: Central RGK Admin.

Phase 2: Parishes via portal.

Upload Format:

CSV/Excel for Phase 1.

JSON/API for Phase 2.

Data Validation:

Prevent duplicate/overlapping entries.

Validate against liturgical calendar (e.g., no Masses on Good Friday).

Update Frequency:

Weekly (Phase 1), daily (Phase 2).

Future UI Plans: Parish-facing UI for direct Mass management (Phase 2).

Upload Scope: Per parish and bulk uploads supported.

Performance (New): Optimize database queries for large-scale uploads (e.g., 10,000+ parishes).

3. Search/Booking Engine

Search Filters:

Date Range

Location (geolocation with 50km radius default)

Mass Type (region-specific options)

Diocese

Language

Time of Day

User Options:

Manual parish selection or auto-match based on criteria.

Search nearby parishes or diocese-wide.

Search Result Details:

Parish Name, Date & Time, Mass Type, Language, Booking Availability, Donation Amount, Booking Button.

Bulk Booking Support: Yes, multiple Masses in one transaction.

Mass Availability Limit: One intention per Mass slot (editable by admin).

Login Requirement: Yes, for booking and tracking history.

UX Enhancements (New):

Mobile-first, WCAG 2.1-compliant design.

User testing for intuitive search flow.

Offline mode for low-connectivity areas (e.g., mission territories).

4. Payments (Stripe/PayPal Integration)

Initial Provider: Stripe (primary), PayPal (secondary).

Payment Model:

Fixed donation per Mass (region-specific, e.g., $10 in U.S., ₦500 in Nigeria).

Optional additional donations.

Timing: Payment required before confirmation.

Receipts: Auto-generated, emailed to payer.

Data Captured: Payer Name, Email, Booking ID, Amount, Parish, Intention.

Refunds/Cancellations: Manual refunds via admin; clear cancellation policy.

Failed Payments: Booking invalidated, user notified to retry.

Compliance (New):

PCI-DSS compliance for payment processing.

Regular security audits of payment integrations.

5. Payment Forwarding

Tracking: Each booking tagged with parish and finance ID.

Finance Reporting:

Downloadable reports (CSV, Excel).

Filters by date, parish, Mass type, amount.

Parish Notification: Email when payment forwarded.

Transfer Method: Bank transfer or Revolut (monthly batch).

Workflow: Manual "forwarded" status button in admin dashboard.

Automation (New): Phase 3: Automate payment forwarding with API-based banking integrations (e.g., Plaid, Wise).

6. Email Notifications

Booking Confirmation Email:

User Details, Intention, Mass Info, Amount Paid, Parish Info.

Templates: Customizable for Parish, Diocese, Admin, Payer.

Email Address Management: Admin-editable fields in Parish/Diocese profiles.

Additional Emails:

Cancellation notices.

Reminders (e.g., 24 hours before Mass).

Confirmation of prayer completion.

Tracking: Open/delivery status via Mailgun or SendGrid.

Future Enhancements: WhatsApp/SMS integration (Phase 3).

Reliability (New): Use transactional email services (e.g., Amazon SES) for high deliverability.

7. Parish Login Portal

Portal Functions:

View Bookings

Block Times

Confirm/Cancel Masses

Upload/Edit Mass Availability

View Manual Phone Requests

Access: Multiple users per parish with role-based access.

Activity Logging: Yes, for audit and monitoring.

UX (New): Responsive design with step-by-step wizards for complex tasks (e.g., availability upload).

8. Forwarding Excess Masses (Diocesan Role)

Mechanism: Manual entry or selection from unfulfilled Mass queue.

Data Access: Diocese views summary and request/forward interface.

Forwarding Options: Forward to other parishes or dioceses in need.

Queue System: Waiting list for over-capacity parishes.

Approval: Optional RGK Admin or diocesan bishop approval.

Transparency (New): Audit trail for forwarded Masses to ensure equitable distribution.

9. Front-End User Requests

Request Details:

Name, Email, Mass Intention, Date/Time, Parish Preference (optional), Mass Type.

Account Requirement: Yes, for history and recurring options.

Mass Types: Requiem, Healing, Thanksgiving, Special Intention, Monthly Masses, Novenas (region-specific).

Recurring Masses: Yes, with automated payments/subscription (Phase 2).

Turnaround: Same-day sourcing (target).

User History: Receipts and status tracking.

Subscription Model (Updated):

Tiers (e.g., Weekly Mass, Novena Chain).

Pause/cancel options for flexibility.

Localization (New): Support for local languages and cultural Mass preferences.

10. CRM/Accounting Features (Admin Panel)

CRM Features:

Contact Records

Mass Booking History

Communication Log

Donor Profiles

Accounting Tools:

Donation Tracking

Invoices

Payment Status Reports

Export Reports (CSV, Excel)

Dashboards:

Income, bookings, Mass types, top parishes.

Analytics (New): Booking trends, donor retention, geographic insights.

Access Control: Role-based dashboards and exports.

Future Integration: Salesforce, QuickBooks, Xero (Phase 3).

Data Privacy (New): Anonymize donor data in reports per GDPR.

Salient Contextual Considerations

Ecclesial Support:

MoUs with bishops in Ireland and Nigeria (e.g., Bishop Isaac Dugu, Diocese of Katsina Ala).

Support for priests in mission territories via forwarded Masses.

Philosophy and Catholic Ethos:

Ensures Masses are celebrated with reverence and equitable clergy support.

Theological Oversight (Updated): RGK ecclesial advisors to review Mass types, intentions, and content.

Additional Suggestions (Updated):

Priest Profiles: Add optional priest bios or bishop endorsements for credibility.

Donor Recognition: “Legacy of Love” feature for memorial donations.

Accessibility: WCAG 2.1 compliance for disabled users.

Analytics: Track mission territory impact (e.g., Masses forwarded to persecuted regions).

Conclusion

The Mass Offering App is a global sacramental ministry platform that facilitates pastoral care, donor engagement, priestly support, and ecclesial cooperation.

By adopting a phased development approach, prioritizing scalability and security, and embedding theological and cultural sensitivity, the app will fulfill RGK’s mission to restore God’s Kingdom through a coherent, Catholic digital infrastructure.

Additional Developer Guidance (New)

Wireframes/Mockups: Create for key screens (e.g., search, booking, admin dashboard) before coding.

Testing Plan: Unit tests for APIs, integration tests for payments, and user acceptance testing (UAT) with parishes.

Documentation: Maintain API and codebase documentation for future scalability.

Agile Methodology: Use sprints (2-week cycles) with regular stakeholder reviews.

Summary of Key Additions

Phased development for faster MVP delivery.

Scalability and performance optimizations (e.g., AWS, PostgreSQL).

Enhanced security and compliance (e.g., GDPR, PCI-DSS).

UX improvements (mobile-first, accessibility, localization).

Theological and cultural sensitivity for global adoption.

Advanced analytics for strategic insights.

Clear technical specs and developer guidance.

Queries asked to client:  
**Clarification Points**

**User Roles**

* Besides Admin, Parish, and Users, do you anticipate any additional roles such as Diocese Admin?
* Will priests log in separately or manage their services via the Parish account?

**Mass Requests**

* Can users submit requests on behalf of someone else (e.g., a deceased family member)?
* Should we allow users to choose mass intention categories (healing, thanksgiving, etc.)?
* Do you need to support file uploads (e.g., images or certificates)?

**Mass Availability**

* Will Parishes be able to set their own mass schedules/availability?
* Is there a limit on the number of requests a parish can accept per day?

**Recurring Masses**

* Should the system automatically schedule future dates for recurring masses?
* Would users be able to pause, skip, or reschedule their recurring requests?

**Donations and Payments**

* Is donation mandatory or optional for submitting a request?
* Should we support multi-currency or international payments?
* How would you like to handle donations? Would you prefer to integrate **Donorbox**, as we did on the RGK website?

**Manual Request Handling**

* Should Admins assign manual requests to Parishes, or should this process be automated?

**Notifications**

* What types of notifications should we support?
  + Email?
  + SMS?
  + Push notifications?

**Analytics & Reports**

* Would you like Admins to view:
  + Top donating users?
  + Most active parishes?
  + Booking trends over time?

**Parish Onboarding**

* Will Parishes need to go through a manual verification process (e.g., document upload or approval)?

**Language Support**

* Will the app be multi-lingual?
* Do you require mass services to be filterable by language?

**Suggested Enhancements**

These are optional, but could greatly improve user experience:

* **Donor Recognition**
  + Should the system include a **Donor Wall** to recognize top donors?
* **Mass Service Feedback**
  + Would you like to gather **feedback from users** on mass services (e.g., rating system, comments)?
* **Social Sharing**
  + Should users be able to **share their mass requests** or **donation milestones** on social media platforms?
* **Concurrency & Scalability**
  + Do you anticipate a high volume of **simultaneous requests** for mass services, especially during peak times (e.g., holidays)?
    - Would you like the system to handle **concurrent requests** efficiently, and should we implement features like **request queuing** or **load balancing** to ensure scalability?
* **Security**
  + How would you like to implement **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)** for Admin accounts?
    - We recommend starting with **Email-based MFA** for simplicity and cost-effectiveness.
    - **SMS-based MFA** is also an option, but it's worth noting that it is vulnerable to **SIM swap attacks**, where attackers hijack a user's phone number to intercept OTPs.
    - If higher security is a priority, we can explore app-based MFA solutions (e.g., **Google Authenticator**, **Authy**) as a future enhancement.

answer received by the client:   
Our goal is to deliver an exceptional experience for users, parishes, priests, and administrators while maintaining the highest standards of security, scalability, and usability.

Clarification Points

User Roles

Additional Roles: Yes, we anticipate including a Diocese Admin role to oversee multiple parishes within a diocese. This role will have permissions to monitor parish activities, approve parish registrations, and generate diocese-level reports. Additionally, we propose a Super Admin role for global oversight, with access to all system data and configurations.

Priest Accounts: Priests will have separate accounts linked to their respective parish and diocesan accounts. These accounts will allow priests to manage their Mass schedules, view assigned intentions, and confirm Mass completions. We’d like to include a feature where priests can indicate their availability for additional Masses (e.g., during peak times) to optimize scheduling.

Mass Requests

Requests on Behalf of Others: Yes, users should be able to submit Mass requests on behalf of others, such as deceased family members or individuals in need. The system should capture the name and relationship of the intended beneficiary.

Mass Intention Categories: Yes, users should be able to select from predefined intention categories (e.g., healing, thanksgiving, repose of souls, special intentions). We suggest adding a custom intention field for users to provide specific details, subject to admin review for appropriateness.

File Uploads: We recommend supporting file uploads (e.g., images, PDFs) for users to submit supporting documents, such as death certificates for deceased intentions or prayer cards. File uploads should be limited to secure formats (e.g., JPEG, PNG, PDF) with a maximum size of 5MB and scanned for malware using an integrated security tool (e.g., ClamAV).

Mass Availability

Parish Schedules: Yes, parishes should have full control over their Mass schedules and availability. The system should provide a user-friendly calendar interface for parishes to set recurring or one-time Mass slots, with options to specify language, rite (e.g., Roman, Byzantine), and priest availability.

Request Limits: Yes, we propose a limit of three Mass requests per priest per day to ensure quality and prevent overburdening. The system should dynamically adjust this limit based on priest availability and parish capacity, with an override option for Diocese Admins during exceptional circumstances (e.g., major feast days).

Recurring Masses

Automatic Scheduling: Yes, the system should support automatic scheduling for recurring Masses, particularly for users who set up direct debits or standing orders. This feature is ideal for anniversaries, monthly intentions, or ongoing prayer needs. Users should be able to select recurrence patterns (e.g., weekly, monthly, annually) during request submission.

Managing Recurring Requests: Once a Mass is scheduled, it cannot be canceled to maintain trust and commitment. However, for recurring Masses, users should be able to pause, skip, or reschedule requests at least one month in advance via their account dashboard. The system should send reminders (email and push notifications) 45 days prior to recurring Mass dates to prompt users to review their preferences.

Donations and Payments

Mandatory Donations: Yes, donations are mandatory for submitting Mass requests to support parishes and ensure sustainability. We suggest a tiered donation structure (e.g., minimum, suggested, and premium amounts) to accommodate users’ financial capacities while encouraging generosity.

Multi-Currency and International Payments: Yes, the app must support multi-currency payments to cater to a global user base. We recommend integrating Stripe for its robust international payment processing, support for 135+ currencies, and built-in fraud detection. Additionally, include Apple Pay and Google Pay for seamless mobile transactions.

Donation Handling: Instead of Donorbox, we propose using a combination of Stripe and PayPal for maximum flexibility and global reach. Stripe’s API supports recurring payments for subscriptions, which aligns with our recurring Mass feature. PayPal’s widespread adoption ensures accessibility for users in regions with limited credit card penetration. To handle millions of transactions, implement a ledger-based accounting system to track donations, automate reconciliations, and generate audit trails. We also suggest integrating a cryptocurrency payment option (e.g., Bitcoin, Ethereum via Coinbase Commerce) to appeal to tech-savvy donors, with automatic conversion to fiat currency for parishes.

Manual Request Handling

Assignment Process: The system should primarily automate Mass request assignments by presenting users with a global list of available Masses (filtered by date, language, rite, and location). Users can select their preferred slot, and the system assigns the Mass instantly. For cases requiring manual intervention (e.g., complex intentions or special requests), the Mass Offerings Team should have a dedicated admin portal to assign requests manually, with options to prioritize specific parishes or priests. We also propose a fallback mechanism where unassigned requests are routed to a pool of vetted priests managed by our organization to ensure fulfillment.

Notifications

Notification Types: We want to support all notification channels—email, SMS, and push notifications—to maximize user engagement. Examples include:

Confirmation of Mass request submission and payment.

Reminders for upcoming Mass dates (48 hours and 1 hour prior).

Updates on Mass completion, including priest confirmation and optional thank-you messages.

Alerts for recurring Mass schedule changes or payment issues.

Admin notifications for parish onboarding, manual request assignments, or system alerts (e.g., high traffic warnings).

Implementation: Use a notification orchestration platform like Twilio for SMS, Firebase for push notifications, and SendGrid for emails. Allow users to customize their notification preferences (e.g., opt out of SMS) and ensure compliance with GDPR and CCPA for data privacy.

Analytics & Reports

Admin Analytics: Yes, Admins should have access to comprehensive analytics, including:

Top donating users (by total amount and frequency).

Most active parishes (by number of Masses offered and requests fulfilled).

Booking trends over time (daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly).

Geographic distribution of requests (heatmaps for global insights).

Conversion rates (e.g., from request submission to payment completion).

Implementation: Integrate a business intelligence tool like Tableau or Power BI for real-time dashboards. Provide exportable reports in PDF and CSV formats for Diocese Admins and Super Admins. Include predictive analytics to forecast peak demand periods (e.g., Christmas, All Souls’ Day) and optimize priest scheduling.

Parish Onboarding

Verification Process: Yes, parishes must undergo a manual verification process to ensure authenticity. This should include:

Document uploads (e.g., proof of canonical status, parish registration).

Approval by the respective Bishop or Diocese Admin via a secure portal.

Optional video verification for high-risk regions to prevent fraud.

Implementation: Use a workflow automation tool like DocuSign for document submission and verification. Implement a status tracker for parishes to monitor their onboarding progress.

Language Support

Multi-Lingual App: Yes, the app must support multiple languages to cater to a global audience. Initial languages should include English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian, and Mandarin, with plans to expand based on user demand.

Mass Filtering: Yes, users should be able to filter Mass services by language and rite (e.g., Roman, Ambrosian, Tridentine). The system should also display the priest’s proficiency level in the selected language to ensure quality.

Suggested Enhancements (Expanded)

Donor Recognition

Donor Wall: Yes, implement a Donor Wall to recognize top donors, with customizable visibility settings (e.g., public, parish-only, anonymous). Include tiered recognition levels (e.g., Bronze, Silver, Gold) based on donation amounts or frequency. Gamify the experience with digital badges for milestones (e.g., “100 Masses Sponsored”).

Additional Feature: Create a “Legacy Donor” program where users can sponsor Masses in perpetuity (e.g., through endowments). Display these donors on a dedicated section of the Donor Wall with a special icon.

Mass Service Feedback

Feedback System: Yes, implement a feedback system to gather user insights on Mass services. Include:

A 5-star rating system for ease of use.

Optional comments for detailed feedback (moderated for appropriateness).

An email satisfaction survey sent 24 hours after Mass completion.

Implementation: Use the feedback to generate a “Parish Quality Score” (visible only to Admins) to identify high-performing parishes and areas for improvement. Ensure anonymity to encourage honest responses.

Social Sharing

Current Stance: As you noted, we are not ready to enable social sharing yet. However, we propose a future roadmap feature where users can share non-sensitive milestones (e.g., “I supported a parish today!”) with customizable privacy settings. This could integrate with platforms like X, Facebook, and WhatsApp.

Concurrency & Scalability

High Volume Requests: Yes, we anticipate significant demand during peak times (e.g., Christmas, Easter, All Souls’ Day). The system must handle thousands of simultaneous requests without latency.

Implementation:

Use a cloud-native architecture with AWS or Google Cloud for elastic scaling.

Implement request queuing with Apache Kafka to manage high traffic.

Deploy load balancers to distribute traffic across multiple servers.

Use a CDN (e.g., Cloudflare) to cache static content and reduce server load.

For unavailable Mass slots, route requests to our pool of priests, with a fallback option to schedule Masses at a later date (notified to users).

Additional Feature: Introduce a “Priority Booking” option for premium users (via subscription) to access high-demand Mass slots during peak periods.

Security

Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA): Yes, implement MFA for all Admin, Diocese Admin, and Super Admin accounts to protect sensitive data. We agree with your recommendation for email-based MFA as a starting point but propose transitioning to app-based MFA (e.g., Google Authenticator, Authy) within 6 months for enhanced security. Avoid SMS-based MFA due to SIM swap vulnerabilities.

Additional Security Measures:

Encrypt all user data at rest and in transit using AES-256 and TLS 1.3.

Implement role-based access control (RBAC) to restrict permissions based on user roles.

Conduct regular penetration testing and vulnerability scans using tools like OWASP ZAP.

Integrate a Web Application Firewall (WAF) to protect against SQL injection and XSS attacks.

Use biometric authentication (e.g., Face ID, Touch ID) for mobile app logins where supported.

Comply with GDPR, CCPA, and PCI DSS for data privacy and payment security.

Additional Features and Enhancements

\*\*\*To make the Mass Offering App a world-class platform, we propose the following additions:

AI-Powered Recommendations:

Use machine learning to suggest Mass times, parishes, or intention categories based on user preferences and history.

Predict peak demand periods and recommend alternative slots to balance load.\*\*\*

Mobile App Features:

Develop native iOS and Android apps with offline capabilities for submitting requests in low-connectivity areas.

Include an augmented reality (AR) feature to visualize parish locations or virtual prayer candles for a personalized experience.

User Personalization:

Allow users to create profiles with saved payment methods, favorite parishes, and preferred notification settings.

Offer customizable themes (e.g., light, dark, liturgical seasons) for the app interface.

Data Extraction and Insights:

Provide users with a downloadable “Mass History” report summarizing their requests and donations. Ensure that all data aggregated is as commercialisable as possible.

Enable parishes to access anonymized demographic data (e.g., age, location) to tailor outreach efforts.

Global Accessibility:

Support right-to-left (RTL) languages like Arabic and Hebrew for broader inclusivity.

Optimize the app for low-bandwidth environments using progressive web app (PWA) technology.

Sustainability Features:

Integrate an RGK donation option where users can contribute to its initiatives alongside their donations.

Partner with ethical payment processors to ensure funds are handled responsibly.