



# The Sacramentary

Volume One  
Part 1



T H E  
S A C R A M E N T A R Y  
VOLUME ONE — SUNDAYS AND FEASTS

THE ROMAN MISSAL  
REVISED BY DECREE OF THE  
SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL  
AND PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF POPE PAUL VI

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THE  
SACRAMENTARY

VOLUME ONE — SUNDAYS AND FEASTS

PREPARED BY  
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ENGLISH IN THE LITURGY  
A JOINT COMMISSION OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCES

#### EDITORIAL NOTE

In this edition prepared for the Bishops' Conferences of England and Wales, Ireland, and Scotland musical settings of texts have been omitted except where necessary. This includes the following sections: the majority of 'Musical Setting of the Order of Mass and Music Settings from the Appendix. Though the pages have been omitted the pagination allows for their eventual inclusion.

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Prot. CD 000/00

DECREE OF PROMULGATION  
BY THE CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

DECREE



CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP  
AND THE  
DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS

Prot. CD 000/00

DECREE



## FOREWORD

The *Missale Romanum*, revised by decree of the Second Vatican Council and published by authority of Pope Paul VI in 1970, was translated into English by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) and submitted to the bishops' conferences of the English-speaking world in 1973. Since then, a second typical edition of the Latin book with minor emendations and additions was published by the Apostolic See in 1975. In addition numerous other ritual books, directories, and instructions have been issued which supplement or modify the contents of the Missal, for instance, the *Directory for Masses with Children* (1973) and the second edition of the *Ordo Lectionum Missae* (1981).

Both the mandate given by the conferences of bishops in 1964 and the Apostolic See's Instruction on the Translation of Liturgical Texts (1969) gave ICEL the duty of revising all its translations after a suitable period of use and of supplementing the translations from the Latin with additional texts newly composed in English. Accordingly, after formal consultations with all the bishops and dioceses of the English-speaking world in 1982 and 1986, ICEL undertook the work of revising the 1973 translation in the light of extended use, of supplementing it with new compositions in the English language, and of arranging and presenting its contents in a more pastorally useful form. This revised and expanded edition, approved by the respective conferences of bishops and confirmed by the Apostolic See, is now issued in two volumes as *The Roman Missal: The Sacramentary*.

### TRANSLATED TEXTS

The presidential prayers have been translated afresh in the light of thorough research and critical comment upon the 1973 Missal. The texts of the Order of Mass, on the other hand, which are more familiar to the people, have been changed only where necessary for greater clarity in the light of the Latin or to avoid language increasingly perceived as discriminatory. Several texts in the Order of Mass are used in common by most English-speaking Christians; these were prepared and revised by an international ecumenical body, the English Language Liturgical Consultation, and are included in this Sacramentary as recommended by the ecumenical directives of the Apostolic See.

### TEXTS COMPOSED IN ENGLISH

Throughout the Sacramentary, additional texts have been supplied, newly composed in English, which reflect the genius of the English language and the shared literary heritage and religious experience of the English-speaking world.

In the Order of Mass, additional prefaces and interpolations for the eucharistic prayers as well as solemn blessings are provided for seasons or occasions not included in the Latin Missal; additional introductions and invitations are given for the opening rites and communion rite.

In the Proper of Seasons, alternative opening prayers are given for each Sunday and solemnity in each year of the Lectionary cycle. They replace the alternative opening prayers of the 1973 Missal, which were paraphrases and expansions of the

Latin collects. These new prayers draw upon the concrete and vivid images from the Scriptures and conclude in a clearly focused petition. They take their inspiration from the assigned readings of the day but do not depend on a prior hearing of those readings to be understood.

A few new prayers over the gifts and prayers after communion have been added to reduce the repetition of a limited number of regularly recurring prayer texts on weekdays of the seasons.

Considerable additions have been made to the Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions, in order to reflect a broader range of concerns and occasions in the contemporary experience of English-speaking Churches.

Except in the case of the original prayers within the propers clearly designated as “alternative opening prayers,” all other original texts are indicated in the right-hand margin by a siglum ( ).

## MUSIC

The musical settings provided in the 1973 Missal have likewise been revised or replaced after consultation among those who have used them. Basic musical settings are provided in the Order of Mass as models for all those elements which ought to be sung; in addition, a sung version of the entire Order of Mass includes settings for the eucharistic prayers and all other elements which may occasionally be sung, in whole or in part.

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

In the light of twenty years’ accumulated experience of the 1973 Missal and in response to the common needs of the Church in English-speaking countries, this edition contains some supplementary materials intended to facilitate better planning, more informed choice, and more sensitive celebration of Mass.

*Outlines:* The Order of Mass in both volumes and other major celebrations with a distinctive shape, principally those of the Easter Triduum, are preceded by a schematic structural outline showing at a glance the sequence and articulation of their component parts.

*Pastoral Introductions:* These introductions are offered as a resource to assist all those involved in the planning, preparation, celebration, and catechesis of the liturgy in English-speaking countries, which share many elements of a common culture and a common pastoral experience. They supplement and reinforce the contents of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and apply them to the experience and needs of the English-speaking countries as expressed through the consultations with the bishops. The pastoral introductions clarify and systematise material scattered throughout the General Instruction and rubrics of the Missal by bringing together relevant materials and norms from other rites and subsequent documents of the Apostolic See bearing on the celebration of Mass. They reinforce the rubrics and directives of the General Instruction and promote their observance by offering further reasons and arguments for them and indicating good practice in the light of common pastoral experience.

Brief introductions appear at the beginning of each section and season of the Sacramentary; somewhat fuller introductions are supplied before each of the major celebrations of the Triduum, and an extensive introduction is given for the Order of Mass. The pastoral introduction to the Order of Mass, because of its scale and importance, is placed at the front of the volume, following directly after the General Instruction and the Directory for Masses with Children, on which it depends.

*Sanctoral:* The Calendar has been somewhat enriched with more descriptive titles for the saints, in order to facilitate the identification of those proposed for celebration and to assist the selection of the most appropriate texts from the Common of Saints.

Furthermore, each formulary is supplied with a brief note providing basic historical information about the saint or the feast and indicating motives for the commemoration or celebration. These are not designed to be proclaimed, but to assist planners and celebrants in the selection of appropriate texts and sometimes to provide ideas for a homily or the general intercessions.

*Table of Rubrics Governing Ritual and Other Masses:* This table is taken from the *Ceremonial of Bishops*. It enables those planning the liturgy to see at a glance exactly when Ritual Masses, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, Votive Masses, and Masses for the Dead may be celebrated.

## PASTORAL ARRANGEMENT

To achieve a more easily useable and pastorally effective book, the contents of this revised and expanded Sacramentary have been considerably rearranged.

Since the quantity of material could not practically be contained in a convenient and durable single volume, the Sacramentary is presented in two distinct and complementary volumes. Volume One contains all the texts and materials required for Sundays, solemnities, and those celebrations which can fall on a Sunday. Volume Two contains everything needed for weekday celebrations. Nothing in the *Missale Romanum* is omitted; several items will be found in both volumes.

In both volumes, the Order of Mass section is found in the middle. It includes all ten eucharistic prayers in sequence, the musical setting of the Order of Mass, more solemn forms of the blessing, and the Order of Mass in Particular Circumstances, which is a rubrical directory for concelebration, for Masses in the absence of the people, and for Masses celebrated with the priest facing away from the people. Within the Order of Mass itself, the principal rearrangement is of the introductory rites in which the six possible components are presented as independent, freestanding opening rites, one of which is to be selected according to the occasion or season.

In both volumes also, the antiphons for the entrance and communion, newly translated to encourage their being sung, are collected together in a separate section called the Antiphonal. The antiphons are augmented by references to suitable psalms or psalm verses that may be sung with them. The majority of these references are taken from the *Graduale Romanum* and the *Graduale Simplex*.

Both volumes contain an appendix, which includes sample formularies for the general intercessions, additional music for the Order of Mass, a form for commissioning a special minister to distribute holy communion on a single occasion, and the traditional prayers of preparation for and thanksgiving after Mass.

In Volume Two, the texts for use on weekdays have been supplemented and considerably rearranged.

On the weekdays of the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Easter, the cycles of presidential prayers have been augmented by a few new compositions, to lessen the frequency with which each prayer recurs.

For the weekdays of Ordinary Time, two new dispositions of resources have been devised to encourage a more varied and sensitive use of the riches of the Missal: first, a four-week cycle of Mass formularies drawn from the translated and newly composed prayers for Ordinary Time; second, a complete collection of the 130 Sunday opening prayers, identified by caption and grouped by theme, followed by a more restricted collection of prayers over the gifts and prayers after communion. An index of themes is supplied to facilitate informed choice among all these prayers.

The prayers in the Common of Saints, the Ritual Masses, the Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, the Votive Masses, and the Masses for the Dead have been somewhat rearranged. To facilitate discriminating selection where several alternative opening prayers, prayers over the gifts, and prayers after communion are provided in the Latin, these are no longer assembled into discrete formularies, but pooled as small collections from which they may be freely chosen and combined.

The expanded collection of Masses for Various Needs and Occasions has been rearranged for greater clarity and consistency. Within the broad categories of Church, National and International Needs, Economic and Social Needs, Family and Personal Needs, Miscellaneous Prayers, several of the existing prayers have been retitled for greater accuracy and comprehensiveness, while a number of additional needs and circumstances have been given new Masses and prayers.

#### EDITORIAL ARRANGEMENT

By comparison with ICEL's 1973 edition, the format or layout of the individual Mass formularies, especially for Sundays and major feasts, has been improved and simplified, partly to allow for a greater number of prayer texts in a more readable arrangement, partly to omit explicit mention of matters that can be taken for granted many years after the first edition.

Thus rubrics about the silence expected after the invitation to the several presidential prayers in the formularies, the optional expansions of the invitations to the opening prayers, and the texts selected by ICEL for the solemn blessings or prayers over the people (where cross references alone are now given) have been omitted in this edition. This is not to suggest that these elements, above all the silence, are less significant or appropriate.

The principles of layout and presentation that have led to the editorial arrangement of these two volumes of the *Sacramentary* have been carefully applied to ensure that the published editions will be both pastorally useful and worthy of the noble use to which they are put. If attractively produced, this new edition of the *Sacramentary* will surely help to foster the full communal celebration of the Mass as envisioned by the reform.

CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

Prot. CD 166/70

DECREE

The Order of Mass has been established and the texts for the Roman Missal have been approved by Pope Paul VI in the Apostolic Constitution *Missale Romanum*, 3 April 1969. This Congregation for Divine Worship, at the mandate of the Pope, now promulgates and declares to be the *editio typica* this new edition of the Roman Missal prepared in accord with the decrees of the Second Vatican Council.

As to use of the new Missal, the Latin edition may be put into use as soon as it is published, with the necessary adjustments of saints' days until the revised calendar is put into definitive effect. As to vernacular editions, the conferences of bishops are given the responsibility for their preparation and for setting the effective date for their use, after due confirmation by the Apostolic See.

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the Congregation for Divine Worship, 26 March 1970, Holy Thursday.

+ Benno Cardinal Gut  
Prefect

+ Annibale Bugnini  
Secretary



CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

Prot. CD 1970/74

DECREE

SECOND *EDITIO TYPICA*

Since the Roman Missal must be reprinted, variations and additions have been included in order that this new edition might be in accord with the documents published after the appearance of the first edition in 1970.

In the General Instruction, the marginal numbers are unchanged, but a description of the liturgical functions of acolyte and reader is inserted in place of the paragraphs that formerly dealt with the subdeacon (nos. 142-152).

There is another change of some importance in the section of the Roman Missal that contains the ritual Masses and the Masses for various needs and occasions. Certain formularies have been completed by supplying opening and communion antiphons.

Texts not found in the first edition have also been added, namely, among the Ritual Masses, texts for the Mass of Dedication of a Church and an Altar and for the Mass of Reconciliation; among Votive Masses, texts for Masses of Mary, Mother of the Church and of the Most Holy Name of Mary.

Some other, less important changes have been introduced in headings and rubrics, so that they may better correspond to the words or expressions occurring in the new liturgical books.

Pope Paul VI has approved this second edition of the Roman Missal by his authority and the Congregation for Divine Worship now issues it and declares it to be the *editio typica*.

It will be the responsibility of the conferences of bishops to introduce into the respective vernacular editions the changes contained in this second edition of the Roman Missal.

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the Congregation for Divine Worship, 27 March 1975, Holy Thursday.

+ James Robert Cardinal Knox  
Prefect

+ Annibale Bugnini  
Titular Archbishop of Diocletiana  
Secretary





# THE LITURGICAL CELEBRATION



# APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION

## PROMULGATION OF THE ROMAN MISSAL REVISED BY DECREE OF THE SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

PAUL, BISHOP  
SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD  
FOR AN EVERLASTING MEMORIAL

The *Missale Romanum* decreed by the Council of Trent was promulgated in 1570 by our predecessor Saint Pius V.<sup>1</sup> It has been recognised by all as one of the many admirable results that the Council achieved for the benefit of the entire Church of Christ. For four centuries it provided Latin-rite priests with norms for the celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice; moreover, messengers of the gospel brought this Missal to almost the entire world. Innumerable holy men and women nurtured their spiritual life on its readings from Scripture and on its prayer texts. In large part these prayer texts owed their arrangement to Saint Gregory the Great.

Since that time a deep interest in fostering the liturgy has become widespread and strong among the Christian people, and our predecessor Pius XII, of blessed memory, viewed this both as a sign of God's caring will regarding today's people and as a saving movement of the Holy Spirit through God's Church.<sup>2</sup> Since the beginning of this liturgical renewal, it has become clear that to some extent the formularies of the Roman Missal had to be revised and enriched. A beginning was made by Pius XII in the restoration of the Easter Vigil and Holy Week services;<sup>3</sup> he thus took the first step toward accommodating the Roman Missal to contemporary mentality.

The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, in the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, laid down the basis for the general revision of the Roman Missal: "Both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things they signify";<sup>4</sup> therefore, "the Order of Mass is to be revised in such a way that the intrinsic nature and purpose of its several parts, as also the connection between them, may be more clearly brought out, and devout, active participation by the faithful more easily achieved."<sup>5</sup> The Council also decreed that "the treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that a richer share in the table of God's word may be provided for the faithful";<sup>6</sup> and finally that "a new rite for concelebration is to be

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<sup>1</sup> See Apostolic Constitution *Quo primum*, 14 July 1570.

<sup>2</sup> See Pius XII, Discourse to the participants in the First International Congress of Pastoral Liturgy at Assisi, 22 September 1956: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, Commentarium officiale (Vatican City; hereafter, AAS) 48 (1956), p. 712.

<sup>3</sup> See Congregation of Rites, Decree *Dominicae Resurrectionis*, 9 February 1951: AAS 43 (1951), pp. 128ff.; see Congregation of Rites, General Decree *Maxima redemptionis nostrae mysteria*, 16 November 1955: AAS 47 (1955), pp. 838ff.

<sup>4</sup> Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, SC), art. 21.

<sup>5</sup> SC, art. 50.

drawn up and incorporated into the Roman Pontifical and the Roman Missal.”<sup>7</sup>

No one should think, however, that this revision of the Roman Missal has come out of nowhere. The progress in liturgical studies during the last four centuries has certainly prepared the way. After the Council of Trent, the comparison and study “of ancient manuscripts in the Vatican library and elsewhere,” as Saint Pius V attests in the Apostolic Constitution *Quo primum*, helped greatly in the revision of the Roman Missal. Since then, however, other ancient sources have been discovered and published and liturgical formularies of the Eastern Church have been studied. Accordingly many have had the desire for these doctrinal and spiritual riches not to be stored away in the dark, but to be put into use for the enlightenment of the mind of Christians and for the nurture of their spirit.

Now, however, our purpose is to set out, at least in broad terms, the new plan of the Roman Missal. We therefore point out, first, that a General Instruction, for use as a preface to the book, gives the new regulations for the celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice. These regulations cover the rites to be carried out and the functions of each minister or participant as well as the furnishings and the places needed for divine worship.

It must be acknowledged that the chief innovation in the reform concerns the eucharistic prayer, as it is called. Although the Roman Rite over the centuries allowed for a multiplicity of different texts in the first part of the prayer (the preface), the second part, called the *Canon actionis*, took on a fixed form during the period of the fourth and fifth centuries. The Eastern liturgies, on the other hand, allowed a degree of variety into the anaphoras themselves. On this point, first of all, the eucharistic prayer has been enriched with a great number of prefaces—drawn from the early tradition of the Roman Church or recently composed—in order that the different facets of the mystery of salvation will stand out more clearly and that there will be more and richer themes of thanksgiving. But besides this, we have decided to add three new canons to the eucharistic prayer. Both for pastoral reasons, however, and to facilitate concelebration, we have ordered that the words of the Lord be identical in each form of the canon. Thus in each eucharistic prayer we wish those words to be as follows: over the bread: *Accipite et manducate ex hoc omnes: Hoc est enim Corpus meum, quod pro vobis tradetur*; over the cup: *Accipite et bibite ex eo omnes: Hic est enim calix Sanguinis mei novi et aeterni testamenti, qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum. Hoc facite in meam commemorationem*. The words *Mysterium fidei* have been removed from the context of Christ’s own words and are spoken by the priest as an introduction to the faithful’s acclamation.

In the Order of Mass the rites have been “simplified, due care being taken to preserve their substance.”<sup>8</sup> “Elements that, with the passage of time, came to be duplicated or were added with but little advantage”<sup>9</sup> have been eliminated, especially in the rites for the offering of the bread and wine, the breaking of the bread, and communion.

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<sup>6</sup>SC, art. 51.

<sup>7</sup>SC, art. 58.

<sup>8</sup>SC, art. 50.

<sup>9</sup>SC, art. 50.

Also, “other elements that have suffered injury through accident of history” are restored “to the tradition of the Fathers,”<sup>10</sup> for example, the homily,<sup>11</sup> the general intercessions or prayer of the faithful,<sup>12</sup> and the penitential rite or act of reconciliation with God and the community of sisters and brothers at the beginning of the Mass, which thus, as is right, regains its proper importance.

According to the decree of the Second Vatican Council, that “a more representative portion of the holy Scriptures be read to the people over the course of a prescribed number of years,”<sup>13</sup> the Sunday readings are arranged in a cycle of three years. In addition, on Sundays and all the major feasts the epistle and gospel are preceded by an Old Testament reading or, during the season of Easter, by readings from the Acts of the Apostles. This is meant to provide a fuller exposition of the continuing process of the mystery of salvation, as shown in the words of divine revelation. These broadly selected biblical readings, which set before the faithful on Sundays and major feasts the most important part of Sacred Scripture, are complemented by other parts of the Bible read on other days.

All this has been planned to arouse among the faithful a greater hunger for the word of God.<sup>14</sup> Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this hunger will seem, so to speak, to impel the people of the New Covenant toward the perfect unity of the Church. We are fully confident that under this arrangement both priest and faithful will prepare their minds and hearts more devoutly for the Lord’s Supper and that, meditating on Sacred Scripture, they will be nourished more each day by the words of the Lord. In accord with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, all will thus regard Sacred Scripture as the abiding source of spiritual life, the foundation for Christian instruction, and the core of all theological study.

This reform of the Roman Missal, in addition to the three changes already mentioned (the eucharistic prayer, the Order of Mass, and the Order of Readings), has also corrected and considerably modified other of its components: the Proper of Seasons, the Proper of Saints, the Common of Saints, Ritual Masses, and Votive Masses. In all of these changes, particular care has been taken with the prayers. Their number has been increased, so that the new forms might better correspond to new needs, and the text of older prayers has been restored on the basis of the ancient sources. As a result, each weekday of the principal liturgical seasons, Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, now has its own distinct prayer.

The texts intended for singing found in the *Graduale Romanum* have been left unchanged. In the interest of their being more readily understood, however, the responsorial psalm (which Saint Augustine and Saint Leo the Great often mention) and the opening and communion antiphons have been revised for use in Masses that are not sung.

After what we have presented concerning the new Roman Missal, we wish in conclusion to insist on one point in particular and to make it have its effect. When he promulgated the *editio princeps* of the Roman Missal, our predecessor Saint Pius V

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<sup>10</sup>SC, art. 50.

<sup>11</sup>See SC, art. 52.

<sup>12</sup>See SC, art. 53.

<sup>13</sup>SC, art. 51.

<sup>14</sup>See Amos 8:11.

offered it to the Christian people as the instrument of liturgical unity and the expression of a pure and reverent worship in the Church. Even though, in virtue of the decree of the Second Vatican Council, we have accepted into the new Roman Missal lawful variations and adaptations,<sup>15</sup> our own expectation in no way differs from that of our predecessor. It is that the faithful will receive the new Missal as a help toward witnessing and strengthening their unity with one another; that through the new Missal one and the same prayer in a great diversity of languages will ascend, more fragrant than any incense, to our heavenly Father, through our High Priest, Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit.

The effective date for what we have prescribed in this Constitution shall be the First Sunday of Advent of this year, 30 November.

We decree that these laws and prescriptions be firm and effective now and in the future, notwithstanding, to the extent necessary, the apostolic constitutions and ordinances issued by our predecessors and other prescriptions, even those deserving particular mention and amendment.

Given at Rome, at Saint Peter's, on Holy Thursday, 3 April 1969, the sixth year of our pontificate.

Paul VI, Pope

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<sup>15</sup>See SC, art. 38-40.

# GENERAL INSTRUCTION OF THE ROMAN MISSAL

## INTRODUCTION

1 When Christ the Lord was about to celebrate the Passover meal with his disciples and institute the sacrifice of his body and blood, he directed them to prepare a large room, arranged for the supper (Luke 22:12). The Church has always regarded this command of Christ as applying to itself when it gives directions about the preparation of the sentiments of the worshipers, the place, rites, and texts for the celebration of the eucharist. The current norms, laid down on the basis of the intent of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, and the new Missal that will be used henceforth in the celebration of Mass by the Church of the Roman Rite are fresh evidence of the great care, faith, and unchanged love that the Church shows toward the great mystery of the eucharist. They attest as well to its coherent tradition, continuing amid the introduction of some new elements.

## A WITNESS TO UNCHANGED FAITH

2 The sacrificial nature of the Mass was solemnly proclaimed by the Council of Trent in agreement with the whole tradition of the Church.<sup>1</sup> The Second Vatican Council reaffirmed this teaching in these significant words: “At the Last Supper our Saviour instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of his body and blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the centuries until he should come again and in this way to entrust to his beloved Bride, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection.”<sup>2</sup>

The Council’s teaching is expressed constantly in the formularies of the Mass. This teaching, in the concise words of the Leonine Sacramentary, is that “the work of our redemption is carried out whenever we celebrate the memory of this sacrifice”;<sup>3</sup> it is aptly and accurately brought out in the eucharistic prayers. At the anamnesis or memorial, the priest, addressing God in the name of all the people, offers in thanksgiving the holy and living sacrifice: the Church’s offering and the Victim whose death has reconciled us with God.<sup>4</sup> The priest also prays that the body and blood of Christ may be a sacrifice acceptable to the Father, bringing salvation to all

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<sup>1</sup>See Council of Trent, session 22, *Doctrina de ss. Missae sacrificio*, 17 September 1562 (hereafter, DMS): *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, H. Denzinger and A. Schönmetzer, editors (editio XXXIII, Freiburg: Herder, 1965; hereafter, Denz-Schön), 1738-1759.

<sup>2</sup>Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, SC), art. 47; see Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*, 21 November 1964 (hereafter, LG), nos. 3, 28; see Vatican Council II, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests *Presbyterorum ordinis*, 7 December 1965 (hereafter, PO), nos. 2, 4, 5.

<sup>3</sup>*Sacramentarium Veronense*, L.C. Mohlberg et al., editors, (3rd edition, Rome, 1978), volume 1, no. 93.

<sup>4</sup>See Order of Mass, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Eucharistic Prayer III.

<sup>5</sup>See Order of Mass, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Eucharistic Prayer IV.

the world.<sup>5</sup>

In this new Missal, then, the Church's rule of prayer (*lex orandi*) corresponds to its constant rule of faith (*lex credendi*). This rule of faith instructs us that the sacrifice of the cross and its sacramental renewal in the Mass, which Christ instituted at the Last Supper and commanded his apostles to do in his memory, are one and the same, differing only in the manner of offering and that consequently the Mass is at once a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, of reconciliation and expiation.

3 The celebration of Mass also proclaims the sublime mystery of the Lord's real presence under the eucharistic elements, which the Second Vatican Council<sup>6</sup> and other documents of the Church's magisterium<sup>7</sup> have reaffirmed in the same sense and with the same words that the Council of Trent had proposed as a matter of faith.<sup>8</sup> The Mass does this not only by means of the very words of consecration, by which Christ becomes present through transubstantiation, but also by that spirit and expression of reverence and adoration in which the eucharistic liturgy is carried out. For the same reason the Christian people are invited in Holy Week on Holy Thursday and on the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ to honour this wonderful sacrament in a special way by their adoration.

4 Further, because of the priest's more prominent place and office in the rite, its form sheds light on the nature of the ministerial priesthood proper to the presbyter, who offers the sacrifice in the person of Christ and presides over the assembly of a holy people. The meaning of his office is declared, precisely and in detail, in the preface for the Chrism Mass on Thursday of Holy Week, the day commemorating the institution of the priesthood. The preface brings out the passing on of the sacerdotal power through the laying on of hands and, by listing its various offices, describes the power. It is the continuation of the power of Christ, High Priest of the New Testament.

5 In addition, the nature of the ministerial priesthood puts into its proper light another reality of which much should be made, namely, the royal priesthood of believers. Through the ministry of presbyters the people's spiritual sacrifice is brought to completeness in union with the sacrifice of Christ, our one and only Mediator.<sup>9</sup> For the celebration of the eucharist is the action of the whole Church; in it all should do only, but all of, those parts that belong to them in virtue of their place within the people of God. In this way greater attention will be given to some aspects of the eucharistic celebration that have sometimes been neglected in the course of time. For these people are the people of God, purchased by Christ's blood, gathered together by the Lord, nourished by his word. They are a people called to offer God the prayers of the entire human family, a people giving thanks in Christ

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<sup>6</sup>See SC, art. 7, 47; see PO, nos. 5, 18.

<sup>7</sup>See Pius XII, Encyclical *Humani generis: Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, Commentarium officiale (Vatican City; hereafter, AAS) 42 (1950), pp. 570-571; see Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Mysterium fidei*, on the doctrine and worship of the eucharist, 3 September 1965 (hereafter, MF): AAS 57 (1965), pp. 762-769; see Paul VI, Solemn Profession of Faith, 30 June 1968 (hereafter, SPF), nos. 24-26: AAS 60 (1968), pp. 442-443; see Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, on the worship of the eucharist, 25 May 1967 (hereafter, EuchMyst), nos. 3f, 9: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 543, 547.

<sup>8</sup>See Council of Trent, session 13, *Decretum de ss. Eucharistia*, 11 October 1551: Denz-Schön, 1635-1661.

<sup>9</sup>See PO, no. 2.

for the mystery of salvation by offering his sacrifice. Finally, they are a people growing together into unity by sharing in Christ's body and blood. These people are holy by their origin, but becoming ever more holy by conscious, active, and fruitful participation in the mystery of the eucharist.<sup>10</sup>

## A WITNESS TO UNBROKEN TRADITION

6 In setting forth its decrees for the revision of the Order of Mass, the Second Vatican Council directed, among other things, that some rites be restored "to the vigour they had in the tradition of the Fathers";<sup>11</sup> this is a quotation from the Apostolic Constitution *Quo primum* of 1570, by which Saint Pius V promulgated the Tridentine Missal. The fact that the same words are used in reference to both Roman Missals indicates how both of them, although separated by four centuries, embrace one and the same tradition. And when the more profound elements of this tradition are considered, it becomes clear how remarkably and harmoniously this new Roman Missal improves on the older one.

7 The older Missal belongs to the difficult period of attacks against Catholic teaching on the sacrificial nature of the Mass, the ministerial priesthood, and the real and permanent presence of Christ under the eucharistic elements. Saint Pius V was therefore especially concerned with preserving the relatively recent developments in the Church's tradition, then unjustly being assailed, and introduced only very slight changes into the sacred rites. In fact, the Roman Missal of 1570 differs very little from the first printed edition of 1474, which in turn faithfully follows the Missal used at the time of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216). Moreover, manuscripts then in the Vatican Library provided evidence for some verbal emendations, but they did not offer anything useful for research into "ancient and approved authors" to extend beyond the examination of a few liturgical commentaries of the Middle Ages.

8 Today, on the other hand, countless studies of scholars have enriched the "tradition of the Fathers" that the revisers of the Missal under Saint Pius V followed. After the Gregorian Sacramentary was first published in 1571, many critical editions of other ancient Roman and Ambrosian sacramentaries appeared. Ancient Spanish and Gallican liturgical books also became available, bringing to light many prayers of profound spirituality that had hitherto been unknown.

Traditions dating back to the first centuries before the formation of the Eastern and Western rites are also better known today because so many liturgical documents have been discovered.

The continuing progress in patristic studies has also illumined eucharistic theology through the teachings of such illustrious saints of Christian antiquity as Irenaeus, Ambrose, Cyril of Jerusalem, and John Chrysostom.

9 The "tradition of the Fathers" does not require merely the preservation of what our immediate predecessors have passed on to us. There must also be profound study and understanding of the Church's entire past and of all the ways in

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<sup>10</sup>See SC, art. 11.

<sup>11</sup>SC, art. 50.

which its single faith has been expressed in the quite diverse human and social forms prevailing in Semitic, Greek, and Latin cultures. This broader view shows us how the Holy Spirit endows the people of God with a marvellous fidelity in preserving the deposit of faith unchanged, even though prayers and rites differ so greatly.

## ADAPTATION TO MODERN CONDITIONS

10 As it bears witness to the Roman Church's rule of prayer (*lex orandi*) and guards the deposit of faith handed down by the later councils, the new Roman Missal in turn marks a major step forward in liturgical tradition.

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council in reaffirming the dogmatic statements of the Council of Trent were speaking at a far different time in the world's history. They were able therefore to bring forward proposals and measures of a pastoral nature that could not have even been foreseen four centuries ago.

11 The Council of Trent recognised the great catechetical value contained in the celebration of Mass, but was unable to bring out all its consequences for the actual life of the Church. Many were pressing for permission to use the vernacular in celebrating the eucharistic sacrifice, but the Council, judging the conditions of that age, felt bound to answer such a request with a reaffirmation of the Church's traditional teaching. This teaching is that the eucharistic sacrifice is, first and foremost, the action of Christ himself and therefore the manner in which the faithful take part in the Mass does not affect the efficacy belonging to it. The Council thus stated in firm but measured words: "Although the Mass contains much instruction for the faithful, it did not seem expedient to the Fathers that as a general rule it be celebrated in the vernacular."<sup>12</sup> The Council accordingly anathematised anyone maintaining that "the rite of the Roman Church, in which part of the canon and the words of consecration are spoken in a low voice, should be condemned or that the Mass must be celebrated only in the vernacular."<sup>13</sup> Although the Council of Trent on the one hand prohibited the use of the vernacular in the Mass, nevertheless, on the other, it did direct pastors to substitute appropriate catechesis: "Lest Christ's flock go hungry . . . the Council commands pastors and others having the care of souls that either personally or through others they frequently give instructions during Mass, especially on Sundays and major feasts, on what is read at Mass and that among their instructions they include some explanation of the mystery of this sacrifice."<sup>14</sup>

12 Convened in order to adapt the Church to the contemporary requirements of its apostolic task, the Second Vatican Council examined thoroughly, as had Trent, the pedagogic and pastoral character of the liturgy.<sup>15</sup> Since no Catholic would now deny the lawfulness and efficacy of a sacred rite celebrated in Latin, the Council was able to acknowledge that "the use of the mother tongue frequently may be of great advantage to the people" and gave permission for its use.<sup>16</sup> The enthusiasm in

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<sup>12</sup>DMS, chapter 8: Denz-Schön, 1749.

<sup>13</sup>DMS, canon 9: Denz-Schön, 1759.

<sup>14</sup>DMS, chapter 8: Denz-Schön, 1749.

<sup>15</sup>See SC, art. 33.

<sup>16</sup>See SC, art. 36.

response to this decision was so great that, under the leadership of the bishops and the Apostolic See, it has resulted in the permission for all liturgical celebrations in which the faithful participate to be in the vernacular for the sake of a better comprehension of the mystery being celebrated.

13 The use of the vernacular in the liturgy may certainly be considered an important means for presenting more clearly the catechesis on the mystery that is part of the celebration itself. Nevertheless, the Second Vatican Council also ordered the observance of certain directives, prescribed by the Council of Trent but not obeyed everywhere. Among these are the obligatory homily on Sundays and major feasts<sup>17</sup> and the permission to interpose some commentary during the sacred rites themselves.<sup>18</sup>

Above all, the Second Vatican Council strongly endorsed “that more complete form of participation in the Mass by which the faithful, after the priest’s communion, receive the Lord’s body from the same sacrifice.”<sup>19</sup> Thus the Council gave impetus to the fulfilment of the further desire of the Fathers of Trent that for fuller participation in the holy eucharist “the faithful present at each Mass should communicate not only by spiritual desire by also by sacramental communion.”<sup>20</sup>

14 Moved by the same spirit and pastoral concern, the Second Vatican Council was able to reevaluate the Tridentine norm on communion under both kinds. No one today challenges the doctrinal principles on the completeness of eucharistic communion under the form of bread alone. The Council thus gave permission for the reception of communion under both kinds on some occasions, because this more explicit form of the sacramental sign offers a special means of deepening the understanding of the mystery in which the faithful are taking part.<sup>21</sup>

15 Thus the Church remains faithful in its responsibility as teacher of truth to guard “things old,” that is, the deposit of tradition; at the same time it fulfils another duty, that of examining and prudently bringing forth “things new” (see Matthew 13:52).

Accordingly, a part of the new Roman Missal directs the prayer of the Church expressly to the needs of our times. This is above all true of the ritual Masses and the Masses for various needs and occasions, which happily combine the traditional and the contemporary. Thus many expressions, drawn from the Church’s most ancient tradition and familiar through the many editions of the Roman Missal, have remained unchanged. Other expressions, however, have been adapted to today’s needs and circumstances and still others—for example, the prayers for the Church, the laity, the sanctification of human work, the community of all peoples, certain needs proper to our era—are completely new compositions, drawing on the thoughts and even the very language of the recent conciliar documents.

The same awareness of the present state of the world also influenced the use of texts from very ancient tradition. It seemed that this cherished treasure would not be harmed if some phrases were changed so that the style of language would be

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<sup>17</sup> See SC, art. 52.

<sup>18</sup> See SC, art. 35:3.

<sup>19</sup> SC, art. 55.

<sup>20</sup> DMS, chapter 6: Denz-Schön, 1747.

<sup>21</sup> See SC, art. 55.

more in accord with the language of modern theology and would faithfully reflect the actual state of the Church's discipline. Thus there have been changes of some expressions bearing on the evaluation and use of the good things of the earth and of allusions to a particular form of outward penance belonging to another age in the history of the Church.

In short, the liturgical norms of the Council of Trent have been completed and improved in many respects by those of the Second Vatican Council. This Council has brought to realisation the efforts of the last four hundred years to move the faithful closer to the sacred liturgy, especially the efforts of recent times and above all the zeal for the liturgy promoted by Saint Pius X and his successors.

## CHAPTER ONE

# IMPORTANCE AND DIGNITY OF THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

1 The celebration of Mass, the action of Christ and the people of God arrayed hierarchically, is for the Church universal and local as well as for each of the faithful the centre of the whole Christian life.<sup>1</sup> In the Mass we have the high point of the work that in Christ God accomplishes to sanctify us and the high point of the worship that the human race offers to the Father, whom we adore through Christ, the Son of God.<sup>2</sup> During the cycle of the year, moreover, the mysteries of redemption are recalled in the Mass in such a way that they are somehow made present.<sup>3</sup> All other liturgical rites and all the works of the Christian life are linked with the eucharistic celebration, flow from it, and have it as their end.<sup>4</sup>

2 Therefore, it is of the greatest importance that the celebration of the Mass, the Lord's Supper, be so arranged that the ministers and the faithful who take their own proper part in it may more fully receive its good effects.<sup>5</sup> This is the reason why Christ the Lord instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of his body and blood and entrusted it to the Church, his beloved Bride, as the memorial of his passion and resurrection.<sup>6</sup>

3 This purpose will best be accomplished if, after due regard for the nature and circumstances of each assembly, the entire celebration is planned in such a way that it brings about in the faithful a participation in body and spirit that is conscious, active, full, and motivated by faith, hope, and charity. The Church desires this kind of participation, the nature of the celebration demands it, and for the Christian people it is a right and duty they have by reason of their baptism.<sup>7</sup>

4 The presence and active participation of the faithful bring out more plainly the ecclesial nature of the celebration.<sup>8</sup> But even when their presence and participation is not possible, the eucharistic celebration still retains its effectiveness and worth because it is the action of Christ and the Church,<sup>9</sup> in which the priest always acts on behalf of the people's salvation.

5 The celebration of the eucharist, like the entire liturgy, involves the use of outward signs that foster, strengthen, and express faith.<sup>10</sup> There must be the utmost

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<sup>1</sup> See SC, art. 41; see LG, no. 11; see PO, nos. 2, 5, 6; see Vatican Council II, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops *Christus Dominus*, 28 October 1965, (hereafter, CD), no. 30; see Vatican Council II, Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio*, 21 November 1964, no. 15; see *EuchMyst*, nos. 3e, 6: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 542, 544-545.

<sup>2</sup> See SC, art. 10.

<sup>3</sup> See SC, art. 102.

<sup>4</sup> See PO, no. 5; see SC, art. 10.

<sup>5</sup> See SC, art. 14, 19, 26, 28, 30.

<sup>6</sup> See SC, art. 47.

<sup>7</sup> See SC, art. 14.

<sup>8</sup> See SC, art. 41.

<sup>9</sup> See PO, no. 13.

<sup>10</sup> See SC, art. 59.

care therefore to choose and to make wise use of those forms and elements provided by the Church which, in view of the circumstances of the people and the place, will best foster active and full participation and properly serve the spiritual well-being of the faithful.

6 The purpose of this Instruction is to give the general guidelines for planning the eucharistic celebration properly and to set forth the rules for arranging the individual forms of celebration.<sup>11</sup> In accord with the Constitution on the Liturgy, each conference of bishops has the power to lay down norms for its own territory that are suited to the traditions and character of peoples, regions, and various communities.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>For Masses with special groups, see Congregation for Divine Worship, Instruction *Actio pastoralis*, on Masses with special groups, 15 May 1969: AAS 61 (1969), pp. 806-811; for Masses with children, Congregation for Divine Worship, *Directory for Masses with Children*, 1 November 1973: AAS 66 (1974), pp. 30-46; for the manner of joining the liturgy of the hours with the Mass, see Congregation for Divine Worship, General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, 2 February 1971, nos. 93-98.

<sup>12</sup>See SC, art. 37-40.

## CHAPTER TWO

# STRUCTURE, ELEMENTS, AND PARTS OF THE MASS

### I. GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE MASS

7 At Mass or the Lord's Supper, the people of God are called together into unity, with a priest presiding and acting in the person of Christ, to celebrate the memorial of the Lord or eucharistic sacrifice.<sup>13</sup> For this reason Christ's promise applies supremely to such a local gathering together of the Church: "Where two or three come together in my name, there am I in their midst" (Matthew 18:20). For at the celebration of Mass, which perpetuates the sacrifice of the cross,<sup>14</sup> Christ is really present in the assembly gathered in his name; he is present in the person of the minister, in his own word, and indeed substantially and permanently under the eucharistic elements.<sup>15</sup>

8 The Mass is made up as it were of two parts: the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the eucharist. These two parts are so closely connected that they form but one single act of worship.<sup>16</sup> For in the Mass the table of God's word and of Christ's Body is laid for the people of God to receive from it instruction and food.<sup>17</sup> There are also certain rites to open and conclude the celebration.

### II. DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF THE MASS

#### READING AND EXPLAINING THE WORD OF GOD

9 When the Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself is speaking to his people, and Christ, present in his own word, is proclaiming the gospel.

The readings of God's word must therefore be listened to by all with reverence; they make up a principal element of the liturgy. In the biblical readings God's word addresses all people of every era and is understandable to them, but a living commentary on the word, that is, the homily, as an integral part of the liturgy, increases the word's effectiveness.<sup>18</sup>

#### PRAYERS AND OTHER PARTS ASSIGNED TO THE PRIEST

10 Among the parts assigned to the priest, the eucharistic prayer is preeminent; it is the high point of the entire celebration. Next are the prayers: the opening prayer or collect, the prayer over the gifts, and the prayer after communion. The priest, presiding over the assembly in the person of Christ, addresses these prayers to God

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<sup>13</sup> See PO, no. 5; see SC, art. 33.

<sup>14</sup> See DMS, chapter 1: Denz-Schön, 1740; see SPF, no. 24: AAS 60 (1968), p. 442.

<sup>15</sup> See SC, art. 7; see MF: AAS 57 (1965), p. 764; see EuchMyst, no. 9: AAS 59 (1967), p. 547.

<sup>16</sup> See SC, art. 56; see EuchMyst, no. 10: AAS 59 (1967), p. 547.

<sup>17</sup> See SC, art. 48, 51; see Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, 18 November 1965, no. 21; see PO, no. 4.

<sup>18</sup> See SC, art. 7, 33, 52.

in the name of the entire holy people and all present.<sup>19</sup> Thus there is good reason to call them “the presidential prayers.”

11 It is also up to the priest in the exercise of his office of presiding over the assembly to pronounce the instructions and words of introduction and conclusion that are provided in the rites themselves. By their very nature these introductions do not need to be expressed verbatim in the form in which they are given in the Missal; at least in certain cases it will be advisable to adapt them somewhat to the concrete situation of the community.<sup>20</sup> It also belongs to the priest presiding to proclaim the word of God and to give the final blessing. He may give the faithful a very brief introduction to the Mass of the day (after the greeting), to the liturgy of the word (before the readings), and to the eucharistic prayer (before the preface); he may also make comments concluding the entire sacred service before the dismissal.

12 The nature of the presidential texts demands that they be spoken in a loud and clear voice and that everyone present listen with attention.<sup>21</sup> While the priest is speaking these texts, there should be no other prayer or song, and the organ or other instruments should not be played.

13 But the priest does not only pray in the name of the whole community as its president; he also prays at times in his own name that he may exercise his ministry with greater attention and devotion. Such prayers are said inaudibly.

#### OTHER TEXTS IN THE CELEBRATION

14 Since by nature the celebration of Mass has the character of being the act of a community,<sup>22</sup> both the dialogues between celebrant and congregation and the acclamations take on special value;<sup>23</sup> in fact, they are not simply outward signs of the community’s celebration, but they encourage and achieve a greater communion between priest and people.

15 The acclamations and the responses of the faithful to the priest’s greeting and prayers create a level of the active participation that the gathered faithful must contribute in every form of the Mass, in order to express clearly and to further the entire community’s activity.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>See SC, art. 33.

<sup>20</sup>See Congregation for Divine Worship, Circular Letter *Eucharistiae participationem*, to the presidents of the conference of bishops, on the eucharistic prayer, 27 April 1973, no. 14: AAS 65 (1973), p. 346.

<sup>21</sup>See Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Musicam sacram*, on music in the liturgy, 5 March 1967 (hereafter, MS), no. 14: AAS 59 (1967), p. 304.

<sup>22</sup>See SC, art. 26, 27; see EuchMyst, no. 3d: AAS 59 (1967), p. 542.

<sup>23</sup>See SC, art. 30.

<sup>24</sup>See MS, no. 16a: AAS 59 (1967), p. 305.

16 There are other parts, extremely useful for expressing and encouraging the faithful's active participation, that are assigned to the whole congregation: especially the penitential rite, the profession of faith, the general intercessions, and the Lord's Prayer.

17 Finally, of the other texts:

1. Some constitute an independent rite or act, such as the *Gloria*, the responsorial psalm, the *Alleluia* verse and the verse before the gospel, the *Sanctus*, the memorial acclamation, and the song after communion.
2. Others accompany another rite, such as the songs at the entrance, at the preparation of the gifts, at the breaking of the bread (*Agnus Dei*), and at communion.

## VOCAL EXPRESSION OF THE DIFFERENT TEXTS

18 In texts that are to be delivered in a loud and clear voice, whether by the priest or by the ministers or by all, the tone of voice should correspond to the genre of the text, that is, accordingly as it is a reading, a prayer, an instruction, an acclamation, or a song; the tone should also be suited to the form of celebration and to the solemnity of the gathering. Other criteria are the idiom of different languages and the genius of peoples.

In the rubrics and in the norms that follow, the words "say" (*dicere*) or "proclaim" (*proferre*) are to be understood of both singing and speaking, and in accordance with the principles just stated.

## IMPORTANCE OF SINGING

19 The faithful who gather together to await the Lord's coming are instructed by the Apostle Paul to sing together psalms, hymns, and inspired songs (see Colossians 3:16). Song is the sign of the heart's joy (see Acts 2:46). Thus Saint Augustine says rightly: "To sing belongs to lovers."<sup>25</sup> There is also the ancient proverb: "One who sings well prays twice."

With due consideration for the culture and ability of each congregation, great importance should be attached to the use of singing in celebrations; but it is not always necessary to sing all the texts that are of themselves meant to be sung.

In choosing the parts actually to be sung, however, preference should be given to those that are more significant and especially to those to be sung by the priest or ministers with the people responding or by the priest and people together.<sup>26</sup>

Since the faithful from different countries come together ever more frequently, it is desirable that they know how to sing at least some parts of the Ordinary of the Mass in Latin, especially the profession of faith and the Lord's Prayer, set to simple melodies.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Augustine, *Sermo* 336, 1: *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series latina*, J.P. Migne, editor, Paris, 1844-1855 (hereafter, PL) 38, 1472.

<sup>26</sup> See MS, nos. 7, 16: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 302, 305; see *Missale Romanum, Ordo cantus Missae*, (Vatican Polyglot Press, 1972), Introduction.

<sup>27</sup> See SC, art. 54; see Congregation of Rites, Instruction (first) *Inter Œcumenici*, on the orderly carrying out of the Constitution on the Liturgy, 26 September 1964 (hereafter, InterŒc), no. 59: AAS 56 (1964), p. 891; see MS, no. 47: AAS 59 (1967), p. 314.

## MOVEMENTS AND POSTURES

20 The uniformity in posture to be observed by all taking part is a sign of the community and the unity of the assembly; it both expresses and fosters the spiritual attitude of those taking part.<sup>28</sup>

21 For the sake of uniformity in movement and posture, the people should follow the directions given during the celebration by the deacon, the priest, or another minister. Unless other provision is made, at every Mass the people should stand from the beginning of the opening song or when the priest enters until the end of the opening prayer or collect; for the singing of the *Alleluia* before the gospel reading; while the gospel reading is proclaimed; during the profession of faith and the general intercessions; from the prayer over the gifts to the end of the Mass, except at the places indicated later in this paragraph. They should sit during the readings before the gospel reading and during the responsorial psalm, for the homily and the preparation of the gifts, and, if this seems helpful, during the period of religious silence after communion. They should kneel at the consecration unless prevented by the lack of space, the number of people present, or some other good reason.

But it is up to the conference of bishops to adapt the actions and postures described in the Order of the Roman Mass to the customs of the people.<sup>29</sup> The conference, however, must make sure that such adaptations correspond to the meaning and character of each part of the celebration.

22 Included among the movements are those actions of the priest going to the altar, of the faithful presenting the gifts, and their coming forward to receive communion. These movements should be carried out becomingly in keeping with the norms prescribed for each, while the songs proper to them are being sung.

## SILENCE

23 Sacred silence should be observed at the designated times as part of the celebration.<sup>30</sup> Its function depends on the time it occurs in each part of the celebration. Thus at the penitential rite and again after the invitation to pray, all recollect themselves; at the conclusion of a reading or the homily, all meditate briefly on what has been heard; after communion, all praise God in silent prayer.

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<sup>28</sup>See SC, art. 30.

<sup>29</sup>See SC, art. 39.

<sup>30</sup>See SC, art. 30; see MS, no. 17: AAS 59 (1967), p. 305.

### III. INDIVIDUAL PARTS OF THE MASS

#### A. INTRODUCTORY RITES

24 The parts preceding the liturgy of the word, namely, the opening song, greeting, penitential rite, *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, and opening prayer or collect, have the character of a beginning, introduction, and preparation.

The purpose of these rites is that the faithful coming together take on the form of a community and prepare themselves to listen properly to God's word and to celebrate the eucharist worthily.

#### ENTRANCE

25 After the people have gathered, the opening song begins as the priest and the ministers come in. The purpose of this song is to open the celebration, intensify the unity of those who have assembled, lead their thoughts to the mystery of the season or feast, and accompany the procession of priest and ministers.

26 The opening song is sung alternately either by the choir and the people or by the cantor and the people; or it is sung entirely by the people or by the choir alone. The antiphon and psalm of the *Graduale Romanum* or *The Simple Gradual* may be used, or another song that is suited to this part of the Mass, the day, or the season and that has a text approved by the conference of bishops.

If there is no singing for the entrance, the antiphon in the Missal is recited either by the faithful, by some of them, or by a reader; otherwise it is recited by the priest after the greeting.

#### VENERATION OF THE ALTAR AND GREETING OF THE PEOPLE

27 When the priest and the ministers enter the sanctuary, they reverence the altar. As a sign of veneration, the priest and deacon kiss the altar; when the occasion warrants, the priest may also incense the altar.

28 After the opening song, the priest and the whole assembly make the sign of the cross. Then through his greeting the priest declares to the assembled community that the Lord is present. This greeting and the people's response express the mystery of the gathered Church.

#### PENITENTIAL RITE

29 After greeting the people, the priest or other qualified minister may very briefly introduce the faithful to the Mass of the day. Then the priest invites them to take part in the penitential rite, which the entire community carries out through a communal confession and which the priest's absolution brings to an end.

## KYRIE ELEISON

30 Then the *Kyrie* begins, unless it has already been included as part of the penitential rite. Since it is a song by which the faithful praise the Lord and implore his mercy, it is ordinarily prayed by all, that is, alternately by the congregation and the choir or cantor.

As a rule each of the acclamations is repeated once, but, because of the idiom of different languages, the music, or other circumstances, it may be said more than twice or a short verse (trope) may be interpolated. If the *Kyrie* is not sung, it is to be recited.

## GLORIA

31 The *Gloria* is the ancient and venerable hymn in which the Church, assembled in the Holy Spirit, praises and entreats God the Father and the Lamb. It is sung by the assembly of the faithful, or by the people alternately with the choir, or by the choir alone. If not sung, it is to be recited either by all together or in alternation.

The *Gloria* is sung or said on Sundays outside Advent and Lent, on solemnities and feasts, and in special, more solemn celebrations.

## OPENING PRAYER OR COLLECT

32 Next the priest invites the people to pray and together with him they observe a brief silence so that they may realise they are in God's presence and may call their petitions to mind. The priest then says the opening prayer, which custom has named the "collect." This expresses the theme of the celebration and the priest's words address a petition to God the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit.

The people make the prayer their own and give their assent by the acclamation *Amen*.

In the Mass only one opening prayer is said; this rule applies also to the prayer over the gifts and the prayer after communion.

The opening prayer ends with the longer conclusion, namely:

—if the prayer is directed to the Father: *We ask this (We make our prayer / Grant this) through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever;*

—if it is directed to the Father, but the Son is mentioned at the end: *Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever;*

—if it is directed to the Son: *You live and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.*

The prayer over the gifts and the prayer after communion end with the shorter conclusion, namely:

—if the prayer is directed to the Father: *We ask this (We make our prayer / Grant this) through Jesus Christ our Lord;*

—if it is directed to the Father, but the Son is mentioned at the end: *Who lives and reigns for ever and ever;*

—if it is directed to the Son: *You live and reign for ever and ever.*

## B. LITURGY OF THE WORD

33 Readings from Sacred Scripture and the chants between the readings form the main part of the liturgy of the word. The homily, profession of faith, and general intercessions or prayer of the faithful expand and complete this part of the Mass. In the readings, explained by the homily, God is speaking to his people,<sup>31</sup> opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation, and nourishing their spirit; Christ is present in the midst of the faithful through his own word.<sup>32</sup> Through the chants the people make God's word their own and through the profession of faith affirm their adherence to it. Finally, having been fed by this word, they make their petitions in the general intercessions for the needs of the entire Church and for the salvation of the whole world.

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

34 In the readings the table of God's word is laid for the faithful and the riches of the Bible are opened up to them.<sup>33</sup>

By tradition the office of reading the Scriptures is a ministerial, not a presidential function. It is therefore proper that as a rule a deacon or, in his absence, a priest other than the one presiding should proclaim the gospel reading and readers should proclaim the other readings. In the absence of a deacon or another priest, the priest celebrant proclaims the gospel reading.<sup>34</sup>

35 The liturgy itself inculcates the great reverence to be shown toward the proclamation of the gospel reading, setting it off from the other readings by special marks of honour. It is honoured in these ways: by a special minister appointed to proclaim it and who prepares himself by a blessing or prayer; by the faithful, who by their acclamations acknowledge and confess Christ present and speaking to them, and who stand as they listen to it; by marks of reverence that are given to the Book of Gospels itself.

### CHANTS BETWEEN THE READINGS

36 After the first reading comes the responsorial psalm or gradual, an integral part of the liturgy of the word. The psalm as a rule is drawn from the Lectionary because the individual psalm texts are directly connected with the individual readings: the choice of psalm depends therefore on the readings. Nevertheless, in order that the people may be able to join in the responsorial psalm more readily, some texts of responses and psalms have been chosen, according to the different seasons of the year and classes of saints, for optional use, whenever the psalm is sung, in place of the text corresponding to the reading.

The psalmist or cantor of the psalm sings the verses of the psalm at the ambo or other suitable place. The people remain seated and listen, but also as a rule take part by singing the response, except when the psalm is sung straight through without

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<sup>31</sup> See SC, art. 33.

<sup>32</sup> See SC, art. 7.

<sup>33</sup> See SC, art. 51.

<sup>34</sup> See InterEc, no. 50: AAS 56 (1964), p. 889.

the response.

When sung the following may be used in place of the psalm assigned in the Lectionary: the gradual from the *Graduale Romanum* or the responsorial psalm or the *Alleluia* psalm from *The Simple Gradual* in the form they have in those books.

- 37 As the season requires, the *Alleluia* or another chant follows the second reading.
1. The *Alleluia* is sung in every season outside Lent. It is begun either by all present or by the choir or cantor; it may then be repeated. The verses are taken from the Lectionary or the *Graduale*.
  2. The other chant consists of the verse before the gospel or another psalm or tract, as found in the Lectionary or the *Graduale*.
- 38 When there is only one reading before the gospel reading:
1. during a season calling for the *Alleluia*, there is an option to use either the psalm with *Alleluia* as the response, or the responsorial psalm followed by the *Alleluia* with its verse, or just the psalm, or just the *Alleluia*;
  2. during the season when the *Alleluia* is not allowed, either the responsorial psalm or the verse before the gospel may be used.
- 39 If the psalm after the reading is not sung, it is to be recited. If not sung, the *Alleluia* or the verse before the gospel may be omitted.
- 40 Sequences are optional, except on Easter Sunday and Pentecost.

## HOMILY

41 The homily is an integral part of the liturgy and is strongly recommended:<sup>35</sup> it is necessary for the nurturing of the Christian life. It should develop some point of the biblical readings or of another text from the Ordinary or from the Proper of the Mass of the day, and take into account the mystery being celebrated and the needs proper to the listeners.<sup>36</sup>

42 There must be a homily on Sundays and holydays of obligation at all Masses that are celebrated with a congregation; it may not be omitted without a serious reason. It is recommended on other days, especially on the weekdays during the seasons of Advent, Lent, and Easter, as well as on other feasts and occasions when the people come to church in large numbers.<sup>37</sup>

The homily should ordinarily be given by the priest celebrant.

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

43 The symbol or profession of faith in the celebration of Mass serves as a way for the people to respond and to give their assent to the word of God, heard in the readings and through the homily, and for them to call to mind the truths of faith before they begin to celebrate the eucharist.

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<sup>35</sup> See SC, art. 52.

<sup>36</sup> See InterEc, no. 54: AAS 56 (1964), p. 890.

<sup>37</sup> See InterEc, no. 53: AAS 56 (1964), p. 890.

44 The profession of faith is to be said or sung by the priest together with the people on Sundays and solemnities. It may be said also at special, more solemn celebrations.

If it is sung, as a rule all are to sing it together or in alternation.

## GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

45 In the general intercessions or prayer of the faithful, the people, exercising their priestly function, intercede for the entire human race. It is appropriate that this prayer be included in all Masses celebrated with a congregation, so that petitions will be offered for the Church, for civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all people, and for the salvation of the world.<sup>38</sup>

46 As a rule the sequence of intentions is to be:

1. for the needs of the Church;
2. for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world;
3. for those oppressed by any need;
4. for the local community.

In particular celebrations, such as confirmations, marriages, or funerals, the series of intercessions may refer more specifically to the occasion.

47 It is for the priest celebrant to direct the general intercessions, to invite the faithful to pray by means of a brief introduction, and to conclude the intercessions with a prayer. It is desirable that a deacon, cantor, or other person announce the intentions.<sup>39</sup> The whole assembly gives expression to its supplication either by a response said together after each intention or by silent prayer.

## C. LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

48 At the Last Supper Christ instituted the sacrifice and paschal meal that make the sacrifice of the cross to be continuously present in the Church, when the priest, representing Christ the Lord, carries out what the Lord did and handed over to his disciples to do in his memory.<sup>40</sup>

Christ took the bread and the cup and gave thanks; he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying: “Take, eat, and drink: this is my body; this is the cup of my blood. Do this in memory of me.” Accordingly, the Church has planned the celebration of the eucharistic liturgy around the parts corresponding to these words and actions of Christ:

1. In the preparation of the gifts, the bread and the wine with water are brought to the altar, that is, the same elements that Christ took into his hands.

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<sup>38</sup> See SC, art. 53.

<sup>39</sup> See InterEc, no. 56: AAS 56 (1964), p. 890.

<sup>40</sup> See SC, art. 47; see EuchMyst, no. 3a, b: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 540-541.

2. In the eucharistic prayer thanks is given to God for the whole work of salvation and the gifts of bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ.
3. Through the breaking of the one bread the unity of the faithful is expressed and through communion they receive the Lord's body and blood in the same way the apostles received them from Christ's own hands.

## PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

49 At the beginning of the liturgy of the eucharist the gifts, which will become Christ's body and blood, are brought to the altar.

First the altar, the Lord's table, which is the centre of the whole eucharistic liturgy,<sup>41</sup> is prepared: the corporal, purificator, Sacramentary, and cup are placed on it (unless the cup is prepared at a side table).

The gifts are then brought forward. It is desirable for the faithful to present the bread and wine, which are accepted by the priest or deacon at a convenient place. The gifts are placed on the altar to the accompaniment of the prescribed texts. Even though the faithful no longer, as in the past, bring the bread and wine intended for the liturgy, the rite of carrying up the gifts retains the same value and spiritual meaning.

This is also the time to receive money or other gifts for the poor or the Church brought by the faithful or collected at the Mass. These are to be put in a suitable place but not on the eucharistic table.

50 The procession bringing the gifts is accompanied by the song for the preparation of the gifts, which continues at least until the gifts have been placed on the altar. The rules for this song are the same as those for the opening song (no. 26). If it is not sung, the presentation antiphon is omitted.

51 The gifts on the altar and the altar itself may be incensed. This is a symbol of the Church's offering and prayer going up like incense, in the sight of God. Afterward the deacon or other minister may incense the priest and the people.

52 The priest then washes his hands as an expression of his desire to be cleansed internally.

53 Once the gifts have been placed on the altar and the accompanying rites completed, the preparation of the gifts comes to an end through the invitation to pray with the priest and the prayer over the gifts, which are a preparation for the eucharistic prayer.

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

54 Now the centre and summit of the entire celebration begins: the eucharistic prayer, a prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. The priest invites the people to lift up their hearts to the Lord in prayer and thanks; he unites them with himself in the prayer he addresses to God the Father in the name of the entire community

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<sup>41</sup>See InterEc, no. 91: AAS 56 (1964), p. 898; see EuchMyst, no. 24: AAS 59 (1967), p. 554.

through Jesus Christ. The meaning of the prayer is that the entire congregation of the faithful joins itself to Christ in acknowledging the great things God has done and in offering the sacrifice.

55 The chief elements making up the eucharistic prayer are these:

1. *Thanksgiving* (expressed especially in the preface): in the name of the entire holy people, the priest praises God the Father and gives thanks for the whole work of salvation or for some special aspect of it that corresponds to the day, feast, or season.
2. *Acclamation*: joining with the angels, the whole congregation sings or recites the *Sanctus*. This acclamation is an intrinsic part of the eucharistic prayer and all the people join with the priest in singing or reciting it.
3. *Epiclesis*: in special invocations the Church calls on God's power and asks that the gifts offered by human hands be consecrated, that is, become Christ's body and blood, and that the victim to be received in communion be the source of salvation for those who will partake.
4. *Institution narrative and consecration*: in the words and actions of Christ, that sacrifice is celebrated which he instituted at the Last Supper, when, under the appearances of bread and wine, he offered his body and blood, gave them to his apostles to eat and drink, then commanded that they carry on this mystery.
5. *Anamnesis*: in fulfilment of the command received from Christ the Lord through the apostles, the Church keeps his memorial by recalling especially his passion, resurrection, and ascension.
6. *Offering*: in this memorial, the Church—and in particular the Church here and now assembled—offers the spotless victim to the Father in the Holy Spirit. The Church's intention is that the faithful not only offer this victim but also learn to offer themselves and so day by day to surrender themselves, through Christ the Mediator, to an ever more complete union with God and with each other, so that at last God may be all in all.<sup>42</sup>
7. *Intercessions*: the intercessions make it clear that the eucharist is celebrated in communion with the entire Church of heaven and earth and that the offering is made for the Church and all its members, living and dead, who are called to share in the salvation and redemption purchased by Christ's body and blood.
8. *Final doxology*: the praise of God is expressed in the doxology, to which the people's acclamation is an assent and a conclusion.

The eucharistic prayer calls for all to listen in silent reverence, but also to take part through the acclamations for which the rite makes provision.

## COMMUNION RITE

56 Since the eucharistic celebration is the paschal meal, it is right that the faithful who are properly disposed receive the Lord's body and blood as spiritual food as he commanded.<sup>43</sup> This is the purpose of the breaking of bread and the other preparatory rites that lead the faithful directly to communion:

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<sup>42</sup>See SC, art. 48; see PO, no. 5; see EuchMyst, no. 12: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 548-549.

<sup>43</sup>See EuchMyst, nos. 12, 33a: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 549, 559.

1. *The Lord's Prayer*: this is a petition both for daily food, which for Christians means also the eucharistic bread, and for the forgiveness of sin, so that what is holy may be given to those who are holy. The priest offers the invitation to pray, but all the faithful say the prayer with him; he alone adds the embolism: *Deliver us*, which the people conclude with a doxology. The embolism, developing the last petition of the Lord's Prayer, begs on behalf of the entire community of the faithful deliverance from the power of evil. The invitation, the prayer itself, the embolism, and the people's concluding doxology are sung or are recited aloud.
2. *Rite of peace*: before they share in the one bread, the faithful implore peace and unity for the Church and for the whole human family and offer some sign of their love for one another.  
The form the sign of peace should take is left to the conference of bishops to determine, in accord with the culture and customs of the people.
3. *Breaking of the bread*: in apostolic times this gesture of Christ at the Last Supper gave the entire eucharistic action its name. This rite is not simply functional, but is a sign that in sharing in the one bread of life which is Christ we who are many are made one body (see 1 Corinthians 10:17).
4. *Commingling*: the celebrant drops a small piece of the consecrated bread into the cup.
5. *Agnus Dei*: during the breaking of the bread and the commingling, the *Agnus Dei* is as a rule sung by the choir or cantor with the congregation responding; otherwise it is recited aloud. This invocation may be repeated as often as necessary to accompany the breaking of the bread. The final repetition concludes with the words: *grant us peace*.
6. *Personal preparation of the priest*: the priest prepares himself by the prayer, said inaudibly, that he may receive Christ's body and blood to good effect. The faithful do the same by silent prayer.
7. *Invitation*: The priest then shows the eucharistic bread for communion to the faithful and invites them to the banquet of Christ. Along with the faithful, he recites the prayer of humility in words from the Gospels.
8. *Communion*: It is most desirable that the faithful receive the Lord's body from bread consecrated at the same Mass and that, in the instances when it is permitted, they share in the cup. Then even through the signs communion will stand out more clearly as a sharing in the sacrifice actually being offered.<sup>44</sup>
9. *Communion Song*: During the priest's and the faithful's reception of the sacrament the communion song is sung. Its function is to express outwardly the communicants' union in spirit by means of the unity of their voices, to give evidence of joy of heart, and to make the procession to receive Christ's body more fully an act of community. The song begins when the priest receives communion and continues for as long as seems appropriate while the faithful receive Christ's body. But the communion song should be ended in good time whenever there is to be a hymn after communion.

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<sup>44</sup>See *EuchMyst*, nos. 31-32: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 557-559; on communion twice in one day, see *Codex Iuris Canonici (Code of Canon Law)*, 1983 (hereafter, CIC), can. 917.

An antiphon from the *Graduale Romanum* may also be used, with or without the psalm, or an antiphon with psalm from *The Simple Gradual* or another suitable song approved by the conference of bishops. It is sung by the choir alone or by the choir or cantor with the congregation.

If there is no singing, the communion antiphon in the Sacramentary is recited either by the faithful, by some of them, or by a reader. Otherwise the priest himself says it after he has received communion and before he gives communion to the faithful.

10. *Reflective Prayer*: After communion, the priest and people may spend some time in silent prayer. If desired, a hymn, psalm, or other song of praise may be sung by the entire congregation.

11. *Prayer after Communion*: In the prayer after communion, the priest petitions for the effects of the mystery just celebrated and by their acclamation, *Amen*, the people make the prayer their own.

#### D. CONCLUDING RITE

- 57 The concluding rite consists of:
1. the priest's greeting and blessing, which on certain days and occasions is expanded and expressed in the prayer over the people or another more solemn formulary;
  2. the dismissal of the assembly, which sends each member back to doing good works, while together praising and blessing the Lord.

## CHAPTER THREE

### OFFICES AND MINISTRIES IN THE MASS

58 All in the assembly gathered for Mass have an individual right and duty to contribute their participation in ways differing according to the diversity of their order and liturgical function.<sup>45</sup> Thus in carrying out this function, all, whether ministers or the rest of the faithful, should do all and only those parts that belong to them,<sup>46</sup> so that the very arrangement of the celebration itself makes the Church stand out as being formed in a structure of different orders and ministries.

#### I. OFFICES AND MINISTRIES OF HOLY ORDERS

59 Every authentic celebration of the eucharist is directed by the bishop, either in person or through the presbyters, who are his helpers.<sup>47</sup>

Whenever he is present at a Mass with a congregation, it is fitting that the bishop himself preside over the assembly and associate the presbyters with himself in the celebration, if possible by concelebrating with them.

This is done not to add external solemnity, but to express in a clearer light the mystery of the Church, which is the sacrament of unity.<sup>48</sup>

Even if the bishop is not the celebrant of the eucharist but assigns someone else, it is appropriate that he should direct the liturgy of the word and give the blessing at the end of Mass.

60 Within the community of believers the presbyter is another who possesses the power of holy orders to offer sacrifice in the person of Christ.<sup>49</sup> He therefore stands at the head of the assembly and presides over its prayer, proclaims the message of salvation, joins the people to himself in offering the sacrifice to God the Father through Christ in the Spirit, gives his brothers and sisters the bread of eternal life, and shares in it with them. At the eucharist he should, then, serve God and the people with dignity and humility; by his bearing and by the way he recites the words of the liturgy he should communicate to the faithful a sense of the living presence of Christ.

61 Among ministers, the deacon, whose order has been held in high honour since the early Church, has first place. At Mass he has his own functions: he proclaims the gospel reading, sometimes preaches God's word, announces the general intercessions to the faithful, assists the priest, gives the eucharist to the faithful (in particular, ministering the cup), and sometimes gives directions regarding the assembly's gestures and postures.

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<sup>45</sup> See SC, art. 14, 26.

<sup>46</sup> See SC, art. 28.

<sup>47</sup> See LG, nos. 26, 28; see SC, art. 42.

<sup>48</sup> See SC, art. 26.

<sup>49</sup> See PO, no. 2; see LG, no. 28.

## II. OFFICE AND FUNCTION OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

62 In the celebration of Mass the faithful are a holy people, a chosen people, a royal priesthood: they give thanks to God and offer the Victim not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him and learn to offer themselves.<sup>50</sup> They should endeavour to make this clear by their deep sense of reverence for God and their charity toward brothers and sisters who share with them in the celebration.

They therefore are to shun any appearance of individualism or division, keeping before their eyes that they have the one Father in heaven and therefore are all brothers and sisters to each other.

They should become one body, whether by hearing the word of God, or joining in prayers and song, or above all by offering the sacrifice together and sharing together in the Lord's table. There is a beautiful expression of this unity when the faithful maintain uniformity in their gestures and postures.

The faithful should serve the people of God joyfully when asked to perform some particular ministry in the celebration.

63 The *schola cantorum* or choir exercises its own liturgical function within the assembly. Its task is to ensure that the parts proper to it, in keeping with the different types of chants, are carried out becomingly and to encourage active participation of the people in the singing.<sup>51</sup> What is said about the choir applies in a similar way to other musicians, especially the organist.

64 There should be a cantor or a choir director to lead and sustain the people in the singing. When in fact there is no choir, it is up to the cantor to lead the various songs, and the people take part in the way proper to them.<sup>52</sup>

## III. SPECIAL MINISTRIES

65 The acolyte is instituted to serve at the altar and to assist the priest and deacon. In particular it is for him to prepare the altar and the vessels and, as a special minister of the eucharist, to give communion to the faithful.

66 The reader is instituted to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, with the exception of the gospel reading. He may also announce the intentions for the general intercessions and, in the absence of the psalmist, sing or read the psalm between the readings.

Readers have their own proper functions in the eucharistic celebration and should exercise them even though ministers of a higher rank may be present.

Those who exercise the ministry of reader, even if they have not received institution, must be truly qualified and carefully prepared in order that the faithful will develop a warm and lively love for Sacred Scripture<sup>53</sup> from listening to the reading of the sacred texts.

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<sup>50</sup> See SC, art. 48; see EuchMyst, no. 12: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 548-549.

<sup>51</sup> See MS, no. 19: AAS 59 (1967), p. 306.

<sup>52</sup> See MS, no. 21: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 306-307.

<sup>53</sup> See SC, art. 24.

67 The psalmist or cantor of the psalm is to sing the psalm or other biblical song that comes between the readings. To fulfil their function correctly, these psalmists should possess the ability to sing and an aptitude for correct pronunciation and diction.

68 As for other ministers, some perform different functions inside the sanctuary, others outside.

The first kind include those deputed as special ministers to administer communion<sup>54</sup> and those who carry the Sacramentary, the cross, candles, the bread, wine, water, and the thurible.

The second kind include:

1. The commentator. This minister provides the faithful with explanations and commentaries with the purpose of introducing them to the celebration and preparing them to understand it better. The commentator's remarks must be meticulously prepared and marked by a simple brevity.

In performing this function the commentator stands in a convenient place visible to the faithful, but it is preferable that this not be at the ambo (where the Scriptures are read).

2. Those who, in some places, meet the faithful at the church entrance, seat them, and direct processions.
3. Those who take up the collection.

69 Especially in larger churches and communities, a person should be assigned responsibility for planning the services properly and for their being carried out by the ministers with decorum, order, and devotion.

70 Laymen, even if they have not received institution as ministers, may perform all the functions below those reserved to deacons. At the discretion of the rector of the church, women may be appointed to ministries that are performed outside the sanctuary.

The conference of bishops may permit qualified women to proclaim the readings before the gospel reading and to announce the intentions of the general intercessions. The conference may also more precisely designate a suitable place for a woman to proclaim the word of God in the liturgical assembly.<sup>55</sup>

71 If there are several persons present who are empowered to exercise the same ministry, there is no objection to their being assigned different parts to perform. For example, one deacon may take the sung parts, another assist at the altar; if there are several readings, it is better to distribute them among a number of readers. The same applies for the other ministries.

72 If only one minister is present at a Mass with a congregation, that minister may carry out several different functions.

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<sup>54</sup> See Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, Instruction *Immense caritatis*, on facilitating reception of communion in certain circumstances, 29 January 1973, no. 1: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 265-266.

<sup>55</sup> See Congregation for Divine Worship, Instruction (third) *Liturgicæ instaurationes*, on the orderly carrying out of the Constitution on the Liturgy, 5 September 1970, no. 7: AAS 62 (1970), pp. 700-701.

73 All concerned should work in harmony in the effective preparation of each liturgical celebration as to its rites, pastoral aspects, and music. They should work under the direction of the rector of the church and should consult the faithful about things that directly affect them.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF CELEBRATION

74 In the local Church, first place should certainly be given, because of its meaning, to the Mass at which the bishop presides surrounded by the college of presbyters and the ministers<sup>56</sup> and in which the people take full and active part. For there is the preeminent expression of the Church.

75 Great importance should be attached to a Mass celebrated by any community, but especially by the parish community, inasmuch as it represents the universal Church gathered at a given time and place. This is particularly true of the community's celebration of the Lord's Day.<sup>57</sup>

76 Of those Masses celebrated by some communities, the conventual Mass, which is a part of the daily office, or the "community" Mass have particular significance. Although such Masses do not have a special form of celebration, it is most proper that they be celebrated with singing, especially with the full participation of all community members, whether religious or canons. In these Masses, therefore, individuals should exercise the function proper to the order or ministry they have received. All the priests who are not bound to celebrate individually for the pastoral benefit of the faithful should thus concelebrate at the conventual or community Mass, if possible. Further, all priests belonging to the community who are obliged to celebrate individually for the pastoral benefit of the faithful may also on the same day concelebrate at the conventual or community Mass.<sup>58</sup>

#### I. MASS WITH A CONGREGATION

77 Mass with a congregation means a Mass celebrated with the faithful taking part. As far as possible, and especially on Sundays and holydays of obligation, this Mass should be celebrated with song and with a suitable number of ministers.<sup>59</sup> But it may be celebrated without music and with only one minister.

78 It is desirable that as a rule an acolyte, a reader, and a cantor assist the priest celebrant; this form of celebration will hereafter be referred to as the "basic" ("typical") form. But the rite to be described also allows for a greater number of ministers.

A deacon may exercise his office in any of the forms of celebration.

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<sup>56</sup> See SC, art. 41.

<sup>57</sup> See SC, art. 42; see *EuchMyst*, no. 26: AAS 59 (1967), p. 555; see LG, no. 28; see PO, no. 5.

<sup>58</sup> See *EuchMyst*, no. 47: AAS 59 (1967), p. 565; see Congregation for Divine Worship, Declaration *In celebratione Missæ*, on concelebration, 7 August 1972 (hereafter, ICM): AAS 64 (1972), pp. 561-563.

<sup>59</sup> See *EuchMyst*, no. 26: AAS 59 (1967), p. 555; see MS, nos. 16, 27: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 305, 308.

## ARTICLES TO BE PREPARED

79 The altar is to be covered with at least one cloth. On or near the altar there are to be candlesticks with lighted candles, at least two but even four, six, or, if the bishop of the diocese celebrates, seven. There is also to be a cross on or near the altar. The candles and cross may be carried in the entrance procession. The Book of Gospels, if distinct from the book of other readings, may be placed on the altar, unless it is carried in the entrance procession.

80 The following are also to be prepared:

1. next to the priest's chair: the Sacramentary and, as may be useful, a book with the chants;
2. at the ambo: the Lectionary;
3. on a side table: the cup, corporal, purificator, and, if useful, a pall; a plate and vessels, if needed, with the bread for the communion of the priest, the ministers, and the people, together with cruets containing wine and water, unless all of these are presented by the faithful at the preparation of the gifts; the communion plate for the communion of the faithful; the requisites for the washing of hands. The cup should be covered with a veil, which may always be white.

81 In the sacristy the vestments for the priest and ministers are to be prepared according to the various forms of celebration:

1. for the priest: the alb, stole, and chasuble;
2. for the deacon: the alb, stole, and dalmatic; the last may be omitted either out of necessity or for less solemnity;
3. for the other ministers: albs or other lawfully approved vestments.

All who wear an alb should use a cincture and an amice, unless other provision is made.

### A. BASIC FORM OF CELEBRATION

#### INTRODUCTORY RITES

82 Once the people have gathered, the priest and the ministers, clad in their vestments, go to the altar in this order:

1. a minister with a lighted thurible, if incense is used;
  2. the ministers, who, according to the occasion, carry lighted candles, and between them the crossbearer, if the cross is to be carried;
  3. acolytes and other ministers;
  4. a reader, who may carry the Book of Gospels;
  5. the priest who is to celebrate the Mass.

If incense is used, the priest puts some in the thurible before the procession begins.

83 During the procession to the altar, the opening song is sung (see nos. 25-26).

84 On reaching the altar, the priest and ministers make the proper reverence, that is, a low bow or, if there is a tabernacle containing the blessed sacrament, a genuflection.

If the cross has been carried in the procession, it is placed near the altar or at some other convenient place; the candles carried by the ministers are placed near the altar or on a side table; the Book of Gospels is placed on the altar.

85 The priest goes up to the altar and venerates it with a kiss. If incense is used, he incenses the altar while circling it.

86 The priest then goes to the chair. After the opening song, and with all standing, the priest and the faithful make the sign of the cross. The priest says: *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*; the people answer: *Amen*.

Then, facing the people and extending his hands, the priest greets all present, using one of the formulas indicated. He or some other qualified minister may give the faithful a very brief introduction to the Mass of the day.

87 After the penitential rite, the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* are said, in keeping with the rubrics (nos. 30-31). Either the priest or the cantors or even everyone together may begin the *Gloria*.

88 With his hands joined, the priest then invites the people to pray, saying: *Let us pray*. All pray silently with the priest for a while. Then the priest, with hands outstretched, says the opening prayer, at the end of which the people make the acclamation *Amen*.

#### LITURGY OF THE WORD

89 After the opening prayer, the reader goes to the ambo for the first reading. All sit and listen and make the acclamation at the end.

90 After the reading, the psalmist, that is, the cantor of the psalm, or even the reader, sings or recites the psalm and the congregation makes the response (see no. 36).

91 Then, if there is a second reading before the gospel reading, the reader reads it at the ambo as before. All sit and listen and make the acclamation at the end.

92 The *Alleluia* or other chant, according to the season, follows (see nos. 37-39).

93 During the singing of the *Alleluia* or other chant, if incense is being used, the priest puts some into the thurible. Then, with hands joined, he bows before the altar and inaudibly says: *Almighty God, cleanse my heart*.

94 If the Book of Gospels is on the altar, he takes it and goes to the ambo, the ministers, who may carry the thurible and candles, walking ahead of him.

95 At the ambo the priest opens the book and says: *The Lord be with you*. Then he says: *A reading from . . .*, making the sign of the cross with his thumb on the book and on his forehead, mouth, and breast. If incense is used, he then incenses the book. After the acclamation of the people, he proclaims the gospel reading and at the end kisses the book, saying inaudibly: *Through the words of the gospel may our sins be washed away*. After the gospel reading, the people make the acclamation customary in the region.

96 If no reader is present, the priest himself proclaims all the readings standing at the ambo and there also, if necessary, the chants that occur between the readings. If incense is used, he puts some into the thurible at the ambo and then, bowing, says: *Almighty God, cleanse my heart.*

97 The homily is given at the chair or at the ambo.

98 The profession of faith is said by the priest together with the people (see no. 44). At the words *was incarnate of the Holy Spirit . . . made man*, all bow; on the solemnities of the Annunciation of the Lord and Christmas, all kneel.

99 Next, with the people taking their proper part, follow the general intercessions (prayer of the faithful), which the priest directs from his chair or at the ambo (see nos. 45-47).

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

100 After the general intercessions, the song for the preparation of the gifts begins (see no. 50). The ministers place the corporal, purificator, cup, and Sacramentary on the altar.

101 It is fitting for the faithful's participation to be expressed by their presenting the bread and wine for the celebration of the eucharist and other gifts to meet the needs of the Church and of the poor.

The faithful's offerings are received by the priest, assisted by the ministers, and put in a suitable place; the bread and wine for the eucharist are taken to the altar.

102 At the altar the priest receives the plate with the bread from a minister. With both hands he holds it slightly raised above the altar and says the accompanying formula. Then he places the plate with the bread on the corporal.

103 Next, as a minister presents the cruets, the priest stands at the side of the altar and pours wine and a little water into the cup, saying the appointed formula inaudibly. He returns to the middle of the altar, takes the cup, raises it a little with both hands, and says the appointed formula. Then he places the cup on the corporal and may cover it with a pall.

104 After placing the cup on the altar, the priest bows and says inaudibly: *With humble and contrite hearts.*

105 If incense is used, he incenses the gifts and the altar. A minister incenses the priest and the congregation.

106 After the prayer *With humble and contrite hearts* or after the incensation, the priest washes his hands at the side of the altar and inaudibly says the appointed formula as a minister pours the water.

107 The priest returns to the middle and, facing the people and extending then joining his hands, invites the people to pray: *Pray, brothers and sisters.* After the people's response, he says the prayer over the gifts with hands outstretched. At the end the people make the acclamation *Amen.*

108 The priest then begins the eucharistic prayer. Extending his hands he says: *The Lord be with you*. As he says: *Lift up your hearts*, he raises his hands; with hands outstretched, he adds: *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God*. When the people have answered: *It is right to give our thanks and praise*, the priest continues the preface. At its conclusion, he joins his hands and sings or says aloud with the ministers and people the *Sanctus* (see no. 55:2).

109 The priest continues the eucharistic prayer according to the rubrics that are given in each of them. If the priest celebrant is a bishop, after the words, *N. our Pope*, or the equivalent, he adds: *for me, your unworthy servant*. The local Ordinary must be mentioned in these words: *N., our Bishop* (or Vicar, Prelate, Prefect, Abbot). Coadjutor and auxiliary bishops may be mentioned in the eucharistic prayer. When several are named, this is done with the collective formula: *N. our Bishop and his assistant bishops*.<sup>60</sup> All these formulas should be modified grammatically to fit each of the eucharistic prayers.

A little before the consecration, a minister may ring a bell as a signal to the faithful. Depending on local custom, the minister also rings the bell at the showing of both the eucharistic bread and the cup.

110 After the doxology at the end of the eucharistic prayer, the priest, with hands joined, says the introduction to the Lord's Prayer. With hands outstretched, he then sings or says this prayer with the people.

111 After the Lord's Prayer, the priest alone, with hands outstretched, says the embolism *Deliver us*. At the end, the congregation makes the acclamation *For the kingdom*.

112 Then the priest says aloud: *Lord Jesus Christ, you said*. After this prayer, extending then joining his hands, while facing the people, he gives the greeting of peace: *The peace of the Lord be with you always*. The people answer: *And also with you*. Then the priest may add: *Let us offer one another a sign of peace*. All give a sign of peace and love to one another, according to local custom. The priest may give the sign of peace to the ministers.

113 The priest then takes the eucharistic bread and breaks it over the plate. He places a small piece in the cup, saying inaudibly: *May this mingling*. Meanwhile the *Agnus Dei* is sung or recited by the choir and congregation (see no. 56:5).

114 Then the priest inaudibly says: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, or Lord Jesus Christ, with faith in your love and mercy*.

115 After the prayer, the priest genuflects, takes the eucharistic bread, and, holding it slightly above the plate while facing the people, says: *Behold the Lamb of God*. With the people he adds, once only: *Lord, I am not worthy*.

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<sup>60</sup>See Congregation for Divine Worship, Decree *Cum de nomine*, on mention of the bishop's name in the eucharistic prayer, 9 October 1972: AAS 64 (1972), pp. 692-694.

116 Next, facing the altar, the priest says inaudibly: *May the body of Christ bring me to everlasting life*, and reverently consumes the body of Christ. Then he takes the cup, saying: *May the blood of Christ bring me to everlasting life*, and reverently drinks the blood of Christ.

117 He then takes the plate or a vessel and goes to the communicants. If communion is given only under the form of bread, he raises the eucharistic bread slightly and shows it to each one, saying: *The body of Christ*. The communicants reply: *Amen*, and, holding the communion plate under their chin, receive the sacrament.

118 For communion under both kinds, the rite described in nos. 240-252 is followed.

119 The communion song is begun while the priest is receiving the sacrament (see no. 56:9).

120 After communion, the priest returns to the altar and collects any remaining particles. Then, standing at the side of the altar or at a side table, he cleanses the plate or vessel over the cup, then cleanses the cup, saying inaudibly: *Lord, may the food we have received*, and dries it with a purificator. If this is done at the altar, the vessels are taken to a side table by a minister. It is also permitted, especially if there are several vessels to be cleansed, to leave them suitably covered on a corporal, either at the altar or at a side table and to cleanse them after the dismissal of the people.

121 Afterward the priest may return to the chair. A period of silence may now be observed, or a hymn of praise or a psalm may be sung (see no. 56:10).

122 Then, standing at the chair or at the altar and facing the people, the priest says: *Let us pray*. There may be a brief period of silence, unless this has been already observed immediately after communion. With hands outstretched, he recites the prayer after communion, at the end of which the people make the acclamation *Amen*.

## CONCLUDING RITE

123 If there are any brief announcements, they may be made at this time.

124 Then the priest, extending his hands, greets the people: *The Lord be with you*. They answer: *And also with you*. The priest immediately adds: *May almighty God bless you* and, as he blesses with the sign of the cross, continues: *the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit*. All answer: *Amen*. On certain days and occasions another, more solemn form of blessing or the prayer over the people precedes this form of blessing as the rubrics direct.

Immediately after the blessing, with hands joined, the priest adds: *Go in the peace of Christ*, or: *Go in peace to love and serve the Lord*, or: *The Mass is ended, go in peace*, and the people answer: *Thanks be to God*.

125 As a rule, the priest venerates the altar with a kiss, then he makes the proper reverence with the ministers, and leaves.

126 If another liturgical service follows the Mass, the concluding rite (greeting, blessing, and dismissal) is omitted.

## B. FUNCTIONS OF THE DEACON

127 When there is a deacon present to exercise his ministry, the norms in the preceding section apply, with the following exceptions.

In general the deacon:

1. assists the priest and walks at his side;
2. at the altar, assists with the cup or the book;
3. if there is no other minister present, carries out other ministerial functions as required.

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

128 Vested and carrying the Book of Gospels, the deacon precedes the priest on the way to the altar or else walks at the priest's side.

129 With the priest he makes the proper reverence and goes up to the altar. After placing the Book of Gospels on it, along with the priest he venerates the altar with a kiss. If incense is used, he assists the priest in putting some in the thurible and in incensing the altar.

130 After the incensation, he goes to the chair with the priest, sits next to him, and assists him as required.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

131 If incense is used, the deacon assists the priest when he puts incense in the thurible during the singing of the *Alleluia* or other chant. Then he bows before the priest and asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice: *Father, give me your blessing.* The priest blesses him: *The Lord be in your heart.* The deacon answers: *Amen.* If the Book of Gospels is on the altar, he takes it and goes to the ambo; the ministers, if there are any, precede, carrying candles and the thurible when used. At the ambo the deacon greets the people, incenses the book, and proclaims the gospel reading. After the reading, he kisses the book, saying inaudibly: *Through the words of the gospel may our sins be washed away,* and returns to the priest. If there is no homily or profession of faith, he may remain at the ambo for the general intercessions, but the ministers leave.

132 After the priest introduces the general intercessions, the deacon announces the intentions at the ambo or other convenient place.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

133 At the preparation of the gifts, while the priest remains at the chair, the deacon prepares the altar, assisted by other ministers, but the care of the sacred vessels belongs to the deacon. He assists the priest in receiving the people's gifts. Next, he

hands the priest the plate with the bread to be consecrated, pours wine and a little water into the cup saying inaudibly: *By the mystery of this water and wine*, then passes the cup to the priest. (He may also prepare the cup with wine and water at a side table.) If incense is used, the deacon assists the priest with the incensation of the gifts and the altar; afterward he, or another minister, incenses the priest and the people.

134 During the eucharistic prayer, the deacon stands near but slightly behind the priest, so that when needed he may assist the priest with the cup or the Sacramentary.

135 At the final doxology of the eucharistic prayer, the deacon stands next to the priest, holding up the cup as the priest raises the plate with the eucharistic bread, until the people have responded with the acclamation *Amen*.

136 After the priest has said the prayer for peace and the greeting *The peace of the Lord be with you always* and the people have made the response *And also with you*, the deacon may invite all to exchange the sign of peace, saying: *Let us offer one another a sign of peace*. He himself receives the sign of peace from the priest and may offer it to other ministers near him.

137 After the priest's communion, the deacon receives under both kinds and then assists the priest in giving communion to the people. But if communion is given under both kinds, the deacon ministers the cup to the communicants and is the last to drink from it.

138 After communion, the deacon returns to the altar with the priest and collects any remaining fragments. He then takes the cup and other vessels to the side table, where he cleanses them and arranges them in the usual way; the priest returns to the chair. But it is permissible to leave the vessels to be cleansed, suitably covered and on a corporal, at a side table and to cleanse them after the dismissal of the people.

## CONCLUDING RITE

139 Following the prayer after communion, if there are any brief announcements, the deacon may make them, unless the priest prefers to do so himself.

140 After the priest's blessing, the deacon dismisses the people, saying: *Go in the peace of Christ*, or *Go in peace to love and serve the Lord*, or *The Mass is ended, go in peace*.

141 Along with the priest, the deacon venerates the altar with a kiss, makes the proper reverence, and leaves in the manner followed for the entrance procession.

## C. FUNCTIONS OF THE ACOLYTE

142 The acolyte may have functions of various kinds and several may occur at the same time. It is therefore desirable that these functions be suitably distributed among several acolytes. But if there is only one acolyte present, that acolyte should perform the more important functions and the rest are distributed among other ministers.

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

143 In the procession to the altar the acolyte may carry the cross, walking between two ministers with lighted candles. Upon reaching the altar, the acolyte places the cross near it and goes to a place prepared in the sanctuary

144 Throughout the celebration it belongs to the acolyte to go to the priest or the deacon, whenever necessary, in order to present the book to them and to assist them in any other way required. Thus it is appropriate that, if possible, acolytes have a place from which they can conveniently carry out their ministry both at the chair and at the altar.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

145 After the general intercessions, when no deacon is present, the acolyte places the corporal, purificator, cup, and Sacramentary on the altar, while the priest remains at the chair. Then, if necessary, the acolyte assists the priest in receiving the gifts of the people and may bring the bread and wine to the altar and hand them to the priest. If incense is used, the acolyte gives the thurible to the priest and assists him in incensing the gifts and the altar.

146 The acolyte may assist the priest as a special minister in giving communion to the people.<sup>61</sup> If communion is given under both kinds, the acolyte ministers the cup to the communicants or holds the cup when communion is given by intinction.

147 After communion, the acolyte helps the priest or deacon to cleanse and arrange the vessels. If no deacon is present, the acolyte takes the vessels to the side table, and there cleanses and arranges them.

## D. FUNCTIONS OF THE READER

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

148 In the procession to the altar, when no deacon is present, the reader may carry the Book of Gospels. In that case the reader walks in front of the priest, otherwise with the ministers.

149 Upon reaching the altar, the reader makes the proper reverence along with the priest, goes up to the altar, and places the Book of Gospels on it. Then the reader takes a place in the sanctuary with the other ministers.

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<sup>61</sup>See Paul VI, *Motu Proprio Ministeria quaedam*, on first tonsure, minor orders, and the subdiaconate, 15 August 1972, no. VI: AAS 64 (1972), p. 532.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

150 At the ambo the reader proclaims the readings that precede the gospel reading. If there is no psalmist, the reader may also sing or recite the responsorial psalm after the first reading.

151 After the priest gives the introduction to the general intercessions, the reader may announce the intentions when no deacon is present.

152 If there is no opening song or communion song and the antiphons in the Missal are not said by the faithful, the reader recites them at the appropriate time.

## II. CONCELEBRATED MASSES

### INTRODUCTION

153 Concelebration effectively brings out the unity of the priesthood, of the sacrifice, and of the whole people of God. The rite itself prescribes concelebration at the ordination of bishops and of priests and at the Chrism Mass.

Unless the good of the faithful requires or suggests otherwise, concelebration is also recommended at:

1. the evening Mass on Holy Thursday;
2. the Mass for councils, meetings of bishops, and synods;
3. the Mass for the blessing of an abbot;
4. the conventual Mass and the principal Mass in churches and oratories;
5. the Mass for any kind of meeting of priests, either secular or religious.<sup>62</sup>

154 Where there are a large number of priests, the authorised superior may permit concelebration several times on the same day, but either at different times or in different places.<sup>63</sup>

155 The right to regulate, in accord with the law, the discipline for concelebration in his diocese, even in churches and oratories of exempt religious, belongs to the bishop.<sup>64</sup>

156 No one is ever to be admitted as a concelebrant once Mass has already begun.<sup>65</sup>

157 A concelebration in which the priests of any diocese concelebrate with their own bishop, especially at the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday and on the occasion of a synod or pastoral visitation, is to be held in high regard. For the same reason concelebration is recommended whenever priests gather together with their bishop during a retreat or at any other meeting. That sign of the unity of the priesthood and

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<sup>62</sup>See SC, art. 57; see CIC, can. 902.

<sup>63</sup>See *EuchMyst*, no. 47: AAS 59 (1967), p. 566.

<sup>64</sup>See *Rite of Concelebration*, Introduction, 7 March 1965 (Vatican Polyglot Press, 1965; hereafter, RCon), no. 3.

<sup>65</sup>See RCon, no. 8.

of the Church itself which marks every concelebration stands out even more clearly in the instances mentioned.<sup>66</sup>

158 For a particular reason, having to do either with the meaning of the rite or of the liturgical feast, to celebrate or concelebrate more than once on the same day is permitted as follows:

1. One who has celebrated or concelebrated the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday may also celebrate or concelebrate the evening Mass.
2. One who has celebrated or concelebrated the Mass of the Easter Vigil may celebrate or concelebrate the second Mass of Easter.
3. All priests may celebrate or concelebrate the three Masses of Christmas, provided the Masses are at their proper times of day.
4. One who concelebrates with the bishop or his delegate at a synod or pastoral visitation, or concelebrates on the occasion of a meeting of priests, may celebrate another Mass for the convenience of the people.<sup>67</sup> This holds also, in analogous circumstances, for gatherings of religious.

159 The structure of a concelebrated Mass, whatever its form, follows the norms for an individual celebration, except for the points prescribed or changed in the next section.

160 If neither a deacon nor other ministers assist in a concelebrated Mass, their functions are carried out by some of the concelebrants.

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

161 In the sacristy or other suitable place, the concelebrants put on the vestments usual when celebrating Mass individually. The concelebrants, for good reason, may omit the chasuble and simply wear the stole over the alb when, for example, there are a large number of concelebrants or an insufficient number of vestments; but the presiding celebrant always wears the chasuble.

162 When everything is ready, there is the usual procession through the church to the altar. The concelebrating presbyters go ahead of the presiding celebrant.

163 On reaching the altar, the concelebrants and the presiding celebrant make the prescribed reverence, kiss the altar, then go to their designated chairs. When incense is used, the presiding celebrant incenses the altar, then goes to the chair.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

164 During the liturgy of the word, the concelebrants remain at their places, sitting or standing as the presiding celebrant does.

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<sup>66</sup>See Congregation of Rites, Decree *Ecclesia semper*, promulgating the *editio typica* of the rites of concelebration and of communion under both kinds, 7 March 1965: AAS 57 (1965), pp. 410-412; see *EuchMyst*, no. 47: AAS 59 (1967), p. 565.

<sup>67</sup>See RCon, no. 9; see ICM: AAS 64 (1972), pp. 561-563.

165 The homily is usually given by the presiding celebrant, or it may be given by one of the concelebrants.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

166 The rites for the preparation of the gifts are carried out by the presiding celebrant; the other concelebrants remain at their places.

167 At the end of the preparation of the gifts, the concelebrants come near the altar and stand around it in such a way that they do not interfere with the actions of the rite and that the people have a clear view. They should not be in the deacon's way when he has to go to the altar in the performance of his ministry.

### MANNER OF RECITING THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

168 The preface is said by the presiding celebrant alone; the *Sanctus* is sung or recited by all the concelebrants with the congregation and the choir.

169 After the *Sanctus*, the concelebrants continue the eucharistic prayer in the way to be described. Unless otherwise indicated, only the presiding celebrant makes the gestures.

170 The parts said by all the concelebrants together are to be spoken in such a way that the concelebrants say them in a very low voice and the presiding celebrant's voice is heard clearly. In this way the people should be able to understand the text without difficulty.

#### A. EUCHARISTIC PRAYER I, THE ROMAN CANON

171 The prayer *All-merciful Father* is said by the presiding celebrant alone, with hands outstretched.

172 The intercessions *Remember, Lord, your faithful people* and *We pray in communion with the whole Church* may be assigned to one or other of the concelebrants; he alone says these prayers, with hands outstretched and aloud.

173 The prayer *Lord, accept this offering* is said by the presiding celebrant alone, with hands outstretched.

174 From *Bless and approve our offering to Almighty God, command that your angel* inclusive, all the concelebrants recite everything together in this manner:

1. They say: *Bless and approve our offering* with hands outstretched toward the offerings.
2. They say: *The day before he suffered* and *When supper was ended* with hands joined.
3. While saying the words of the Lord, each extends his right hand toward the bread and toward the cup, if this seems appropriate; they look at the eucharistic bread and the cup as these are shown and afterward bow low.
4. They say: *And so, Lord God, we celebrate the memory of Christ* and *Look with favour* with hands outstretched.

5. From *Almighty God, command that your angel to the sacred body and blood of your Son* inclusive, they bow with hands joined; then they stand upright and cross themselves at the words *let us be filled with every grace and blessing*.

175 The intercessions *Remember, Lord, your servants who have died* and *For ourselves, too* may be assigned to one or other of the concelebrants; he alone says these prayers, with hands outstretched and aloud.

176 At the words *sinner who trust in your mercy and love* all the concelebrants strike their breast.

177 The prayer *Through Christ our Lord you give us all these gifts* is said by the presiding celebrant alone.

178 In this eucharistic prayer the parts from *Bless and approve our offering to Almighty God, command that your angel* inclusive and the concluding doxology may be sung.

#### B. EUCHARISTIC PRAYER II

179 The prayer *Lord, you are holy indeed* is said by the presiding celebrant alone, with hands outstretched.

180 From *Send down your Spirit* to *We pray that all of us who share* inclusive, all the concelebrants together say the prayer in this manner:

1. They say: *Send down your Spirit* with hands outstretched toward the offerings.
2. They say: *Before he was given up to death* and *When supper was ended* with hands joined.
3. While saying the words of the Lord, each extends his right hand toward the bread and toward the cup, if this seems appropriate; they look at the eucharistic bread and the cup as these are shown and afterward bow low.
4. They say *Remembering therefore his death* and *We pray that all of us who share* with hands outstretched.

181 The intercessions for the living *Lord, remember your Church* and for the dead *Remember our brothers and sisters* may be assigned to one or other of the concelebrants; he alone says these prayers, with hands outstretched.

182 In this eucharistic prayer the parts from *Before he was given up to death* to *Remembering therefore his death* inclusive and the concluding doxology may be sung.

#### C. EUCHARISTIC PRAYER III

183 The prayer *Lord, you are holy indeed* is said by the presiding celebrant alone, with hands outstretched.

184 From *And so, Lord God, we humbly pray* to *Look with favour* inclusive, all the concelebrants together say the prayer in this manner:

1. They say: *And so, Lord God, we humbly pray* with hands outstretched toward the offerings.
2. They say: *On the night he was handed over to death* and *When supper was ended* with hands joined.
3. While saying the words of the Lord, each extends his right hand toward the bread and toward the cup, if this seems appropriate; they look at the eucharistic bread and the cup as these are shown and afterward bow low.
4. They say *Calling to mind, Lord God* and *Look with favour* with hands outstretched.

185 The intercessions *Let him make us an everlasting gift* and *Lord, may this sacrifice* may be assigned to one or other of the concelebrants; he alone says these prayers, with hands outstretched.

186 In this eucharistic prayer the parts from *On the night he was handed over to death* to *Calling to mind, Lord God* inclusive and the concluding doxology may be sung.

#### D. EUCHARISTIC PRAYER IV

187 The prayer *Father most holy, we proclaim* is said by the presiding celebrant alone, with hands outstretched.

188 From *Lord God, we pray that* to *Lord, look upon the sacrifice* inclusive, all the concelebrants together say the prayer in this manner:

1. They say: *Lord God, we pray that* with hands outstretched toward the offerings.
2. They say: *When the hour had come* and *In the same way* with hands joined.
3. While saying the words of the Lord, each extends his right hand toward the bread and toward the cup, if this seems appropriate; they look at the eucharistic bread and the cup as these are shown and afterward bow low.
4. They say: *And so, Lord God, we celebrate* and *Lord, look upon the sacrifice* with hands outstretched.

189 The intercessions *Lord, remember those* may be assigned to one or other of the concelebrants; he alone says them, with hands outstretched.

190 In this eucharistic prayer the parts from *When the hour had come* to *And so, Lord God, we celebrate* inclusive and the concluding doxology may be sung.

191 The concluding doxology of the eucharistic prayer may be sung or said either by the presiding celebrant alone or together with all the concelebrants.

#### COMMUNION RITE

192 Next, with hands joined, the presiding celebrant introduces the Lord's Prayer; with hands outstretched, he then says this prayer itself with the other concelebrants and the congregation.

193 The embolism *Deliver us* is said by the presiding celebrant alone, with hands outstretched. All the concelebrants together with the congregation make the final acclamation *For the kingdom*.

194 After the deacon (or one of the concelebrants) says the invitation *Let us offer one another a sign of peace*, all exchange the sign of peace with each other. The concelebrants who are nearer the presiding celebrant receive the sign of peace from him ahead of the deacon.

195 During the *Agnus Dei*, some of the concelebrants may help the presiding celebrant break the eucharistic bread for communion, both for the concelebrants and for the people.

196 After the commingling, the presiding celebrant alone inaudibly says: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God*, or *Lord Jesus Christ, with faith in your love and mercy*.

197 After this prayer, the presiding celebrant genuflects and steps back a little. One by one the concelebrants come to the middle of the altar, genuflect, and reverently take the body of Christ from the altar. Then holding the eucharistic bread in the right hand, with the left hand under it, they return to their places. The concelebrants may, however, remain in their places and take the body of Christ from the plate presented to them by the presiding celebrant or by one or more of the concelebrants, or from the plate as it is passed from one to the other.

198 Then the presiding celebrant takes the eucharistic bread, holds it slightly raised above the plate, and, facing the people, says: *Behold the Lamb of God*. With the concelebrants and the people he continues: *Lord, I am not worthy*.

199 Then the presiding celebrant, facing the altar, says inaudibly: *May the body of Christ bring me to everlasting life* and reverently consumes the body of Christ. The concelebrants do the same. After them the deacon receives the body of Christ from the presiding celebrant.

200 The blood of the Lord may be taken by drinking from the cup directly, through a tube, with a spoon, or even by intinction.

201 If communion is received directly from the cup, either of two procedures may be followed:

1. The presiding celebrant takes the cup and says inaudibly: *May the blood of Christ bring me to everlasting life*. He drinks a little and hands the cup to the deacon or a concelebrant. Then he gives communion to the faithful or returns to the chair. The concelebrants approach the altar one by one or, if two cups are used, two by two. They drink the blood of Christ and return to their seats. The deacon or a concelebrant wipes the cup with a purificator after each concelebrant communicates.

2. The presiding celebrant stands at the middle of the altar and drinks the blood of Christ in the usual manner.

But the concelebrants may receive the blood of the Lord while remaining in their places. They drink from the cup presented by the deacon or by one of the concelebrants, or else passed from one to the other. Either the one who

drinks from the cup or the one who presents it always wipes it off. After communicating, each one returns to his seat.

202 If communion is received through a tube, this is the procedure. The presiding celebrant takes the tube and says inaudibly: *May the blood of Christ bring me to everlasting life*. He drinks a little and immediately cleanses the tube by sipping some water from a container at hand on the altar, then places the tube on a plate on the altar. The deacon or one of the concelebrants puts the cup in a convenient place in the middle of the altar or at the right side on another corporal. A container of water for cleansing the tubes is placed near the cup with a plate to hold them afterward.

The concelebrants come forward one by one, take a tube, and drink a little from the cup. They then cleanse the tube, by sipping some water, and place it on the plate.

203 If communion is received by using a spoon, the same procedure is followed as for communion with a tube. But care is to be taken that after each communion the spoon is placed in a container of water. After communion has been completed, the acolyte carries this container to a side table to cleanse and dry the spoons.

204 The deacon approaches the altar last. After he receives the blood of Christ, he drinks what remains in the cup and takes it to the side table. There he or an acolyte cleanses and dries the cup and arranges it in the usual way.

205 The concelebrants may also receive the blood of the Lord at the altar immediately after receiving the body of the Lord.

In this case the presiding celebrant receives communion under both kinds as he would when celebrating Mass alone, but for the communion from the cup he follows the rite that in each instance has been decided on for the concelebrants.

After the presiding celebrant's communion, the cup is placed on another corporal at the right side of the altar. The concelebrants come forward to the middle of the altar one by one, genuflect, and receive the body of the Lord; then they go to the right side of the altar and drink the blood of the Lord, following the rite decided upon, as has just been said.

The communion of the deacon and the cleansing of the cup take place as already described.

206 If the concelebrants receive communion by intinction, the presiding celebrant receives the body and blood of the Lord in the usual way, making sure that enough of the precious blood remains in the cup for the communion of the concelebrants. Then the deacon or one of the concelebrants arranges the cup conveniently in the centre of the altar or at the right side on another corporal together with the plate with the eucharistic bread. The concelebrants approach the altar one by one, genuflect, and take a particle, dip part of it into the cup, and, holding a plate under their chin, communicate. Afterward they return to their places as at the beginning of Mass.

The deacon receives communion also by intinction and to the concelebrant's words *The body and blood of Christ* makes the response *Amen*. At the altar the deacon drinks what remains in the cup and takes it to the side table. There he or an acolyte cleanses and dries the cup and arranges it in the usual way.

## CONCLUDING RITE

207 The presiding celebrant does everything else until the end of Mass in the usual way; the other concelebrants remain at their seats.

208 Before leaving, they make the proper reverence to the altar; as a rule, the presiding celebrant kisses the altar.

## III. MASS IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PEOPLE

### INTRODUCTION

209 This section gives the norms for Mass celebrated by a priest with only one minister to assist him and to make the responses.

210 In general this form of Mass follows the rite of Mass with a congregation. The minister takes the people's part to the extent possible.

211 Mass should not be celebrated without a minister or the participation of at least one of the faithful, except for some legitimate and reasonable cause. In this case the greetings and the blessing at the end of Mass are omitted.

212 The cup is prepared before Mass, either on a side table near the altar or on the altar itself; the Sacramentary is placed on the left side of the altar.

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

213 After he reverences the altar, the priest makes the sign of the cross, saying: *In the name of the Father*. He turns and greets the minister, using one of the formulas of greeting. For the penitential rite the priest stands at the foot of the altar.

214 The priest then goes up to the altar and venerates it with a kiss, goes to the Sacramentary at the left side of the altar, and remains there until the end of the general intercessions.

215 He reads the opening antiphon and says the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria*, in keeping with the rubrics.

216 Then, with hands joined, the priest says: *Let us pray*. After a suitable pause, he says the opening prayer, with hands outstretched. At the end the minister makes the acclamation *Amen*.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

217 After the opening prayer, the minister or the priest himself reads the first reading and psalm, the second reading, when it is to be said, and the *Alleluia* verse or other chant.

218 The priest remains in the same place, bows and says: *Almighty God, cleanse my heart.* He then reads the gospel reading and at the conclusion kisses the book, saying inaudibly: *Through the words of the gospel may our sins be washed away.* The minister makes the acclamation.

219 The priest then says the profession of faith with the minister if the rubrics call for it.

220 The general intercessions may be said even in this form of Mass; the priest gives the intentions and the minister makes the response.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

221 The antiphon for the preparation of the gifts is omitted. The minister places the corporal, purificator, and cup on the altar, unless they have already been put there at the beginning of Mass.

222 The placing of the bread and wine, including the pouring of the water, is carried out as at a Mass with a congregation, with the formulas given in the Order of Mass. After placing the bread and wine on the altar, the priest washes his hands at the side of the altar as the minister pours the water.

223 The priest says the prayer over the gifts and the eucharistic prayer, following the rite described for Mass with a congregation.

224 The Lord's Prayer and the embolism *Deliver us* are said as at Mass with a congregation.

225 After the acclamation concluding the embolism, the priest says: *Lord Jesus Christ, you said.* He then adds: *The peace of the Lord be with you always,* and the minister answers: *And also with you.* The priest may give the sign of peace to the minister.

226 Then, while he says the *Agnus Dei* with the minister, the priest breaks the eucharistic bread over the plate. After the *Agnus Dei*, he places a particle in the cup, saying inaudibly: *May this mingling.*

227 After the commingling, the priest says inaudibly: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God* or *Lord Jesus Christ, with faith in your love and mercy.* Then he genuflects and takes the eucharistic bread. If the minister is to receive communion, the priest turns to the minister and, holding the eucharistic bread a little above the plate, says: *Behold the Lamb of God,* adding once with the minister: *Lord, I am not worthy.* Facing the altar, the priest then receives the body of Christ. If the minister, however, is not receiving communion, the priest, after making a genuflection, takes the eucharistic bread and, facing the altar, says once inaudibly: *Lord, I am not*

*worthy*, and eats the body of Christ. The blood of Christ is received in the way described in the Order of Mass with a congregation.

228 Before giving communion to the minister, the priest says the communion antiphon.

229 The cup is cleansed at the side of the altar and then may be carried by the minister to a side table or left on the altar, as at the beginning.

230 After the cleansing of the cup, the priest may observe a period of silence. Then he says the prayer after communion.

#### CONCLUDING RITE

231 The concluding rite is carried out as at Mass with a congregation, but the dismissal formula is omitted.

### IV. SOME GENERAL RULES FOR ALL FORMS OF MASS

#### VENERATION OF THE ALTAR AND THE BOOK OF GOSPELS

232 According to traditional liturgical practice, the altar and the Book of Gospels are kissed as a sign of veneration. But if this sign of reverence is not fully in harmony with the traditions or the culture of the region, the conference of bishops may substitute some other sign, after informing the Apostolic See.

#### GENUFLECTIONS AND BOWS

233 Three genuflections are made during Mass: after the showing of the eucharistic bread, after the showing of the cup, and before communion.

If there is a tabernacle with the blessed sacrament in the sanctuary, a genuflection is made before and after Mass and whenever anyone passes in front of the blessed sacrament.

234 There are two kinds of bow, a bow of the head and a bow of the body:

1. A bow of the head is made when the three divine Persons are named together and at the name of Jesus, the blessed Virgin Mary, and the saint in whose honour Mass is celebrated.

2. A bow of the body, or profound bow, is made: toward the altar if there is no tabernacle with the blessed sacrament; during the prayers *Almighty God, cleanse* and *With humble and contrite hearts*; with the profession of faith at the words *was incarnate of the Holy Spirit . . . made man*; in Eucharistic Prayer I (Roman Canon) at the words *Almighty God, command that your angel*. The same kind of bow is made by the deacon when he asks the blessing before proclaiming the gospel reading. In addition, the priest bends over slightly as he says the words of the Lord at the consecration.

#### INCENSATION

- 235 The use of incense is optional in any form of Mass:
1. during the entrance procession;
  2. at the beginning of Mass, to incense the altar;
  3. at the procession and proclamation of the gospel reading;
  4. at the preparation of the gifts, to incense them, as well as the altar, priest, and people;
  5. at the showing of the eucharistic bread and the cup after the consecration.

236 The priest puts the incense in the thurible and blesses it with the sign of the cross, saying nothing.

This is the way to incense the altar:

1. If the altar is freestanding, the priest incenses it as he walks around it.
2. If the altar is not freestanding, he incenses it while walking first to the right side of the altar, then to the left.

If there is a cross on or beside the altar, he incenses it before he incenses the altar.

If the cross is behind the altar, the priest incenses it when he passes in front of it.

## CLEANSINGS

237 Whenever a fragment of the eucharistic bread adheres to his fingers, especially after the breaking of the bread or the communion of the faithful, the priest wipes his fingers over the plate or, if necessary, washes them. He also gathers any particles that may fall outside the plate.

238 The vessels are cleansed by the priest or by the deacon or acolyte after communion or after Mass, if possible at a side table. Wine and water or water alone are used for the cleansing of the cup, then drunk by the one who cleanses it. The plate is usually wiped with the purificator.

239 If the eucharistic bread or any particle of it should fall, it is to be picked up reverently. If any of the precious blood spills, the area where the spill occurred should be washed and the water poured into the sacrarium.

## COMMUNION UNDER BOTH KINDS

240 Holy communion has a more complete form as a sign when it is received under both kinds. For in this manner of reception a fuller sign of the eucharistic banquet shines forth. Moreover there is a clearer expression of that will by which the new and everlasting covenant is ratified in the blood of the Lord and of the relationship of the eucharistic banquet to the eschatological banquet in the Father's kingdom.<sup>68</sup>

241 For the faithful who take part in the rite or are present at it, pastors should take care to call to mind as appropriately as possible Catholic teaching according to the Council of Trent on the manner of communion. Above all they should instruct the Christian faithful that according to Catholic faith Christ, whole and entire, as

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<sup>68</sup>See *EuchMyst*, no. 32: AAS 59 (1967), p. 558.

well as the true sacrament are received under one kind only; that, therefore, as far as the effects are concerned, those who receive in this manner are not deprived of any grace necessary for salvation.<sup>69</sup>

Pastors are also to teach that the Church has the power in its stewardship of the sacraments, provided their substance remains intact, to make those rules and changes that, in view of the different conditions, times, and places, it decides to be in the interest of reverence for the sacraments or the well-being of the recipients.<sup>70</sup> At the same time the faithful should be guided toward a desire to take part more intensely in a sacred rite in which the sign of the eucharistic meal stands out more explicitly.

242 At the discretion of the Ordinary and after the prerequisite catechesis, communion from the cup is permitted in the case of:<sup>71</sup>

1. newly baptised adults at the Mass following their baptism; adults at the Mass at which they receive confirmation; baptised persons who are being received into the full communion of the Church;
2. the bride and bridegroom at their wedding Mass;
3. deacons at the Mass of their ordination;
4. an abbess at the Mass in which she is blessed; those consecrated to a life of virginity at the Mass of their consecration; professed religious, their relatives, friends, and the other members of their community at the Mass of first or perpetual vows or renewal of vows when the vows are taken or renewed during Mass;
5. those who receive institution for a certain ministry at the Mass of their institution; lay missionary helpers at the Mass in which they publicly receive their mission; others at the Mass in which they receive an ecclesiastical mission;
6. the sick person and all present at the time viaticum is to be administered when Mass is celebrated in the sick person's home;
7. the deacon and ministers who exercise their office at Mass;
8. when there is a concelebration, in the case of:
  - a. all who exercise a liturgical ministry at this concelebration and also all seminarians present;
  - b. in their churches or oratories, all members of institutes professing the evangelical counsels and other societies whose members dedicate themselves to God by religious vows or by an offering or promise; also all those who reside day and night in the houses of members of such institutes and societies;
9. priests who are present at major celebrations and are not able to celebrate or concelebrate;
10. all who make a retreat at a Mass in which they actively participate and which is specially celebrated for the group; also all who take part in the meeting of any pastoral body at a Mass they celebrate as a group;
11. those listed in nos. 2 and 4, at Masses celebrating their jubilees;
12. godparents, relatives, wife or husband, and lay catechists of newly

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<sup>69</sup>See Council of Trent, session 21, *Doctrina de communione sub utraque specie et parvulorum*, 16 July 1562 (hereafter, DCS), chapters 1-3: Denz-Schön, 1725-1729.

<sup>70</sup>See DCS, chapter 2: Denz-Schön, 1728.

<sup>71</sup>See Congregation for Divine Worship, Instruction *Sacramentali Communionem*, extending the practice of communion under both kinds, 29 June 1970: AAS 62 (1970), pp. 664-667.

baptised adults at the Mass of their initiation;

13. relatives, friends, and special benefactors who take part in the Mass of a newly ordained priest;

14. members of communities at the conventual or community Mass, in accord with the provisions of this Instruction, no. 76.

Further, the conferences of bishops have the power to decide to what extent and under what considerations and conditions Ordinaries may allow communion under both kinds in other instances that are of special significance in the spiritual life of any community or group of the faithful.

Within such limits, Ordinaries may designate the particular instances, but on condition that they grant permission not indiscriminately but for clearly defined celebrations and that they point out matters for caution. They are also to exclude occasions when there will be a large number of communicants. The groups receiving this permission must also be specific, well-ordered, and homogeneous.

243 Preparations for giving communion under both kinds:

1. If communion is received from the cup with a tube, silver tubes are needed for the celebrant and each communicant. There should also be a container of water for cleansing the tubes and a plate on which to put them afterward.

2. If the precious blood is given with a spoon, only one spoon is necessary.

3. If communion under both kinds is given by intinction, care is to be taken that the eucharistic bread is not too thin or too small, but a little thicker than usual so that after being partly dipped into the precious blood it can still easily be given to the communicant.

A. RITE OF COMMUNION UNDER BOTH KINDS DIRECTLY FROM THE CUP

244 If there is a deacon, another assisting priest, or an acolyte present:

1. The priest celebrant receives the Lord's body and blood as usual, making sure enough remains in the cup for the other communicants. He wipes the outside of the cup with a purificator.

2. The priest gives the cup and the purificator to the minister and he himself takes the plate or vessel with the eucharistic bread. The priest and the minister of the cup station themselves in a place convenient for the communion of the faithful.

3. The communicants approach, make the proper reverence, and stand in front of the priest. Showing the eucharistic bread he says: *The body of Christ*. The communicant answers: *Amen*, and receives the body of Christ from the priest.

4. The communicant then moves and stands before the minister of the cup. The minister says: *The blood of Christ*, the communicant answers: *Amen*, and the minister holds out the cup and the purificator. For the sake of convenience, communicants may raise the cup to their mouth themselves. Holding the purificator under the mouth with one hand, they drink a little from the cup, taking care not to spill the cup, and then return to their place. The minister wipes the outside of the cup with the purificator.

5. The minister places the cup on the altar after all who are receiving under both kinds have drunk from it. If there are others receiving under one

kind only, the priest gives these communion, then returns to the altar. The priest or minister drinks whatever remains in the cup and cleanses the vessels as usual.

245 If there is no deacon, assisting priest, or acolyte present:

1. The priest receives the Lord's body and blood as usual, making sure enough remains in the cup for the other communicants. He wipes the outside of the cup with the purificator.
2. The priest then stations himself in a place convenient for communion and distributes the body of Christ in the usual way to all who are receiving under both kinds. The communicants approach, make the proper reverence, and stand in front of the priest. After receiving the body of Christ, they step back a little.
3. After each one has received the body of the Lord, the priest places the vessel on the altar and takes the cup and the purificator. All those receiving from the cup come forward again and stand in front of the priest. He says: *The blood of Christ*, the communicant answers: *Amen*, and the priest presents the cup and the purificator. The communicants hold the purificator under their mouth with the left hand, taking care that none of the precious blood is spilled, drink a little from the cup, and then return to their place. The priest wipes the outside of the cup with the purificator.
4. After the communion from the cup, the priest places it on the altar and if there are others receiving under one kind only, he gives them communion in the usual way, then returns to the altar. He drinks whatever remains in the cup and cleanses the vessels as usual.

#### B. RITE OF COMMUNION UNDER BOTH KINDS BY INTINCTION

246 If there is a deacon, another assisting priest, or an acolyte present:

1. The priest gives this minister the cup and the purificator and he himself takes the plate or vessel with the eucharistic bread. The priest and the minister of the cup station themselves in a place convenient for distributing communion.
2. The communicants approach one by one, make the proper reverence, stand in front of the priest, and hold the communion plate below their chin. The priest dips a particle of eucharistic bread into the cup and, showing it, says: *The body and blood of Christ*. The communicants respond: *Amen*, receive the sacrament from the priest, and return to their place.
3. The communion of those who receive under one kind only, the consuming of the remaining precious blood, and the cleansing of the vessels take place as already described.

247 If there is no deacon, assisting priest, or acolyte present:

1. After drinking the blood of the Lord, the priest takes the vessel, or plate with the eucharistic bread, between the index and middle fingers of the left hand and holds the cup between the thumb and index finger of the same hand. Then he stations himself in a place convenient for communion.
2. The communicants approach one by one, make the proper reverence, stand in front of the priest, and hold the communion plate below their chin. The priest dips a particle of eucharistic bread into the cup and, showing it,

says: *The body and blood of Christ*. The communicants respond: *Amen*, receive the sacrament from the priest, and return to their place.

3. It is also permitted to place a small table covered with a cloth and corporal at a suitable place. The priest places the cup or vessel on the table in order to make the distribution of communion easier.

4. The communion of those who receive under one kind only, the consuming of the remaining precious blood, and the cleansing of the vessels take place as already described.

#### C. RITE OF COMMUNION UNDER BOTH KINDS USING A TUBE

248 In this case the priest celebrant also uses a tube when receiving the blood of the Lord.

249 If there is a deacon, another assisting priest, or an acolyte present:

1. For the communion of the body of the Lord, everything is done as previously described (nos. 244:2 and 3).

2. The communicant goes and stands in front of the minister of the cup. The minister says: *The blood of Christ*, and the communicant responds: *Amen*. The communicant receives the tube from the minister, places it in the cup and drinks a little of the precious blood. The communicant then removes the tube, careful not to spill any drops, and places it in a container of water held by a minister. The communicant sips a little water to cleanse the tube, then puts it into another container presented by the minister.

250 If there is no deacon, assisting priest, or acolyte present, the priest celebrant offers the cup to each communicant in the way described already for communion from the cup (no. 245). A minister standing next to him holds the container of water for cleansing the tube.

#### D. RITE OF COMMUNION UNDER BOTH KINDS USING A SPOON

251 If there is a deacon, another assisting priest, or an acolyte present, the minister holds the cup with the left hand and, saying: *The blood of Christ*, ministers the blood of the Lord with a spoon to the individual communicants, who hold the communion plate below their chin. The minister is to take care that the spoon does not touch the lips or tongue of the communicants.

252 If there is no deacon, assisting priest, or acolyte present, the priest celebrant himself gives them the Lord's blood, after all receiving communion under both kinds have received the Lord's body.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# ARRANGEMENT AND FURNISHING OF CHURCHES FOR THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

### I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

253 For the celebration of the eucharist, the people of God normally assemble in a church or, if there is none, in some other fitting place worthy of so great a mystery. Churches and other places of worship should therefore be suited to celebrating the liturgy and to ensuring the active participation of the faithful. Further, the buildings and requisites for worship should be truly worthy and beautiful, signs and symbols of heavenly realities.<sup>72</sup>

254 At all times, therefore, the Church seeks out the noble service of the arts and welcomes the artistic expressions of all peoples and regions.<sup>73</sup> Even more, the Church is intent on keeping the works of art and the treasures handed down from the past<sup>74</sup> and, when necessary, on adapting them to new needs. It strives as well to promote new works of art that appeal to the contemporary mentality.<sup>75</sup>

In commissioning artists and choosing works of art that are to become part of a church, the highest artistic standard is therefore to be set, in order that art may aid faith and devotion and be true to the reality it is to symbolise and the purpose it is to serve.<sup>76</sup>

255 All churches are to be solemnly dedicated or at least blessed. But cathedral and parish churches are always to be dedicated. The faithful should give due honour to the cathedral of their diocese and to their own church as symbols of the spiritual Church that their Christian vocation commits them to build up and extend.

256 All who are involved in the construction, restoration, and remodelling of churches are to consult the diocesan commission on liturgy and liturgical art. The local Ordinary is to use the counsel and help of this commission whenever it comes to laying down norms on this matter, approving plans for new buildings, and making decisions on the more important issues.<sup>77</sup>

### II. ARRANGEMENT OF A CHURCH FOR THE LITURGICAL ASSEMBLY

257 The people of God assembled at Mass possess an organic and hierarchical structure, expressed by the various ministries and actions for each part of the celebration. The general plan of the sacred building should be such that in some way it conveys the image of the gathered assembly. Thus it should also allow the participants to take the place most appropriate to them and assist all to carry out their

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<sup>72</sup>See SC, art. 122-124; see PO, no. 5; see InterEc, no. 90: AAS 56 (1964), p. 897; see EuchMyst, no. 24: AAS 59 (1967), p. 554.

<sup>73</sup>See SC, art. 123.

<sup>74</sup>See EuchMyst, no. 24: AAS 59 (1967), p. 554.

<sup>75</sup>See SC, art. 123, 129; see InterEc, no. 13c: AAS 56 (1964), p. 880.

<sup>76</sup>See SC, art. 123.

<sup>77</sup>See SC, art. 126.

individual functions properly.

The faithful and the choir should have a place that facilitates their active participation.<sup>78</sup>

The priest and his ministers have their place in the sanctuary, that is, in the part of the church that brings out their distinctive role, namely, to preside over the prayers, to proclaim the word of God, or to minister at the altar.

Even though all these elements must express a hierarchical arrangement and the diversity of functions, they should at the same time form a deep and organic unity, clearly expressive of the unity of the entire holy people. The character and beauty of the place and all its appointments should foster devotion and show the holiness of the mysteries celebrated there.

### III. SANCTUARY

258 The sanctuary should be clearly marked off from the body of the church either by being somewhat elevated or by its distinctive design and appointments. It should be large enough to allow the proper celebration of the rites.<sup>79</sup>

### IV. ALTAR

259 At the altar the sacrifice of the cross is made present under sacramental signs. It is also the table of the Lord, and the people of God are called together to share in it. The altar is, as well, the centre of the thanksgiving that the eucharist accomplishes.<sup>80</sup>

260 In a place of worship, the celebration of the eucharist must be on an altar, either fixed or movable. Outside a place of worship, especially if the celebration is only for a single occasion, a suitable table may be used, but always with a cloth and corporal.

261 A fixed altar is attached to the floor so that it cannot be moved; a movable altar is one that can be transferred from place to place.

262 In every church there should ordinarily be a fixed, dedicated altar, which should be freestanding to allow the ministers to walk around it easily and Mass to be celebrated facing the people. It should be so placed as to be a focal point on which the attention of the whole congregation of the faithful centres naturally.<sup>81</sup>

263 According to the Church's traditional practice and the altar's symbolism, the table of a fixed altar should be of stone and indeed of natural stone. But at the discretion of the conference of bishops some other solid, becoming, and well-crafted

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<sup>78</sup> See InterEc, nos. 97-98: AAS 56 (1964), p. 899.

<sup>79</sup> See InterEc, no. 91: AAS 56 (1964), p. 898.

<sup>80</sup> See EuchMyst, no. 24: AAS 59 (1967), p. 554.

<sup>81</sup> See InterEc, no. 91: AAS 56 (1964), p. 898.

material may be used.

The pedestal or base of the table may be made of any sort of material, as long as it is becoming and solid.

264 A movable altar may be constructed of any becoming, solid material suited to liturgical use, according to the traditions and customs of different regions.

265 Altars both fixed and movable are dedicated according to the rite described in the liturgical books, but movable altars may simply be blessed.

266 The practice of placing under the altar to be dedicated relics of saints, even of non-martyrs, is to be maintained. Care must be taken to have solid evidence of the authenticity of such relics.

267 Minor altars should be fewer in number. In new churches they should be placed in chapels separated in some way from the body of the church.<sup>82</sup>

## V. ALTAR APPOINTMENTS

268 At least one cloth should be placed on the altar out of reverence for the celebration of the memorial of the Lord and the banquet that gives us his body and blood. The shape, size, and decoration of the altar cloth should be in keeping with the design of the altar.

269 Candles are to be used at every liturgical service as a sign of reverence and of the festiveness of the celebration. The candlesticks are to be placed either on or around the altar in a way suited to the design of the altar and the sanctuary. Everything is to be well balanced and must not interfere with the faithful's clear view of what takes place at the altar or is placed on it.

270 There is also to be a cross, clearly visible to the assembly either on the altar or near it.

## VI. CHAIR FOR THE PRIEST CELEBRANT AND THE MINISTERS, THAT IS, THE PLACE WHERE THE PRIEST PRESIDES

271 The priest celebrant's chair ought to stand as a symbol of his function of presiding over the assembly and of directing prayer. Thus the best place for the chair is at the head of the sanctuary and turned toward the people, unless the design of the building or other circumstances are an obstacle (for example, if too great a distance would interfere with communication between the priest and the assembly of the faithful). Anything resembling a throne is to be avoided. The seats for the ministers should be so placed in the sanctuary that they can readily carry out their

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<sup>82</sup>See InterEc, no. 93: AAS 56 (1964), p. 898.

appointed functions.<sup>83</sup>

## VII. AMBO OR PLACE FROM WHICH THE WORD OF GOD IS PROCLAIMED

272 The dignity of the word of God requires the church to have a place that is suitable for proclamation of the word and is a natural focal point for the faithful during the liturgy of the word.<sup>84</sup>

As a rule the ambo (lectern or pulpit) should be stationary, not simply a movable stand. In keeping with the design of each church, it must be so placed that the ministers may be easily seen and heard by the faithful.

The readings, responsorial psalm, and the Easter Proclamation (*Exsultet*) are proclaimed from the ambo; it may be used also for the homily and general intercessions (prayer of the faithful).

It is better for the commentator, cantor, or choir director not to use the ambo.

## VIII. PLACES FOR THE FAITHFUL

273 The places for the faithful should be arranged with care so that they are able to take their rightful part in the celebration visually and mentally. As a rule, there should be benches or chairs for their use. But the custom of reserving seats for private persons must be abolished.<sup>85</sup> Chairs or benches should be set up in such a way that the people can easily take the postures required during various parts of the celebration and have unimpeded access to receive communion.

The faithful must be enabled not only to see the priest and the other ministers but also, with the aid of modern sound equipment, to hear them without difficulty.

## IX. PLACES FOR CHOIR, ORGAN, AND OTHER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

274 In relation to the design of each church, the *schola cantorum* should be so placed that its character as a part of the assembly of the faithful that has a special function stands out clearly. The location should also assist the choir's liturgical ministry and readily allow each member complete, that is, sacramental participation in the Mass.<sup>86</sup>

275 The organ and other lawfully approved musical instruments are to be placed suitably in such a way that they can sustain the singing of the choir and congregation and be heard by all with ease when they are played alone.

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<sup>83</sup> See InterEc, no. 92: AAS 56 (1964), p. 898.

<sup>84</sup> See InterEc, no. 96: AAS 56 (1964), p. 899.

<sup>85</sup> See SC, art. 32; see InterEc, no. 98: AAS 56 (1964), p. 899.

<sup>86</sup> See MS, no. 23: AAS 59 (1967), p. 307.

## X. RESERVATION OF THE EUCHARIST

276 Every encouragement should be given to the practice of eucharistic reservation in a chapel suited to the faithful's private adoration and prayer.<sup>87</sup> If this is impossible because of the design of the church, the sacrament should be reserved at an altar or elsewhere, in keeping with legitimate local custom, and in a part of the church that is worthy and properly adorned.<sup>88</sup>

277 The eucharist is to be reserved in a single, solid, immovable tabernacle that is opaque and is locked in such a way as to provide every possible security against the danger of desecration. Thus as a rule there should be only one tabernacle in each church.<sup>89</sup>

## XI. IMAGES FOR VENERATION BY THE FAITHFUL

278 In keeping with the Church's very ancient tradition, it is lawful to set up in buildings images of the Lord, Mary, and the saints for veneration by the faithful. But there is need both to limit their number and to situate them in such a way that they do not distract the faithful's attention from the celebration.<sup>90</sup> There is to be only one image of any one saint. In general, the devotion of the entire community is to be the criterion regarding images in the adornment and arrangement of a church.

## XII. GENERAL PLAN OF THE CHURCH

279 Church decor should seek to achieve noble simplicity rather than ostentation. The choice of materials for church appointments must be marked by concern for genuineness and by the intent to foster instruction of the faithful and the dignity of the place of worship.

280 Proper planning of a church and its surroundings that meets contemporary needs requires attention not only to the elements belonging directly to liturgical services but also to those facilities for the comfort of the faithful that are usual in places of public assembly.

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<sup>87</sup> See *EuchMyst*, no. 53: AAS 59 (1967), p. 568; see *The Roman Ritual, Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass*, English edition 1974 (hereafter, HCWE), Introduction, no. 9.

<sup>88</sup> See *EuchMyst*, no. 54: AAS 59 (1967), p. 568; see *InterEc*, no. 95: AAS 56 (1964), p. 898.

<sup>89</sup> See *EuchMyst*, no. 52: AAS 59 (1967), p. 568; see *InterEc*, no. 95: AAS 56 (1964), p. 898; see *Congregation of the Sacraments*, Instruction *Nullo umquam tempore*, 28 May 1938, no. 4: AAS 30 (1938), pp. 199-200; see HCWE, Introduction, nos. 10-11; see CIC, can. 938.

<sup>90</sup> See SC, art. 125.

## CHAPTER SIX

# REQUISITES FOR CELEBRATING MASS

### I. BREAD AND WINE

281 Following the example of Christ, the Church has always used bread and wine with water to celebrate the Lord's Supper.

282 The bread must be made only from wheat and must have been baked recently; according to the long-standing tradition of the Latin Church, it must be unleavened.

283 The nature of the sign demands that the material for the eucharistic celebration truly have the appearance of food. Accordingly, even though unleavened and baked in the traditional shape, the eucharistic bread should be made in such a way that in a Mass with a congregation the priest is able actually to break it into parts and distribute them to at least some of the faithful. (When, however, the number of communicants is large or other pastoral needs require it, small breads are in no way ruled out.) The action of the breaking of the bread, the simple term for the eucharist in apostolic times, will more clearly bring out the force and meaning of the sign of the unity of all in the one bread and of their charity, since the one bread is being distributed among the members of one family.

284 The wine for the eucharist must be from the fruit of the vine (see Luke 22:18), natural, and pure, that is not mixed with any foreign substance.

285 Care must be taken to ensure that the bread and wine for the eucharist are kept in good condition: that the wine does not sour or the bread spoil or become too hard to be broken easily.

286 If the priest notices after the consecration or as he receives communion that water instead of wine was poured into the cup, he pours the water into another container, then pours wine with water into the cup and consecrates it. He says only the part of the institution narrative related to the consecration of the cup, without being obliged to consecrate bread again.

### II. LITURGICAL FURNISHINGS IN GENERAL

287 As in the case of the building of churches, the Church welcomes the artistic style of every region for all sacred furnishings and accepts adaptations in keeping with the genius and traditions of each people, provided they fit the purpose for which the sacred furnishings are intended.<sup>91</sup>

In this matter as well, the concern is to be for the noble simplicity that is the perfect companion of genuine art.

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<sup>91</sup>See SC, art. 128; see *EuchMyst*, no. 24: AAS 59 (1967), p. 854.

288 In the choice of materials for sacred furnishings, others besides the traditional are acceptable that by contemporary standards are considered to be of high quality, are durable, and well suited to sacred uses. The conference of bishops is to make the decisions for each region.

### III. LITURGICAL VESSELS

289 Among the requisites for the celebration of Mass, the sacred vessels hold a place of honour, especially the cup and plate which are used in presenting, consecrating, and receiving the bread and wine.

290 Vessels should be made from materials that are solid and that in the particular region are regarded as noble. The conference of bishops will be the judge in this matter. But preference is to be given to materials that do not break easily or deteriorate.

291 Cups and other vessels that serve as receptacles for the blood of the Lord are to have bowls of nonabsorbent material. The base may be of any other solid and worthy material.

292 Vessels that serve as receptacles for the eucharistic bread, such as a plate, ciborium, pyx, monstrance, etc., may be made of other materials that are prized in the region, for example, ebony or other hard woods, as long as they are suited to sacred use.

293 One rather large plate may properly be used for the consecration of the eucharistic bread; on it is placed the bread for the priest as well as for the ministers and the faithful.

294 Vessels made from metal should ordinarily be gilded on the inside if the metal is one that rusts; gilding is not necessary if the metal is more precious than gold and does not rust.

295 The artist may fashion the sacred vessels in a shape that is in keeping with the culture of each region, provided each type of vessel is suited to the intended liturgical use.

296 For the blessing of vessels the rites prescribed in the liturgical books are to be followed.

### IV. VESTMENTS

297 In the Church, the body of Christ, not all members have the same function. This diversity of ministries is shown outwardly in worship by the diversity of vestments. These should therefore symbolise the function proper to each ministry. But at the same time the vestments should also contribute to the beauty of the rite.

298 The vestment common to ministers of every rank is the alb, tied at the waist with a cincture, unless it is made to fit without a cincture. An amice should be put on first if the alb does not completely cover the street clothing at the neck. A surplice may not be substituted for the alb when the chasuble or dalmatic is to be worn or when a stole is used instead of the chasuble or dalmatic.

299 Unless otherwise indicated, the chasuble, worn over the alb and stole, is the vestment proper to the priest celebrant at Mass and other rites directly connected with Mass.

300 The dalmatic, worn over the alb and stole, is the vestment proper to the deacon.

301 Ministers below the order of deacon may wear the alb or other vestment that is lawfully approved in each region.

302 The priest wears the stole around his neck and hanging down in front. The deacon wears it over his left shoulder and drawn diagonally across the chest to the right side, where it is fastened.

303 The cope is worn by the priest in processions and other services, in keeping with the rubrics proper to each rite.

304 Regarding the design of vestments, conferences of bishops may determine and propose to the Apostolic See adaptations that correspond to the needs and usages of their regions.<sup>92</sup>

305 In addition to the traditional materials, natural fabrics proper to the region may be used for making vestments; artificial fabrics that are in keeping with the dignity of the liturgical service and the person wearing them may also be used. The conference of bishops will be the judge in this matter.<sup>93</sup>

306 The beauty and nobility of a vestment should derive from its material and design rather than from lavish ornamentation. Representations on vestments should consist only of symbols, images, or pictures portraying the sacred. Anything out of keeping with the sacred is to be avoided.

307 Variety in the colour of the vestments is meant to give effective, outward expression to the specific character of the mysteries of faith being celebrated and, in the course of the liturgical year, to a sense of progress in the Christian life.

308 Traditional usage should be retained for the vestment colours.

1. White is used in the offices and Masses during the seasons of Easter and Christmas; on feasts and memorials of the Lord, other than of his passion; on feasts and memorials of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the angels, saints who were not martyrs, All Saints (1 November), the Birth of John the Baptist (24 June), John, apostle, evangelist (27 December), the Chair of Peter (22 February), and the Conversion of Paul (25 January).

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<sup>92</sup>See SC, art. 128.

<sup>93</sup>See SC, art. 128.

2. Red is used on Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) and Good Friday, Pentecost Sunday, celebrations of the Lord's passion, birthday feasts of the apostles and evangelists, and celebrations of martyrs.
3. Green is used in the offices and Masses of Ordinary Time.
4. Violet is used in Advent and Lent. It may also be worn in offices and Masses for the dead.
5. Black may be used in Masses for the dead.
6. Rose may be used on *Gaudete* Sunday (Third Sunday of Advent) and *Lætare* Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent).

The conference of bishops may choose and propose to the Apostolic See adaptations suited to the needs and culture of peoples.

309 On solemn occasions more precious vestments may be used, even if not of the colour of the day.

310 Ritual Masses are celebrated in their proper colour, in white, or in a festive colour; Masses for various needs and occasions are celebrated in the colour proper to the day or the season or in violet if they bear a penitential character, for example, Masses in time of war or conflict, Masses in time of famine, or Masses for forgiveness of sins; votive Masses are celebrated in the colour suited to the Mass itself or in the colour proper to the day or season.

## V. OTHER REQUISITES FOR CHURCH USE

311 Besides vessels and vestments for which some special material is prescribed, any other furnishings that either have a liturgical use or are in any other way introduced into a church should be worthy and suited to their particular purpose.

312 Even in minor matters, every effort should be made to respect the canons of art and always to combine a noble simplicity and cleanliness.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CHOICE OF THE MASS AND ITS PARTS

313 The pastoral effectiveness of a celebration will be heightened if the texts of readings, prayers, and songs correspond as closely as possible to the needs, religious preparation, and aptitude of the participants. This will be achieved by an appropriate use of the broad options described in this chapter.

In planning the celebration, then, the priest should consider the common spiritual good of the assembly rather than his personal outlook. He should also remember that the choices are to be made in consultation with the ministers and others who have a function in the celebration, including the faithful in regard to the parts that more directly belong to them.

Since a variety of options are provided for the different parts of the Mass, it is necessary for the deacon, readers, psalmist, cantor, commentator, and choir to be completely sure beforehand of those texts for which each is responsible so that nothing is improvised. Harmonious planning and carrying out of the rites will help dispose the faithful spiritually to take part in the eucharist.

#### I. CHOICE OF MASS

314 On solemnities the priest is bound to follow the calendar of the Church where he is celebrating.

315 On Sundays, on weekdays during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, on feasts, and on obligatory memorials:

1. if Mass is celebrated with a congregation, the priest should follow the calendar of the Church where he is celebrating;
2. if Mass is celebrated without a congregation, the priest may choose either the calendar of the Church or his own calendar.

316 On optional memorials:

1. On the weekdays of Advent from 17 December to 24 December, during the octave of Christmas, and on the weekdays of Lent, except Ash Wednesday and during Holy Week, the priest celebrates the Mass of the day; but he may take the opening prayer from a memorial listed in the General Calendar for that day, except on Ash Wednesday and during Holy Week.
2. On the weekdays of the season of Advent before 17 December, the weekdays of the season of Christmas from 2 January, and the weekdays of the season of Easter, the priest may choose the weekday Mass, the Mass of the saint, or the Mass of one of the saints whose memorial is observed or of a saint listed in the martyrology for that day.
3. On the weekdays in Ordinary Time, the priest may choose the weekday Mass, the Mass of an optional memorial of the day, the Mass of a saint listed in the martyrology for that day, a Mass for various needs and occasions, or a votive Mass.

If he celebrates with a congregation, the priest will consider first the spiritual good of the faithful and avoid imposing his own personal preferences. Above all he will be careful not to omit the readings assigned for each day in the weekday lectionary too frequently or without sufficient reason, since the Church desires that a richer portion at the table of God's word be provided for the people.<sup>94</sup>

For the same reason he should use Masses for the dead sparingly. Every Mass is offered for both the living and the dead, and there is a remembrance of the dead in every eucharistic prayer.

Where the faithful are attached to the optional memorials of Mary or the saints, at least one Mass of the memorial should be celebrated to satisfy their legitimate devotion.

When an option is given between a memorial in the General Calendar and one in a diocesan or religious calendar, the preference should be given, all things being equal and depending on tradition, to the memorial in the particular calendar.

## II. CHOICE OF INDIVIDUAL TEXTS

317 In the choice of texts for the several parts of the Mass, the following rules are to be observed. They apply to Masses of the season and of the saints.

### READINGS

318 Sundays and major feasts have three readings, that is, from the prophet, the apostle, and the gospel. Thus the Christian people are brought to know the continuity of the work of salvation according to the exalted plan of God's word.

Accordingly, it is expected that there will actually be three readings. Nevertheless for pastoral reasons and by decree of the conference of bishops the use of only two readings is allowed in some places. In such a case, the choice between the first two readings should be based on the norms in the Lectionary and on the intention to lead the faithful to a deeper knowledge of Scripture; there should never be any thought of choosing a text because it is shorter or easier.

319 In the weekday Lectionary, readings are provided for each day of every week throughout the year; therefore, these readings are for the most part to be used on the days to which they are assigned, unless a solemnity or feast occurs.

Because of this the continuous reading during the week is sometimes interrupted by the occurrence of a feast or particular celebration. In this case the priest, taking into consideration the entire week's plan of readings, is allowed either to combine omitted parts with other readings or to decide which readings are to be preferred.

In Masses with special groups, the priest may choose texts more suited to the particular celebration, provided they are taken from the texts of an approved lectionary.

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<sup>94</sup>See SC, art. 51.

320 The Lectionary has a special selection of texts from Scripture for Masses that incorporate certain sacraments or sacramentals or that are celebrated by reason of special circumstances.

These selections of readings have been assigned so that by hearing a more pertinent passage from God's word the faithful may be led to a better understanding of the mystery they are taking part in and may be led to a more ardent love for God's word.

Therefore the texts for proclamation in the liturgical assembly are to be chosen on the basis of their pastoral relevance and the choices allowed in this matter.

## PRAYERS

321 The many prefaces that enrich the Roman Missal are intended to develop in different ways the theme of thanksgiving in the eucharistic prayer and bring out more clearly the different facets of the mystery of salvation.

322 The choice of the eucharistic prayer is suitably guided by the following norms.

1. Eucharistic Prayer I, the Roman Canon, which may be used on any day, is particularly apt on days when there is a special text for the prayer *We pray in communion with the whole Church* or in Masses that have a special form of the prayer *Lord, accept this offering*. It is also appropriate on the feasts of the apostles and saints mentioned in it and on Sundays, unless for pastoral considerations another eucharistic prayer is preferred.

2. Eucharistic Prayer II has features that make it particularly suitable for weekdays and special circumstances.

Although it has its own preface, it may also be used with other prefaces, especially those that summarise the mystery of salvation, such as the Sunday prefaces or the common prefaces.

When Mass is celebrated for a dead person, the special formula may be inserted in the place indicated, namely, before the intercession *Remember our brothers and sisters*.

3. Eucharistic Prayer III may be said with any preface. Its use is particularly suited to Sundays and major feasts.

The special formula for a dead person may be used in the place indicated, namely, after the prayer *Merciful Father, hear the prayers*.

4. Eucharistic Prayer IV has an unchangeable preface and gives a fuller summary of the history of salvation. It may be used when a Mass has no preface of its own.

Because of the structure of this prayer no special formula for the dead may be inserted.

5. A eucharistic prayer that has its own preface may be used with that preface, even when the Mass calls for the preface of the season.

323 In any Mass the prayers proper to that Mass are used, unless otherwise noted.

On a memorial, however, the opening prayer or collect may be the one proper to the Mass or from the common. The prayer over the gifts and prayer after communion, unless they are proper, may be taken either from the common or from the weekdays of the current season.

On the weekdays in Ordinary Time, the prayers may be taken from the preceding Sunday, from another Sunday in Ordinary Time, or from the prayers for various needs and occasions listed in the Missal. It is always permissible, however, to use only the opening prayer from these Masses.

This provides a rich collection of texts that create an opportunity continually to rephrase the themes of prayer for the liturgical assembly and also to adapt the prayer suitably to the needs of the people, the Church, and the world. During the more important seasons of the year, however, the proper seasonal prayers appointed for each day in the Missal already make this adaptation.

## SONG

324 The norms laid down in their proper places are to be observed for the choice of chants between the readings and the opening song, the song for the preparation of the gifts, and the communion song.

## SPECIAL PERMISSIONS

325 In addition to the permissions just given to choose more suitable texts, the conferences of bishops have the right in special circumstances to make further adaptations of readings, but on condition that the texts are taken from an approved Lectionary.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# MASSES AND PRAYERS FOR VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES AND MASSES FOR THE DEAD

### I. MASSES AND PRAYERS FOR VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES

326 For well-disposed members of the faithful the liturgy of the sacraments and sacramentals causes almost every event in life to be made holy by divine grace that flows from the paschal mystery.<sup>95</sup> The eucharist, in turn, is the sacrament of sacraments. Accordingly, the Missal provides formularies for Masses and prayers that may be used in the various circumstances of Christian life, for the needs of the whole world, and for the needs of the Church, both universal and local.

327 In view of the broad options for choosing the readings and prayers, the Masses for various circumstances should be used sparingly, that is, when the occasion requires.

328 In all the Masses for various circumstances, unless otherwise expressly indicated, the weekday readings and the chants between them may be used, if they are suited to the celebration.

329 The Masses for various circumstances are of three types:

1. the Ritual Masses, which are related to the celebration of certain sacraments or sacramentals;
2. the Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, which are used either as situations arise or at fixed times;
3. the Votive Masses of the mysteries of the Lord or in honour of Mary or a particular saint or of all the saints, which are options provided for the sake of the faithful's devotion.

330 Ritual Masses are prohibited on Sundays during the seasons of Advent, Lent and Easter, on solemnities, on days within the octave of Easter, on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls), on Ash Wednesday, and during Holy Week. In addition, the norms found in the ritual books or in the Masses themselves also apply.

331 From the selection of Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, the competent authority may choose Masses for those special days of prayer that the conferences of bishops may decree during the course of the year.

332 In cases of serious need or pastoral advantage, at the direction of the local Ordinary or with his permission, an appropriate Mass may be celebrated on any day except solemnities, the Sundays during the seasons of Advent, Lent, and Easter, days within the octave of Easter, on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls), Ash Wednesday, and during Holy Week.

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<sup>95</sup>See SC, art. 61.

333 On obligatory memorials, on the weekdays of Advent until 16 December, of the season of Christmas after 2 January, and of the season of Easter after the octave of Easter, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions and Votive Masses are *per se* forbidden. But if some real need or pastoral advantage requires, at the discretion of the rector of the church or the priest celebrant himself, the Masses corresponding to such need or advantage may be used in a celebration with a congregation.

334 On weekdays in Ordinary Time when there is an optional memorial or the office is of the weekday, any Mass or prayer for various circumstances is permitted, but prayers from the Ritual Masses are excluded when the Ritual Mass is not being celebrated.

## II. MASSES FOR THE DEAD

335 The Church offers the eucharistic sacrifice of Christ's passover for the dead so that on the basis of the communion existing among all Christ's members, the petition for spiritual help on behalf of some members may bring others comforting hope.

336 The funeral Mass has first place among the Masses for the dead and may be celebrated on any day except solemnities that are days of obligation, Holy Thursday, the Easter Triduum, and the Sundays during the seasons of Advent, Lent, and Easter.

337 On the occasion of receiving the news of a death, the final burial, or the first anniversary, the Mass for the dead may be celebrated, even on days within the Christmas octave, on obligatory memorials, and on weekdays, except on Ash Wednesday and during Holy Week.

Other Masses for the dead, that is, daily Masses, may be celebrated on weekdays in Ordinary Time when there is an optional memorial or when the office is of the weekday, provided such Masses are actually offered for the dead.

338 At the funeral Mass there should as a rule be a short homily, but never a eulogy of any kind. The homily is also recommended at other Masses for the dead celebrated with a congregation.

339 The faithful, and especially the family of the deceased, should be urged to share in the eucharistic sacrifice offered for the deceased person by receiving communion.

340 If the funeral Mass is directly joined to the burial rite, once the prayer after communion has been said and omitting the concluding rite, the rite of final commendation or farewell takes place. This rite is celebrated only if the body is present.

341 In the planning and choosing of the variable parts of the Mass for the dead, especially the funeral Mass (for example, prayers, readings, general intercessions), pastoral considerations bearing upon the deceased, the family, and those attending should rightly be foremost.

Pastors should, moreover, take into special account those who are present at a liturgical celebration or who hear the gospel only on the occasion of the funeral. These may be non-Catholics or Catholics who never or rarely share in the eucharist or who have apparently lost the faith. Priests are, after all, ministers of Christ's gospel for all people.

# DIRECTORY FOR MASSES WITH CHILDREN

## INTRODUCTION

1 The Church must show special concern for baptised children who have yet to be fully initiated through the sacraments of confirmation and eucharist as well as for children who have only recently been admitted to holy communion. The circumstances of contemporary life in which children grow up are less favourable to their spiritual progress.<sup>1</sup> In addition parents sometimes scarcely fulfil the obligations they accepted at the baptism of their children to bring them up as Christians.

2 In the upbringing of children in the Church a special difficulty arises from the fact that liturgical celebrations, especially the eucharist, cannot fully exercise their inherent pedagogical force upon children.<sup>2</sup> Although the vernacular may now be used at Mass, still the words and signs have not been sufficiently adapted to the capacity of children.

In fact, even in daily life children do not always understand all their experiences with adults but rather may find them boring. It cannot therefore be expected of the liturgy that everything must always be intelligible to them. Nonetheless there is a fear of spiritual harm if over the years children repeatedly experience in the Church things that are barely comprehensible; for recent psychological study has established how profoundly children are formed by the religious experience of infancy and early childhood, because of the special religious receptivity proper to those years.<sup>3</sup>

3 The Church follows its Master, who “put his arms around the little children . . . and blessed them” (Mark 10:16). It cannot leave children in the condition described. The Second Vatican Council had already spoken in the Constitution on the Liturgy about the need of liturgical adaptation for various groups.<sup>4</sup> Soon afterward, especially in the first Synod of Bishops held in Rome in 1967, the Church began to consider more carefully how participation by children could be facilitated. On the occasion of the Synod, the President of the Consilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy said explicitly that it could not be a matter of “creating some entirely special rite but rather of retaining, shortening, or omitting some elements or of making a more appropriate selection of texts.”<sup>5</sup>

4 All the details of eucharistic celebration with a congregation were determined in the General Instruction of the revised Roman Missal published in 1969.

<sup>1</sup> See Congregation for the Clergy, *General Catechetical Directory* (hereafter, GCD), no. 5: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, Commentarium officiale (Vatican City; hereafter, AAS) 64 (1972), pp. 101-102.

<sup>2</sup> See Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, SC), art. 33.

<sup>3</sup> See GCD, no. 78: AAS 64 (1972), pp. 146-147.

<sup>4</sup> See SC, art. 38; see also Congregation for Divine Worship, Instruction *Actio pastoralis*, on Masses with special groups, 15 May 1969: AAS 61 (1969), pp. 806-811.

<sup>5</sup> Consilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy, “De Liturgia in prima Synodo Episcoporum” (hereafter, “De Liturgia”), *Notitia* 3 (1967), p. 368.

Then this Congregation began to prepare a special Directory for Masses with Children, as a supplement to the Instruction. This was done in response to repeated petitions from the entire Catholic world and with the cooperation of men and women specialists from almost every nation.

5 Like the General Instruction, this Directory reserves some adaptations to the conferences of bishops or to individual bishops.<sup>6</sup>

Adaptations of the Mass for children may be necessary in a given country but cannot be included in a general directory. In accord with the Constitution on the Liturgy, art. 40, the same conferences of bishops are to propose such adaptations to the Apostolic See for introduction into the liturgy with its consent.

6 The Directory is concerned with children who have not yet entered the period of preadolescence. It does not speak directly of children who are physically or mentally handicapped, because a broader adaptation is sometimes necessary for them.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the following norms may also be applied to the handicapped, with the necessary changes.

7 The first chapter of the Directory (nos. 8-15) gives a kind of foundation by considering the variety of ways in which children are introduced to the eucharistic liturgy. The second chapter (nos. 16-19) briefly treats Masses with adults in which children also take part. Finally, the third chapter (nos. 20-54) treats at greater length Masses with children in which only some adults take part.

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<sup>6</sup>See nos. 19, 32, 33 of this Directory.

<sup>7</sup>See the Order of Mass with deaf and mute children of German-speaking regions approved, that is, confirmed by this Congregation, 26 June 1970 (Protocol no. 1546/70).

## CHAPTER ONE

# THE INTRODUCTION OF CHILDREN TO THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

8 A fully Christian life is inconceivable without participation in the liturgical services in which the faithful, gathered into a single assembly, celebrate the paschal mystery. Therefore, the religious initiation of children must be in harmony with this purpose.<sup>8</sup> The Church baptises children and therefore, relying on the gifts conferred by this sacrament, it must be concerned that once baptised they grow in communion with Christ and each other. The sign and pledge of that communion is participation in the eucharistic table, for which children are being prepared or led to a deeper realisation of its meaning. This liturgical and eucharistic formation may not be separated from their general education, both human and Christian; indeed it would be harmful if their liturgical formation lacked such a foundation.

9 For this reason all who have a part in the formation of children should work together and consult toward one objective: that, even if children already have some feeling for God and the things of God, they may also experience in proportion to their age and personal development the human values that are present in the eucharistic celebration. These values include the community activity, exchange of greetings, capacity to listen and to seek and grant pardon, expression of gratitude, experience of symbolic actions, a meal of friendship, and festive celebration.<sup>9</sup>

Eucharistic catechesis, dealt with in no. 12, should develop such human values. Then, depending on their age and their psychological and social situation, children will gradually open their minds to the perception of Christian values and the celebration of the mystery of Christ.<sup>10</sup>

10 The Christian family has the greatest role in instilling these human and Christian values.<sup>11</sup> Thus Christian formation, provided by parents and other educators, should be strongly encouraged in relation to the liturgical formation of children as well.

By reason of the duty in conscience freely accepted at the baptism of their children, parents have an obligation to teach them gradually how to pray. This they do by praying with them each day and by introducing them to prayers said privately.<sup>12</sup> If children, prepared in this way even from their early years, take part in the Mass with their family whenever they wish, they will easily begin to sing and to pray in the liturgical community and indeed will already have some initial idea of the eucharistic mystery.

If, however, the parents are weak in faith but still wish their children to receive Christian formation, they should be urged at least to communicate to their children the human values mentioned already and, when the occasion arises, to participate in meetings of parents and in non-eucharistic celebrations held with children.

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<sup>8</sup> See SC, art. 14, 19.

<sup>9</sup> See GCD, no. 25: AAS 64 (1972), p. 114.

<sup>10</sup> See Vatican Council II, Declaration on Christian Education *Gravissimum educationis*, 28 October 1965 (hereafter, GE), no. 2.

<sup>11</sup> See GE, no. 3.

<sup>12</sup> See GCD, no. 78: AAS 64 (1972), pp. 146-147.

11 In addition, the Christian communities to which the individual families belong or in which the children live also have a responsibility toward children baptised in the Church. By giving witness to the gospel, living communal charity, and actively celebrating the mysteries of Christ, the Christian community is an excellent school of Christian and liturgical formation for the children who live in it.

Within the Christian community, godparents or other persons noted for their dedicated service can, out of apostolic zeal, contribute greatly to the necessary catechesis in the case of families that fail in their obligation toward the children's Christian upbringing.

Pre-school programs, Catholic schools, and various kinds of associations for children serve these same needs in a special way.

12 Even in the case of children, the liturgy itself always exerts its own inherent power to instruct.<sup>13</sup> Yet within religious-education programs in the schools and parishes the necessary importance should be given to catechesis on the Mass.<sup>14</sup> This catechesis should be directed to the child's active, conscious, and authentic participation.<sup>15</sup> "Suited to children's age and capabilities, it should, by means of the main rites and prayers of the Mass, aim at conveying its meaning, including what relates to taking part in the Church's life."<sup>16</sup> This is especially true of the text of the eucharistic prayer and of the acclamations by which the children take part in this prayer.

The catechesis preparing children for first communion calls for special mention. In it they should learn not only the truths of faith regarding the eucharist but also how from first communion on—after being prepared according to their capacity by penance—they can as fully integrated members of Christ's Body take part actively with the people of God in the eucharist, sharing in the Lord's table and the community of their brothers and sisters.

13 Various kinds of celebrations may also play a major role in the liturgical formation of children and in their preparation for the Church's liturgical life. By the very fact of such celebrations children easily perceive some liturgical elements, for example, greetings, silence, and common praise (especially when this is sung together). But care must be taken that the instructive element does not become dominant in these celebrations.

14 Depending on the capacity of the children, the word of God should have a greater and greater place in these celebrations. In fact, as the children's spiritual capacity develops, celebrations of the word of God in the strict sense should be held rather frequently, especially during Advent and Lent.<sup>17</sup> These celebrations are able to encourage in the children an appreciation of the word of God.

15 While all that has been said remains true, the final purpose of all liturgical and eucharistic formation must always be a greater and greater conformity to the gospel in the daily life of the children.

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<sup>13</sup>See SC, art. 33.

<sup>14</sup>See Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, on worship of the eucharist, 25 May 1967 (hereafter, *EuchMyst*), no. 14: AAS 59 (1967), p. 550.

<sup>15</sup>See GCD, no. 25: AAS 64 (1972), p. 114.

<sup>16</sup>See *EuchMyst*, no. 14: AAS 59 (1967), p. 550; GCD, no. 57: AAS 64 (1972), p. 131.

<sup>17</sup>See SC, art. 35:4.

## CHAPTER TWO

### MASSES WITH ADULTS IN WHICH CHILDREN ALSO PARTICIPATE

16 In many places parish Masses are celebrated, especially on Sundays and feast days, at which a good many children take part along with the large number of adults. At these Masses the witness of adult believers can have a great effect upon the children. Adults can in turn benefit spiritually from experiencing the part that the children have within the Christian community. The Christian spirit of the family is greatly fostered when children take part in these Masses together with their parents and other family members.

Infants who as yet are unable or unwilling to take part in the Mass may be brought in at the end of Mass to be blessed together with the rest of the community. This may be done, for example, if some parish helpers have been taking care of them in a separate area.

17 Nevertheless, in Masses of this kind it is necessary to take great care that the children present do not feel neglected because of their inability to participate or to understand what happens and what is proclaimed in the celebration. Some account should be taken of their presence: for example, by speaking to them directly in the brief comments (as at the beginning and the end of Mass) and at some point in the homily.

Sometimes, moreover, if the place itself and the nature of the individuals permit, it possibly will be appropriate to celebrate the liturgy of the word, including a homily, with the children in a separate, but not too distant, location. Then, before the eucharistic liturgy begins, the children are led to the place where the adults have meanwhile celebrated their own liturgy of the word.

18 In these Masses it may also be very helpful to give some tasks to the children. They may, for example, bring forward the gifts or sing one or other of the songs of the Mass.

19 If the number of children is large, it may at times be suitable to plan this kind of Mass so that it corresponds more closely to the needs of the children. In this case the homily should be directed to them but in such a way that adults may also benefit from it. Wherever the bishop permits, in addition to the adaptations already provided in the Order of Mass, one or other of the particular adaptations described later in the Directory may be employed in a Mass celebrated with adults in which children also participate.

## CHAPTER THREE

### MASSES WITH CHILDREN IN WHICH ONLY A FEW ADULTS PARTICIPATE

20 In addition to the Masses in which children take part with their parents and other family members (which are not always possible everywhere), Masses with children primarily in which only a few adults take part are recommended, especially during the week. From the beginning of the liturgical reform it has been clear to everyone that some adaptations are necessary in these Masses.<sup>18</sup>

Such adaptations, but only those of a more general kind, will be considered later (nos. 38-54).

21 It is always necessary to keep in mind that such eucharistic celebrations must lead children toward the celebration of Mass with adults, especially the Masses at which the Christian community must come together on Sundays.<sup>19</sup> Thus, apart from adaptations that are necessary because of the children's age, the result should not be entirely special rites, markedly different from the Order of Mass celebrated with a congregation.<sup>20</sup> The purpose of the various elements should always correspond with what is said in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal on individual points, even if at times for pastoral reasons an absolute *identity* cannot be insisted upon.

### OFFICES AND MINISTRIES IN THE CELEBRATION

22 The principles of active and conscious participation are in a sense even more significant for Masses celebrated with children. Every effort should therefore be made to increase this participation and to make it more intense. For this reason as many children as possible should have special parts in the celebration: for example, preparing the place and the altar (see no. 29), acting as cantor (see no. 24), singing in a choir, playing musical instruments (see no. 32), proclaiming the readings (see nos. 24 and 47), responding during the homily (see no. 48), reciting the intentions of the general intercessions, bringing the gifts to the altar, and performing similar activities in accord with the usage of various peoples (see no. 34).

To encourage participation, it will also sometimes be helpful to have several additions, for example, the insertion of motives for giving thanks before the priest begins the dialogue of the preface.

In all this, it should be kept in mind that external activities will remain fruitless and even harmful if they do not serve the internal participation of the children. Thus sacred silence has its importance even in Masses with children (see no. 37). These things should be attended to with great care so that the children do not forget that all the forms of participation reach their high point in eucharistic communion, when the body and blood of Christ are received as spiritual nourishment.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> See no. 3 of this Directory.

<sup>19</sup> See SC, art. 42 and 106.

<sup>20</sup> See "De Liturgia," *Notitiae* 3 (1967), p. 368.

<sup>21</sup> See pages 7-70, General Instruction of the Roman Missal (hereafter, GIRM), no. 56.

23 It is the responsibility of the priest who celebrates a Mass with children to make the celebration festive, familial, and meditative.<sup>22</sup> Even more than in Masses with adults, the priest should bring about this kind of attitude of mind which depends on his personal preparation and his manner of acting and speaking with others.

The priest should be concerned above all about the dignity, clarity, and simplicity of his actions and gestures. In speaking to the children he should express himself so that he will be easily understood, while avoiding any childish style of speech.

The free use of introductory comments<sup>23</sup> will lead children to a genuine liturgical participation, but these should not be merely didactic explanations.

It will help him to reach the hearts of the children if the priest sometimes expresses the invitations in his own words, for example, at the penitential rite, the prayer over the gifts, the Lord's Prayer, the sign of peace, and communion.

24 Since the eucharist is always the action of the entire ecclesial community, the participation of at least some adults is desirable. These should be present not as monitors but as people who by praying with the children are participating in the Mass and who can help them to the extent necessary.

With the consent of the pastor or rector of the church, nothing forbids one of the adults who is participating in a Mass with children from speaking to the children after the gospel reading, especially if the priest finds it difficult to adapt himself to the mentality of children. In this matter the norms issued by the Congregation for the Clergy should be observed.

Even in Masses with children the diversity of ministries should be encouraged so that the Mass may stand out clearly as the celebration of a community.<sup>24</sup> For example, readers and cantors, whether children or adults, should be employed. In this way a variety of voices will keep the children from becoming bored.

## PLACE AND TIME OF CELEBRATION

25 The primary place for the eucharistic celebration for children is the church. Within the church, however, a space should be carefully chosen, if available, that will be suited to the number of participants. It should be a place where the children can act freely according to the requirements of a living liturgy that is suited to their age.

If, however, the church does not satisfy these demands, it will sometimes be suitable to celebrate the eucharist with children outside a place of worship. But in that case the location chosen should be appropriate and worthy of such a celebration.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>See no. 37 of this Directory.

<sup>23</sup>See GIRM, no. 11.

<sup>24</sup>See SC, art. 28.

<sup>25</sup>See GIRM, no. 253.

26 For Masses with children the time of day should be chosen that best corresponds to the circumstances of their lives so that they may be most open to hearing the word of God and to celebrating the eucharist.

27 Weekday Mass in which children participate can certainly be celebrated with greater effect and less danger of boredom if it does not take place every day (for example, in boarding schools). Moreover, preparation can be more careful if there is a longer interval between diverse celebrations.

Sometimes it will be preferable to have common prayer, to which the children may also contribute spontaneously, or else a common meditation, or a celebration of the word of God. These are ways of continuing the eucharistic celebrations already held and of fostering a deeper participation in subsequent celebrations.

28 When the number of children who celebrate the eucharist together is very great, attentive and conscious participation becomes more difficult. Therefore, if possible, several groups should be formed; these should not be set up rigidly according to age but with regard for the children's progress in religious formation and catechetical preparation.

During the week such groups appropriately may be invited to the sacrifice of the Mass on different days.

## PREPARATION FOR THE CELEBRATION

29 Each eucharistic celebration with children should be carefully prepared beforehand, especially with regard to the prayers, songs, readings, and intentions of the general intercessions. This should be done in discussion with the adults and with the children who will have a special ministry in these Masses. If possible, some of the children should take part in preparing and ornamenting the place of celebration and preparing the cup with the plate and the cruets. Presupposing the appropriate internal participation, such activity may also help to develop the spirit of community celebration.

## SINGING AND MUSIC

30 Since singing must be given great importance in all celebrations, it is to be especially encouraged in every way for Masses celebrated with children, in view of their special affinity for music.<sup>26</sup> The culture of various peoples and the children's own capabilities should be taken into account.

If possible, the acclamations should be sung by the children rather than recited, especially the acclamations that form part of the eucharistic prayer.

31 To facilitate the children's participation in singing the *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and the *Agnus Dei*, it is permitted to use with the melodies appropriate vernacular texts, accepted by competent authority, even if these do not correspond exactly to the liturgical texts.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See GIRM, no. 19.

<sup>27</sup> See Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Musicam sacram*, on music in the liturgy, 5 March 1967 (hereafter, MS), no. 55: AAS 59 (1967) p. 316.

32 The use of “musical instruments can also add a great deal” in Masses with children, especially if they are played by the children themselves.<sup>28</sup> The playing of instruments will help to sustain the singing or to encourage the reflection of the children; sometimes in their own fashion instruments express festive joy and the praise of God.

Special care should always be taken, however, that the musical accompaniment does not overpower the singing or become a distraction rather than a help to the children. Music should correspond to the purpose intended for the different times at which it is played during the Mass.

With these precautions and with due need and special discretion, recorded music may also be used in Masses with children, in accord with norms established by the conferences of bishops.

## GESTURES

33 In view of the nature of the liturgy as an activity of the entire person and in view of the psychology of children, participation by means of gestures and posture should be strongly encouraged in Masses with children, with due regard for age and local customs. Much depends not only on the gestures of the priest,<sup>29</sup> but also on the manner in which the children conduct themselves as a community.

If, in accord with the norm of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal,<sup>30</sup> a conference of bishops adapts the gestures and postures at Mass to the mentality of a people, it should take the special condition of children into account or should decide on certain adaptations that are for children only.

34 Among the actions that are considered under this heading, processions and other activities that involve physical participation deserve special mention.

The children’s entering in procession with the priest celebrant serves to help them better to experience a sense of the communion that is thus being created.<sup>31</sup> The participation of at least some children in the procession with the Book of Gospels makes clearer the presence of Christ announcing the word to his people. The procession of children with the cup and the gifts expresses more clearly the value and meaning of the preparation of the gifts. The communion procession, if properly arranged, helps greatly to develop the children’s devotion.

## VISUAL ELEMENTS

35 The liturgy of the Mass itself contains many visual elements and these should be given great prominence with children. This is especially true of the particular visual elements in the course of the liturgical year, for example, the veneration of the cross, the Easter candle, the lights on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord,

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<sup>28</sup> See MS, no. 62: AAS 59 (1967), p. 318.

<sup>29</sup> See no. 23 of this Directory.

<sup>30</sup> See GIRM, no. 21.

<sup>31</sup> See GIRM, no. 24.

and the variety of colours and liturgical appointments.

In addition to these visual elements that belong to the celebration itself and to the place of celebration, it is appropriate to introduce other related elements that will permit children to perceive visually the wonderful works that God performed in creation and redemption and thus support their prayer. The liturgy should never appear as something dry and merely intellectual.

36 For the same reason, the use of pictures prepared by the children themselves may be useful, for example, as illustrations of a homily, as visual expressions of the intentions of the general intercessions, or as inspirations to reflection.

## SILENCE

37 Even in Masses with children “silence should be observed at the designated times as part of the celebration”<sup>32</sup> lest too great a place be given to external action. In their own way children are also genuinely capable of reflection. They need some guidance, however, so that they will learn how, in keeping with the different moments of the Mass (for example, after communion or even after the homily<sup>33</sup>), to recollect themselves, meditate briefly, or praise and pray to God in their hearts.<sup>34</sup>

Besides this, care should be taken, much more than in Masses with adults, that the liturgical texts should be proclaimed unhurriedly and intelligibly, with the necessary pauses.

## PARTS OF THE MASS

38 The general structure of the Mass, which “is made up as it were of two parts: the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the eucharist,” should always be maintained, as should certain rites to open and conclude the celebration.<sup>35</sup> Within individual parts of the celebration, the adaptations that follow seem necessary if children are truly to experience, in their own way and according to the psychological patterns of childhood, “the mystery of faith . . . by means of rites and prayers.”<sup>36</sup>

39 Some rites and texts should never be adapted for children lest the difference between Masses with children and the Masses with adults become too pronounced.<sup>37</sup> These are “the acclamations and the responses of the faithful to the priest’s greeting,”<sup>38</sup> the Lord’s Prayer, and the Trinitarian formulary at the end of the blessing with which the priest concludes the Mass. It is urged, moreover, that children should become accustomed to the Nicene Creed little by little, the right to use the Apostles’ Creed indicated in no. 49 remaining intact.

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<sup>32</sup> GIRM, no. 23.

<sup>33</sup> See *EuchMyst*, no. 38: AAS 59 (1967), p. 562.

<sup>34</sup> See GIRM, no. 23.

<sup>35</sup> See GIRM, no. 8.

<sup>36</sup> SC, art. 48.

<sup>37</sup> See no. 21 of this Directory.

<sup>38</sup> GIRM, no. 15.

## A. INTRODUCTORY RITE

40 The introductory rite of Mass has as its purpose “that the faithful coming together take on the form of a community and prepare themselves to listen properly to God’s word and to celebrate the eucharist worthily.”<sup>39</sup> Therefore every effort should be made to create this disposition in the children and not to jeopardise it by any excess of rites which are set forth here.

It is sometimes permissible to omit one or other element of the introductory rite or perhaps to expand another element. There should always be at least some introductory element, which is completed by the opening prayer. In choosing individual elements, care should be taken that each one be used from time to time and that none be entirely neglected.

## B. READING AND EXPLANATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

41 Since readings taken from Sacred Scripture “form the main part of the liturgy of the word,”<sup>40</sup> even in Masses celebrated with children biblical reading should never be omitted.

42 With regard to the number of readings on Sundays and feast days, the decrees of the conferences of bishops are to be observed. If three or even two readings appointed on Sundays or weekdays can be understood by children only with difficulty, it is permissible to read two or only one of them, but the gospel reading should never be omitted.

43 If all the readings assigned to the day seem to be unsuited to the capacity of the children, it is permissible to choose readings or a reading either from the Lectionary for Mass or directly from the Bible, but taking into account the liturgical seasons. It is recommended, moreover, that the individual conferences of bishops see to the composition of lectionaries for Masses with children.

If, because of the limited capacity of the children, it seems necessary to omit one or other verse of a biblical reading, this should be done cautiously and in such a way “that the meaning of the text or the intent and, as it were, style of the Scriptures are not distorted.”<sup>41</sup>

44 In the choice of readings the criterion to be followed is the quality rather than the quantity of the texts from Sacred Scripture. A shorter reading is not in itself always more suited to children than a lengthy reading. Everything depends on the spiritual advantage that the reading can bring to the children.

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<sup>39</sup>GIRM, no. 24.

<sup>40</sup>GIRM, no. 33.

<sup>41</sup>The Roman Missal, *Lectionary for Mass*, typical edition, 1969, Introduction, no. 7d; see also 2nd English edition, 1981, Introduction, no. 77.

45 In the biblical texts “God is speaking to his people . . . (and) Christ is present in the midst of the faithful through his own word.”<sup>42</sup> Paraphrases of Sacred Scripture should therefore be avoided. On the other hand, the use of translations that may already exist for the catechesis of children and that are accepted by the competent authority is recommended.

46 Verses of psalms, carefully selected in accord with the understanding of children, or a song in the form of psalmody or the *Alleluia* with a simple verse should be sung between the readings. The children should always have a part in this singing, but sometimes a reflective silence may be substituted for the singing.

If only a single reading is chosen, the singing may follow the homily.

47 All the elements that will help explain the readings should be given great consideration so that the children may make the biblical readings their own and may come more and more to appreciate better the value of God’s word.

Among such elements are the introductory comments that may precede the readings<sup>43</sup> and that by explaining the context or by introducing the text itself help the children to listen better and more fruitfully. The interpretation and illustration of the readings from Sacred Scripture in the Mass on a saint’s day may include an account of the saint’s life, not only in the homily but even before the biblical readings in the form of an introduction.

Depending on the text of the reading, it may be helpful for the children to read it in parts distributed among them, as is provided for the reading of the Lord’s passion during Holy Week.

48 The homily explaining the word of God should be given great prominence in all Masses with children. Sometimes the homily intended for children should become a dialogue with them, unless it is preferred that they should listen in silence.

49 If the profession of faith occurs at the end of the liturgy of the word, the Apostles’ Creed may be used with children, especially because it is part of their catechetical formation.

### C. PRESIDENTIAL PRAYERS

50 The priest is permitted to choose from the Roman Missal texts of presidential prayers more suited to children, so that he may truly associate the children with himself. But he is to take into account the liturgical season.

51 Since these prayers were composed for adult members of the faithful, however, the principle simply of choosing from among them sometimes does not serve the purpose of having the children regard the prayers as an expression of their own life and religious experience.<sup>44</sup> If this is the case, nothing prevents the text of prayers of the Roman Missal from being adapted to the needs of children, but this should

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<sup>42</sup>GIRM, no. 33.

<sup>43</sup>See GIRM, no. 11.

<sup>44</sup>See Consilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy, Instruction *Comme le prévoit*, on the translation of liturgical texts for celebrations with a congregation, 25 January 1969, no. 20.

be done in such a way that, preserving the purpose of the prayer and to some extent its substance as well, the priest avoids anything that is foreign to the literary genre of a presidential prayer, such as moral exhortations or a childish manner of speech.

52 The eucharistic prayer is of the greatest importance in the eucharist celebrated with children because it is the high point of the entire celebration.<sup>45</sup> Much depends on the manner in which the priest proclaims this prayer<sup>46</sup> and on the way the children take part by listening and making their acclamations.

The disposition of mind required for this central part of the celebration and the calm and reverence with which everything is done must make the children as attentive as possible. Their attention should be on the real presence of Christ on the altar under the elements of bread and wine, on his offering, on the thanksgiving through him and with him and in him, and on the Church's offering, which is made at that moment and by which the faithful offer themselves and their lives with Christ to the eternal Father in the Holy Spirit.

For the present, the four eucharistic prayers approved by the supreme authority for Masses with adults and introduced into liturgical use are to be employed until the Apostolic See makes other provisions for Masses with children.<sup>47</sup>

#### D. RITES BEFORE COMMUNION

53 When the eucharistic prayer has ended, the Lord's Prayer, the breaking of bread, and the invitation to communion should always follow,<sup>48</sup> because these elements have the principal significance in the structure of this part of the Mass.

#### E. COMMUNION AND THE FOLLOWING RITES

54 Everything should be done so that the children who are properly disposed and who have already been admitted to the eucharist may go to the holy table calmly and with recollection and thus take part fully in the eucharistic mystery. If possible, there should be singing, suited to the children, during the communion procession.<sup>49</sup>

The comments that precede the final blessing<sup>50</sup> are important in Masses with children. Before they are dismissed, they need some repetition and application of what they have heard, but this should be done in a very few words. In particular, this is the appropriate time to express the connection between the liturgy and life.

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<sup>45</sup>See GIRM, no. 54.

<sup>46</sup>See nos. 23 and 37 of this Directory.

<sup>47</sup>After the promulgation of this Directory, three eucharistic prayers for children were published by the Congregation for Divine Worship on 1 November 1974. These prayers may be used at Masses in which the majority of those present are children, in those countries in which the conference of bishops has approved their use.

<sup>48</sup>See no. 23 of this Directory.

<sup>49</sup>See MS, no. 32: AAS 59 (1967), p. 309.

<sup>50</sup>See GIRM, no. 11.

At least sometimes, depending on the liturgical seasons and different occasions in the children's life, the priest should use more expanded forms of blessing, but at the end should always retain the Trinitarian formula with the sign of the cross.<sup>51</sup>

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55 The contents of the Directory have as their purpose to help children readily and joyfully to encounter Christ together in the eucharistic celebration and to stand with him in the presence of the Father.<sup>52</sup> If they are formed by conscious and active participation in the eucharistic sacrifice and meal, they should learn better day by day, at home and away from home, to proclaim Christ to others among their family and among their peers by living the "faith, that works through love" (Galatians 5:6).

This Directory was prepared by the Congregation for Divine Worship. On 22 October 1973, Pope Paul VI approved and confirmed it and ordered that it be published.

Congregation for Divine Worship, 1 November 1973, the solemnity of All Saints.

By special mandate of the Supreme Pontiff.

+ Jean Cardinal Villot  
Secretary of State

+ Annibale Bugnini  
Titular Archbishop of Diocletiana  
Secretary of the Congregation for  
Divine Worship

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<sup>51</sup>See no. 39 of this Directory.

<sup>52</sup>See Order of Mass, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Eucharistic Prayer II.

DECISIONS  
OF THE  
CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

# INTRODUCTION TO THE ORDER OF MASS

This pastoral introduction is presented as a supplement to the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. It presumes the General Instruction and is in no way intended to replace it. The pastoral introduction cannot be read apart from the General Instruction.

## I. THE CELEBRATION OF MASS

1 In celebrating the eucharist, the people of God assemble as the body of Christ to fulfil the Lord's command to "do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19). In this most sacred action of Christ and the Church, the memorial of his death and resurrection is celebrated, God is adored in spirit and in truth, the Church identifies itself with the saving sacrifice of its Lord and, nourished by his body and blood, looks forward in joyful hope to sharing in the supper of the Lamb in the heavenly kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

2 At the Last Supper the Lord spoke to his disciples, took bread and wine, gave thanks, broke the bread, and gave them the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation. After his resurrection from the dead, two disciples recognised his presence in these same actions: speaking, taking bread, giving thanks, breaking and sharing (see Luke 24:13-35). In the eucharist the Church to this day makes Christ's memorial and celebrates his presence in the same sequence of actions: in the liturgy of the word the assembly listens with hearts burning as the Lord speaks to it again and it responds with words of praise and petition; in the liturgy of the eucharist it takes bread and wine, gives thanks, breaks the bread, and receives the body and blood of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

3 These two principal parts of the Mass are so closely connected as to form one single act of worship: the table of God's word and of Christ's body is prepared, and from it the faithful are instructed and nourished; the spoken word of God announces the history of salvation, the eucharist embodies it in the sacramental signs of the liturgy. In addition to these two parts, there are also the introductory rites, which prepare the people for word and eucharist, and the concluding rite, which brings the people's worship to a close and sends them out to witness and service.<sup>3</sup>

4 The celebration of Mass is the action of Christ and the people of God, ministers and congregation. Within the one body of Christ there are many gifts and responsibilities. But just as each organ and limb is necessary for the sound functioning of the body (see 1 Corinthians 12), so every member of the assembly has a part to play in the action of the whole. It is therefore of the greatest importance that in all circumstances and on every occasion the celebration be so organised that priest, ministers, and faithful may all take their own part. The participation of all is de-

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<sup>1</sup>See Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, on the worship of the eucharist, 25 May 1967 (hereafter, EuchMyst), no. 3, a-c: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, Commentarium officiale (Vatican City; hereafter, AAS) 59 (1967), pp. 540-542.

<sup>2</sup>See pages 7-70, General Instruction of the Roman Missal (hereafter, GIRM), no. 48.

<sup>3</sup>See GIRM, no. 8; see The Roman Missal, *Lectionary for Mass*, 2nd English edition, 1981, Introduction (hereafter, LM), no. 10.

manded by the nature of the liturgy, and, for the faithful, is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.<sup>4</sup>

- By apostolic tradition, the Church gathers on the Lord's Day to celebrate the Lord's Supper. This Sunday eucharist, at which the entire local community assembles and in which all play their proper parts, is the primary manifestation of the local Church and, as such, the most important and normative form of eucharistic celebration.<sup>5</sup> It should be in every sense inclusive and not be needlessly multiplied. The celebration of other sacraments, when the Roman Ritual allows, may be accommodated within it.
- In the celebration of the eucharist, all present render the particular service corresponding to their role and function in the assembly.<sup>6</sup> A celebration is the work of the whole body of Christ; the ministers and other members of the assembly have a part in the action and have a contribution to make. Each of these special services is performed for the good of the whole and for the glory of God.

## THE ASSEMBLY AND ITS MINISTERS

### ASSEMBLY

5 Christ is always present in the Church, particularly in its liturgical celebrations. In the celebration of Mass, which is a memorial of the sacrifice of the cross, Christ is really present first of all in the assembly itself: "Where two or three come together in my name, there am I in their midst" (Matthew 18:20).<sup>7</sup> At Mass the faithful form "a holy people, a chosen people, a royal priesthood: they give thanks to God and offer the Victim not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him and learn to offer themselves. They should endeavour to make this clear by their deep sense of reverence for God and their charity toward sisters and brothers who share with them in the celebration."<sup>8</sup>

6 The assembly is not a random group of individuals but the gathering of God's people to exercise its royal priesthood in the sacrifice of praise. Everything in the celebration is organised to encourage and foster an awareness of mutual interdependence, of common dignity and purpose.

- The dialogues between the assembly and its ministers and the acclamations have a special value as signs of communal action and as means of effective communication.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, SC), art. 14, 28; see GIRM, nos. 1, 2, 3, 5.

<sup>5</sup> See SC, art. 49, 106; see Congregation of Rites, General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, 21 March 1969 (hereafter, GNLYC), no. 4.

<sup>6</sup> See SC, art. 28.

<sup>7</sup> See SC, art. 7; see GIRM, no. 7.

<sup>8</sup> GIRM, no. 62.

<sup>9</sup> See GIRM, no. 14.

- Singing is one of the most potent of all expressions of communal awareness and common purpose.
- Uniformity in posture and gesture likewise expresses and fosters a unity of spirit and purpose.

## LITURGICAL MINISTERS

7 All members of the assembly contribute to the eucharistic celebration in ways appropriate to their particular order or liturgical function. By doing all and only those parts that belong to them, the ministers and other members of the assembly contribute to the participation of all and show the Church as the body of Christ, actively engaged in worship of the living God with the help of various orders and ministries.<sup>10</sup>

8 The composition of the liturgical assembly represents and reflects the nature of the Church itself. The very arrangement of the celebration in its various ministries shows that all the baptised have a place in the Church, women and men, the young and old, people of every race and way of life. Through the variety of liturgical ministries in the Church, the body of Christ is built up.

9 All who exercise a liturgical ministry within the assembly need proper preparation for their responsibilities. They are to have the competence to perform the particular ministry with which they have been entrusted.

10 The formation of liturgical ministers is both spiritual and technical. Although this formation varies in extent and depth depending upon the nature of the particular ministry, it will normally have liturgical, biblical, and technical components. Through liturgical formation ministers acquire an understanding of the Mass as a whole, with particular emphasis on the parts of the Mass for which they have specific responsibility. Through biblical formation they are helped to understand the cycle of Scripture readings and to perceive the revealed message of the Scriptures through the light of faith. Liturgical ministers also learn the intimate connection between the two principal parts of the Mass, the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the eucharist. Through training in the particular skills of their ministry, they learn to make the best use of their personal gifts and strengths in order to communicate the person and message of Christ by the reverent use of word, gesture, or movement.

11 Opportunities should be made available periodically for liturgical ministers to pray together and be renewed in their ministry. These occasions may provide for their continuing formation and for the improvement of their abilities to assist the assembly in its worship.

12 The words and actions of the liturgy give verbal and bodily expression to the profound realities of God's gracious activity and the people's attitude in response to God. Equal care is therefore to be given by liturgical ministers to the verbal and physical elements of the liturgy.

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<sup>10</sup>See GIRM, no. 58.

- When speaking or singing, ministers use a strong, clear voice and strive for a measured delivery.
- By reverent posture and through graceful gesture and movement, ministers reinforce the words of the liturgy and help to elicit the response of the assembly.
- When not performing particular duties, liturgical ministers join with the rest of the assembly in their actions and responses. At these times the ministers listen, respond, and sing with the other members of the assembly and so continue to contribute to the worship of the whole body.

### *Priest Celebrant*

13 In the celebration of the eucharist, Christ is also present in the person of the presiding priest. Every authentic celebration of the eucharist is presided over by the bishop or a presbyter presiding in the person of Christ. The priest leads the people in prayer, in listening and responding to God's word, and in offering the sacrifice through Christ in the Spirit to the Father. He proclaims the message of salvation in preaching and gives the bread and cup of salvation.<sup>11</sup>

14 By the depth of the priest's prayerfulness and the dignity and humility of his bearing, the people should be able to recognise the living presence of Christ, who spoke with authority but as one who came not to be served but to serve. In this way the priest will be conscious that he presides over the assembly in the name of Christ and that his leadership is exercised in a ritual manner.<sup>12</sup>

- Through his liturgical presidency, the priest encourages the participation of others and coordinates them into one harmonious action. Rather than appropriating the functions of others, he is responsible for seeing that everything is done well.<sup>13</sup>
- The priest exercises his responsibility chiefly in the proclamation of the presidential prayers: the opening prayer, the prayer over the gifts, the prayer after communion, and, supremely, the eucharistic prayer. Presiding in the person of Christ, he addresses these prayers to God in the name not only of the assembly but of the entire people of God.<sup>14</sup>
- In some circumstances the priest may also facilitate the conscious participation of the assembly by brief and helpful comments and introductions, for example, at the beginning of the celebration, before the readings and the eucharistic prayer, or at the dismissal.<sup>15</sup>
- The readings, including the gospel, are proclaimed by other ministers, but the homily is ordinarily given by the presiding priest (see nos. 92-94). Preaching is an integral part of the liturgy, particularly when the community gathers for its Sunday celebration of the eucharist.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>See GIRM, nos. 7, 59, 60.

<sup>12</sup>See GIRM, no. 60.

<sup>13</sup>See LM, no. 38; see Congregation for Divine Worship, Circular Letter *Eucharistiae participationem*, to the presidents of the conferences of bishops, on the eucharistic prayers, 27 April 1973 (hereafter, EP), no. 17: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 346-347.

<sup>14</sup>See GIRM, no. 10.

<sup>15</sup>See GIRM, no. 11; see LM, no. 42.

<sup>16</sup>See GIRM, no. 42.

## Deacon

15 The deacon, whose order has been held in high honour since the early Church, has a principal role among the other ministers of the assembly. In communion with the bishop and the college of presbyters, the deacon's service for the people of God is the *diakonia* of liturgy, word, and charity.<sup>17</sup>

- The deacon's most important function at Mass is to proclaim the gospel reading. On occasion, he may be invited to deliver the homily and he also ordinarily announces the intentions in the general intercessions.<sup>18</sup> If the Book of Gospels is used, the deacon may carry it before the presiding priest in the entrance procession. After reverencing the altar, he places the book upon it, and then, with the priest, kisses the altar.<sup>19</sup>
- In the liturgy of the eucharist, the deacon assists in the distribution of communion to the people, especially as minister of the cup. In this connection, he also prepares the table and gifts, elevates the cup at the doxology, and may assist with the breaking of the bread and the preparation of the cups at communion.
- As the servant of the assembly and its worship, the deacon assists the priest at the chair and at the altar. He is also called to give certain directions and invitations to the assembly, especially regarding movement or posture.<sup>20</sup> When incense is used, the deacon assists with its preparation and where indicated may incense the priest, the people, and the Book of Gospels.

## Reader

16 In proclaiming the word of God, readers exercise their responsibility in mediating the presence of Christ. God speaks to the assembly through them, and, the impact of God's message will depend significantly on their conviction, their preparation, and their delivery.

17 The richness in the quantity and in the variety of readings in the Lectionary challenges those who are called upon to proclaim the Scriptures at Mass. The individual sacred authors reflected on the meaning of God's action in history from their own perspective and in their own style. They employed various literary forms to convey the message of salvation, ranging, for example, from narratives and the poetry of the psalms to prophetic oracles and parables, from theological expositions to apocalyptic visions. An awareness of the literary form of a particular reading or psalm and a knowledge of the sacred author's style will enable the reader or psalmist to proclaim more fully and with greater understanding the tone and content of the text.

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<sup>17</sup>See GIRM, no. 61; see Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*, 21 November 1964 (hereafter, LG), no. 29; see The Roman Pontifical, *Rites of Ordination of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons*, second typical edition, 1993, no. 199.

<sup>18</sup>See GIRM, nos. 47, 61; see LM, no. 50.

<sup>19</sup>See GIRM, no. 129.

<sup>20</sup>See GIRM, no. 61.

- Both to involve more people in active ministry and to assist the assembly to appreciate the genre and context of the different passages of Scripture, it is better to have a different reader for each reading.<sup>21</sup>
- The responsorial psalm is led by a psalmist or cantor, but, if necessary, it may be led by a reader.<sup>22</sup> In this case it is preferable that it be led by someone other than the reader of the first reading, in order to respect the force and effectiveness of the liturgy of the word as proclamation and response.
- When there is no deacon, a reader may carry the Book of Gospels before the presiding priest in the entrance procession and lay it on the altar. If the Book of Gospels is not used, the Lectionary may be carried in its place (or it may be prepared at the ambo before Mass begins).<sup>23</sup>

### *Ministers of Music*

18 A psalmist, a cantor, an organist, other instrumentalists, a choir, and a director of music assist the assembly's full participation in singing the songs, responses, and acclamations. These ministers of music exercise a liturgical function within the assembly and by their role help to add beauty and solemnity to the celebration.<sup>24</sup>

- The psalmist has the special task of drawing the assembly into the proclamation of the word of God in the psalm by introducing the psalm responses, alleluia or gospel acclamation to the assembly, and by singing the verses of the responsorial psalm and the alleluia and gospel verses.<sup>25</sup> The psalmist may also introduce all antiphons to the assembly and sing the verses of the psalms used. The role of the psalmist and cantor may be carried out by one person.
- The cantor's function is to lead and encourage the assembly in singing. The cantor also introduces and teaches new music to the people.<sup>26</sup>
- The organ and other instruments not only support and encourage participation through song, but in their own right can powerfully assist contemplation and express praise and a variety of human feelings before God.
- The choir remains at all times a part of the assembly. It can serve the assembly by leading it in sung prayer and by reinforcing or enhancing the song of the assembly, for example, by sharing the singing of the verses or sections of a hymn or song alternately, by introducing a sung response or antiphon, or through harmony or other elaboration. Occasionally it will be appropriate for the choir alone to sing more elaborate music, for example, an anthem, which can assist the prayerful reflection of the assembly.

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<sup>21</sup>See GIRM, no. 71; see LM, no. 52.

<sup>22</sup>See GIRM, no. 150; see LM, no. 22.

<sup>23</sup>See GIRM, nos. 80:2, 82:4, 148-149.

<sup>24</sup>See GIRM, nos. 63-64.

<sup>25</sup>See GIRM, no. 67.

<sup>26</sup>See GIRM, no. 64.

- Even at celebrations when there is no choir, basic musical participation can be ensured by an instrumentalist and one or more cantors, or by a cantor alone. Especially through responsorial singing, such ministers can draw the people into singing together.<sup>27</sup>

### *Ministers of Communion*

19 “Since the eucharistic celebration is the paschal meal, it is right that the faithful who are properly disposed receive the Lord’s body and blood as spiritual food as he commanded.”<sup>28</sup> If a large number are to receive communion, the priest celebrant will frequently need assistance in distributing communion, so that the communion rite is not unduly long. This assistance will regularly be needed when communion is given under both kinds, the form of communion in which the eucharistic banquet is more clearly signified.<sup>29</sup>

20 Deacons and concelebrating priests are the ordinary ministers of communion. Instituted acolytes, where they are available, assist as auxiliary ministers. Frequently, however, this assistance will be given by special ministers of communion, either formally commissioned for a given period or, in case of necessity, deputed ad hoc by the priest celebrant.

21 These ministers serve Christ present in the assembly by ministering his body and blood to their brothers and sisters. They also serve the unity of the worshipping community by taking communion to those members who are prevented by sickness, old age, or other cause from taking part in the assembly. In accord with an ancient tradition, it is appropriate for communion to be taken directly from the Sunday eucharist to the sick and to those unable to leave their homes.

- There is no need for special ministers to be accommodated in the sanctuary for the whole celebration. It may be a more appropriate expression of their ministry and relationship to the assembly if they come forward from their place among the people after the sign of peace.
- They assist in the preparation of the bread and cups for communion. Should it be necessary to use the consecrated elements from a previous Mass, one of them may bring the reserved elements to the altar from the tabernacle, reverently but without ceremony.
- When the distribution is complete, the special ministers should return the vessels to a side table. They may reverently consume any remaining consecrated elements.
- When communion is being taken from Mass to the sick or those unable to leave their homes, the appropriate moment for the deacons, acolytes, or special ministers to take the pyx from the altar table and leave the assembly is after the communion of the people. Alternatively, they may depart immediately after receiving communion themselves, or as part of the concluding procession of ministers. It is particularly fitting that when there are several such ministers they leave in this procession.

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<sup>27</sup> See GIRM, no. 64.

<sup>28</sup> GIRM, no. 56.

<sup>29</sup> See Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, Instruction *Immense caritatis*, on facilitating reception of communion in certain circumstances, 29 January 1973, no. 1, I:c: AAS 65 (1973), p. 266; see GIRM no. 240.

## *Servers*

22 In addition to the service of instituted acolytes, service at the altar by other ministers represents a long liturgical tradition. These servers enhance the quality of celebration for the whole assembly by taking part in processions and by ensuring that all requisites for the celebration are available at the appropriate moments.<sup>30</sup>

- Servers hold the book while the presiding priest proclaims the presidential prayers with outstretched hands. They bring and hold such things as books, thuribles, water jug and towel, plates and dishes, and microphones. They lead the entrance and concluding processions with the cross and candles; they escort the deacon (or priest) to the ambo and stand at his side while he proclaims the gospel reading. They may, on more solemn occasions, accompany the procession with the gifts. They tend the thurible, prepare it for the priest or deacon, and themselves may incense the assembly and other ministers.
- The number of servers will depend upon the circumstances and the tasks to be performed. Especially at large-scale celebrations, there should be an assisting minister with responsibility<sup>31</sup> for ensuring that these various tasks are properly assigned and carried out.

## *Ushers*

23 Saint Paul instructed the assembled community to “welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, to the glory of God” (Romans 15:7). It will normally be appropriate for those commonly referred to as ushers to exercise this ministry of welcome by greeting people at the door, making sure they are provided with all necessary books and aids, and helping them find their places.<sup>32</sup> The people are assembling as table guests of the Lord to share in a supper as sisters and brothers. They will appreciate this more readily if they are made welcome by representatives of the community and acknowledged informally by their neighbours.

- In small and stable communities, a formal ministry of welcome may not be needed. But in larger assemblies with a more shifting attendance, special arrangements are necessary so that visitors and those unfamiliar with the community and its worship may be put at ease and drawn into the celebration.
- Ushers also help when, at any time during the celebration, members of the assembly become ill or otherwise need assistance.
- Ushers may assist with the collection and with processions.

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<sup>30</sup>See GIRM, no. 68.

<sup>31</sup>See GIRM, no. 69.

<sup>32</sup>See GIRM, no. 68:2.

## THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION AND ITS SYMBOLS

24 “In the liturgy, by means of signs perceptible to the senses, human sanctification is signified and brought about in ways proper to each of these signs.”<sup>33</sup> The entire ritual complex of actions, objects, words, and persons which constitute the symbolism of the eucharist is integral to its effectiveness. The more clearly and powerfully each of them signifies, the more directly their effect will be perceived and experienced. Words clearly proclaimed, actions deliberately and gracefully performed, elements and objects authentically made and reverently handled contribute to the integrity of the liturgy and allow its symbolism to work to greater effect.

25 Bread and wine, breaking and sharing, eating and drinking, standing, kneeling, bowing, and greeting should not need to be explained. It is in sharing and experiencing them in their natural integrity and consistency that their spiritual significance and effect are appropriated.

### GESTURE AND POSTURE

26 The active participation of the faithful is first of all internal in that their thoughts reflect what they hear, do, and say during the liturgy. It is also external in that through their outward bearing and gestures they express their inner participation in the liturgy. The ritual interplay of the internal and external elements of the liturgy conveys the transcendence and the immanence of the living God whom the assembly worships.<sup>34</sup>

27 Since worship engages people fully, in every aspect of their being, they worship God with their bodies and feelings as well as their minds and spirits, with their hands and feet as well as their eyes and ears. The non-verbal elements of the liturgy can express what cannot be articulated in words and, at times, can reinforce the spoken word. Because of their power, the gestures and postures of the liturgy deserve as much care as its words.

28 The people are called as members of an organic whole, not as disparate individuals. A Christian assembly that worships “with one heart and soul” (Acts 4:32) adopts a common posture as a sign of its unity. Such common posture “both expresses and fosters the spiritual attitude of those taking part.”<sup>35</sup>

- Actions done together by the whole assembly express its unity and cohesion in the body of Christ. Some actions and gestures are performed by the whole community together, for example, making the sign of the cross, standing to pray, sitting to listen, bowing to show reverence, moving forward to present and receive, exchanging the sign of peace.
- Other actions are performed by the priest celebrant or another minister, for example, praying with hands raised and outstretched, blessing with hands extended over the people, showing the consecrated elements to the people, and the breaking of the bread (see nos. 130-131).

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<sup>33</sup>SC, art. 7.

<sup>34</sup>See Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Musicam sacram*, on music in the liturgy, 5 March 1967 (hereafter, MS), no. 15: AAS 59 (1967) pp. 304-305.

<sup>35</sup>GIRM, no. 20.

## *Posture*

29 Our countries share a common understanding of the significance of the postures of standing, sitting, and kneeling. One rises to greet people, to honour someone important, to express readiness for action, or when seized with excitement. In Christian liturgical tradition, standing is the basic posture of an Easter people lifted up to greet its risen Lord. The assembly stands at Mass, for example, during the proclamation of the gospel reading.<sup>36</sup>

30 One sits to listen, to rest, to watch. At Mass it is appropriate, for example, to sit during the homily and at the preparation of the gifts.<sup>37</sup>

31 One kneels as a human gesture of submission. In Christian tradition, kneeling is an acknowledgement of one's creatureliness before God. It can signify penitence for sin, humility, reverence, and adoration.

- The conference of bishops may determine when the assembly should stand, sit, or kneel at Mass, in accord with local sensibilities and the character of the rite.<sup>38</sup>

## *Other Postures and Gestures*

32 Other gestures employed in the celebration of the Mass include bowing, kissing, genuflecting, and striking the breast. Each of these gestures has had a natural significance in human experience and in Christian liturgical tradition, but this may vary considerably according to culture and epoch. Bowing may be seen as a natural and gracious sign of respect, as, for instance, when passing the altar. Kissing is a more intense sign of reverence and respect. Genuflecting was an ancient gesture of fealty, reverence, and adoration; it is now generally reserved for the veneration of Christ present in the eucharistic elements. Striking the breast is a sign of humility and self-abasement.

- The conference of bishops may determine other postures and gestures, in accord with local sensibilities and the character of the rite.

## WORDS

33 Because the celebration of Mass is a communal activity, the priest celebrant and all others who have special parts to play need to give careful thought to the different kinds of verbal communication with the assembly. Their manner of delivery will correspond to the nature or genre of the text, the scale and acoustics of the building, the form of the celebration, and the genius of the language.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> See GIRM, no. 21.

<sup>37</sup> See GIRM, no. 21.

<sup>38</sup> See GIRM, no. 21.

<sup>39</sup> See EP, no. 17: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 346-347; see GIRM, no. 18.

## *Sacred Scripture*

34 Preeminent among the texts of the Mass are the biblical readings (see nos. 84-86) with their accompanying scriptural chants, for even now from the word of God handed down in writing God speaks to the people, “and it is from the continued use of Sacred Scripture that the people of God, docile to the Holy Spirit under the light of faith, receive the power to be Christ’s living witnesses before the world.”<sup>40</sup>

## *Presidential Prayers*

35 Among the texts assigned to the priest, the eucharistic prayer is of first importance as the high point of the whole celebration (see nos. 111-124). Next are the other presidential prayers: the opening prayer, the prayer over the gifts, and the prayer after communion.

- These prayers are proclaimed by the priest alone, presiding in the person of Christ. They are addressed to God in the name of the entire Church and on behalf of the whole assembly.<sup>41</sup>
- When the assembly is drawn into the prayer by the invitation *Let us pray*, all observe some moments of silence in which they place themselves in God’s presence and make their personal petitions.
- By a most ancient tradition of the Western Church, presidential prayers have a trinitarian structure, being addressed to God (*Pater, Deus, Domine*) with and through the Son as mediator, in the unity and power of the Holy Spirit, who convokes the Church, maintains it in communion, and empowers it to pray.
- The assembly makes the prayer its own and expresses its assent in the acclamation *Amen*.

## *Common Prayers and Other Texts*

36 The dialogues between the priest and the congregation and the acclamations are of particular importance as expressions of the prayer of the whole assembly. They are necessary as the very minimum form of communal participation, whatever the form of Mass. Some texts belong to the whole assembly and as such are recited or sung, as appropriate, by the priest and congregation together. These are, for example, the acclamations, the profession of faith, and the Lord’s Prayer.<sup>42</sup>

## *Sung Texts*

37 There are various forms of prayer that by their very nature or because of their function in the liturgy lend themselves to being sung.

- The psalms used in the liturgy, for example, the responsorial psalm and others designated in the *Simple Gradual*, are songs and poems of praise intended for singing. The opening and communion antiphons, when used, are likewise texts that by their very nature should be sung, along with appropriate psalm verses (see introductory notes to the “Antiphonal,” page 979).

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<sup>40</sup>LM, no. 12.

<sup>41</sup>See GIRM, no. 10.

<sup>42</sup>See GIRM, nos. 14-16.

- Other texts, for example, the acclamations, call for the whole assembly to take them up and voice them in song with enthusiasm.
- On Sundays, feasts, or more solemn occasions elements of the liturgy like the eucharistic prayer or at least its preface may be sung, as may the other presidential prayers. Since the eucharistic prayer is the central prayer and high point of the Mass, the singing of this prayer expresses the solemn nature of the day or occasion being celebrated.

### *Invitations and Introductions*

38 At certain moments in the Mass, indicated in the rubrics and in this introduction, the deacon or presiding priest gives formal invitations to elicit the people's action, response, or silent preparation for prayer. In addition the presiding priest may facilitate the people's participation by brief and well-prepared comments.<sup>43</sup>

- All such introductions should be adapted to the different circumstances and occasions.
- Invitations may be expressed in the words provided or in similar words.
- Invitations intended to be followed immediately by a response from the people should end with a recognisable cue.

### *Private Prayers*

39 Some prayers prescribed in the Mass are personal prayers of the priest or deacon. These are by their nature private and are recited inaudibly.<sup>44</sup> This also allows the faithful to pray silently and in their own way during these moments of preparation.

## MUSIC

40 As an art placed at the service of communal prayer, music is part of the liturgical action, drawing people together and transforming them into an assembly of worshipers. For this reason it is considered integral to worship and serves a ministerial function.<sup>45</sup>

41 In all the arts the Church has admitted styles from every period, according to the proper genius and circumstances of peoples and the requirements of the liturgy. The music of our own day, from every culture and region, should also serve the assembly and its worship with due reverence and honour.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> See GIRM, no. 11; see EP, no. 14: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 345-346.

<sup>44</sup> See GIRM, no. 13.

<sup>45</sup> See SC, art. 112.

<sup>46</sup> See SC, art. 112, 123.

42 In choosing music for liturgy, consideration should be given to the music itself, the text, and the ritual function. Concerning the music, factors include the quality of composition, its ability to express the tone, content, and form of a text (for example, an acclamation or a hymn), likewise the ease with which it can be remembered and sung. A text may be prescribed (for example, the *Sanctus*) or freely chosen (for example, a song for the communion procession). Regarding the ritual function, music may be an accompaniment to an action (for example, a procession) or a constitutive element of the rite (for example, the memorial acclamation).<sup>47</sup>

- The primary sources for the texts of the liturgical music are Scripture and the prayers of the liturgy.
- Music is provided in the Sacramentary as a model, especially when singing will be unaccompanied. Composers may create suitable settings appropriate to our traditions and culture.
- Many forms or types of music are employed in the liturgy according to the nature of the various components of the rites, for example, the responsorial form, acclamations, responses, and hymns.

43 Instrumental music may be employed to lend a particular tone to the celebration and especially to create an atmosphere conducive to recollection, stillness, or silent prayer. Many different instruments could be used to effect.

44 While music is integral to every liturgical celebration, not every liturgy is celebrated with the same degree of solemnity. Sundays and solemnities enjoy pride of place and demand greater preparation. Other celebrations are planned in the light of the community's needs and resources.

45 It is important that the music chosen reflect the nature of the season or occasion, that it contribute to developing a stable repertoire, and, if it will be used regularly, that it be strong enough to bear repetition.

46 The selection of music begins with the liturgical texts themselves. Priority is given to singing the constitutive parts of the Mass in preference to hymns, and among these parts priority should be given to the responsorial psalm, to the acclamations before the gospel and within the eucharistic prayer (the *Sanctus*, memorial acclamation, and *Amen*), and to the dialogues between the priest and the people (for example, the preface dialogue and the final dismissal).<sup>48</sup>

- The description of the Order of Mass which follows (nos. 66-147) makes recommendations as to which elements may or should be sung.

## SILENCE

47 Silence is, as in all communication, a most important element in the communication between God and the community of faith. Its purpose is to allow for the voice of the Holy Spirit to be heard in the hearts of the people of God and to enable them to unite personal prayer more closely with the word of God and the public

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<sup>47</sup>See GIRM, nos. 18-19.

<sup>48</sup>See LM, nos. 19-20; see GIRM, nos. 18-19; see MS nos. 7, 29: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 302, 308-309.

voice of the Church.<sup>49</sup> During liturgical silence all respond in their own way, recollecting themselves, pondering what has been heard, petitioning and praising God in their inmost spirit.<sup>50</sup>

48 Liturgical silence is not merely an absence of words, a pause, or an interlude. It is a stillness, a quieting of spirits, a making of time and leisure to hear, assimilate, and respond. Any haste that hinders reflectiveness should be avoided. The dialogue between God and the community of faith taking place through the Holy Spirit requires intervals of silence, suited to the assembly, so that all can take to heart the word of God and respond to it in prayer.<sup>51</sup>

- At the beginning of the rite of blessing and sprinkling of water, the people pause to ask for God's blessing on the water as a sign of baptism. In the penitential rite, they pause to remember their sinfulness and the loving-kindness of God in Christ. At the opening prayer, they put themselves and their deepest needs and desires before God. After the readings and homily, they savour God's word, ponder it in their hearts like Mary (see Luke 2:19), and apply it to their lives. Before communion, they compose themselves to receive the Lord, and afterwards praise God in silent prayer.<sup>52</sup>
- Liturgical silence is a corporate activity which is shared by all present and in which all support and sustain each other in profound prayerful solidarity. It demands a stillness and prayerful concentration, which the priest celebrant and all ministers can help to bring about.
- Structurally, liturgical silence is indispensable to the rhythm of a balanced celebration. Without it the celebration can become perfunctory in its haste or burdensome in its unrelieved sound and song.

## MATERIALS AND OBJECTS

49 Materials and objects used in the eucharist are to be "truly worthy and beautiful," authentic in their noble simplicity, and well adapted to sacred use.<sup>53</sup> The greatest care and sensitivity are necessary, even in the smallest matters, to achieve "a noble simplicity and cleanliness."<sup>54</sup>

- The Conferences of bishops may prepare guidelines for the appropriate arrangement of Church buildings, their furnishings, the objects used in the celebration, and artwork placed within the church. These paragraphs (nos. 50-58) refer only to the actual celebration of the eucharist and the principal materials and objects used in it.

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<sup>49</sup> See General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours (hereafter, GILH), no. 202; see EP, no. 18: AAS 65 (1973), p. 347.

<sup>50</sup> See EP, no. 18: AAS 65 (1973), p. 347.

<sup>51</sup> See LM, no. 28.

<sup>52</sup> See GIRM, no. 23.

<sup>53</sup> See GIRM, nos. 253, 287, 288.

<sup>54</sup> GIRM, no. 312.

## *Bread and Wine*

50 The very nature of sacramental symbolism demands that the elements for the eucharist be recognisable, in themselves and without explanation, as food and drink.

- Bread made from wheat flour (and by tradition of the Western Church unleavened) should “have the appearance of food.” In colour, taste, texture, and smell it should be identifiable as bread by those who are to share it.<sup>55</sup> This is just as necessary when small individual breads are used.
- Wine should be natural and pure, from the fruit of the grape, and free from any foreign substance.<sup>56</sup> To be seen and recognised for what it is and what it signifies, it can help greatly if the wine is brought to the altar in clear glass containers and is of a sufficiently rich colour to be clearly distinguishable from water.

## *Vessels*

51 Vessels for the eucharistic elements should be made of worthy and durable materials, their form in keeping with local culture and with their function in the liturgy.<sup>57</sup>

- The fundamental eucharistic symbolism of the many sharing in the one bread and cup is more clearly expressed when all the bread is contained in a single vessel and all the wine in one cup. Additional vessels may be necessary for the distribution of communion and may be brought to the altar at the breaking of the bread.
- Vessels for the body of Christ preferably have the form of bread-plates or dishes rather than of cups or reliquaries. Cups for the blood of Christ need to be large enough to be shared, easily handled between minister and communicant, and easily tilted by the communicant for the purpose of drinking.
- A suitable jug and basin may be used for the washing of the priest’s hands. The water presented with the gifts for mixing with the wine is not appropriate for this purpose. Generous quantities of water and a towel will be necessary if the priest is to do more than wet the tips of his fingers.

## *Altar*

52 “At the altar the sacrifice of the cross is made present under sacramental signs. It is also the table of the Lord, and the people of God are called together to share in it. The altar is, as well, the centre of the thanksgiving that the eucharist accomplishes.”<sup>58</sup>

- The design of the altar will reflect its place as the focus of attention during the liturgy of the eucharist and its function within the liturgical assembly. Its size and proportions should be appropriate to the normal Sunday eucharistic celebration, and it should be able to accommodate the plates and cups for the communion of the assembly.
- Out of respect for the memorial banquet which is celebrated at it, the altar is adorned with a covering throughout the eucharist and after.<sup>59</sup> This may be of

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<sup>55</sup> See GIRM, nos. 283.

<sup>56</sup> See GIRM, no. 284.

<sup>57</sup> See GIRM, nos. 291-292, 295.

<sup>58</sup> GIRM, no. 259.

a seasonal, a neutral, or a festal colour, and the fabric should be of good quality, design, and texture. At the preparation of the gifts, a corporal, large enough to accommodate all the vessels that are to be used in the sacred banquet, is spread on top of the altar.

- Candles are used to express reverence and festivity. They should be authentic, made of a substance which gives a living flame and is seen to be consumed in giving its light. The candles may be placed on the altar or, more appropriately, near or around it, so as not to distract from the sacred vessels or impede the view of the participants.<sup>60</sup>
- The table of the altar itself holds only what is necessary for the celebration, for example, the vessels and Sacramentary, and those things remain on the altar only for as long as needed. Decorative items like flowers may be placed near or around the altar, but not, as a rule, on it.

### *Ambo*

53 When the Scriptures are read in the church, God speaks to the assembly, and in the proclamation of the gospel reading Christ himself is present in his word. The place from which the Scriptures are proclaimed is regarded as the “table of God’s word” and is therefore a symbol of the surpassing dignity of that word.<sup>61</sup>

- In accord with its dignity, the ambo is used exclusively for the proclamation of God’s word in the Scriptures, including the singing of the responsorial psalm, the elucidation and application of the word in the homily and general intercessions, and also the Easter proclamation (*Exsultet*).<sup>62</sup>
- The design of the ambo will reflect its place as the focus of attention during the liturgy of the word and its function within the liturgical assembly. The ambo is to be somewhat elevated, fixed, and of noble design, in harmonious relationship with the altar.<sup>63</sup>

### *Chair*

54 Christ is really present in the person of the minister who presides at the liturgy. The chair stands as a sign of the priest celebrant’s office. It symbolises unity, leadership, and service to the gathered assembly. Its position allows the priest to be seen easily and heard by all in the assembly.<sup>64</sup>

- From the chair the priest leads the introductory and concluding rites and presides over the liturgy of the word. He may also give the homily at the chair, sitting or standing, and say the prayer after communion.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> See GIRM, no. 268.

<sup>60</sup> See GIRM, no. 269.

<sup>61</sup> See GIRM, no. 9; see LM, no. 32.

<sup>62</sup> See LM, no. 33.

<sup>63</sup> See GIRM, no. 272; see LM, no. 32.

<sup>64</sup> See GIRM, nos. 7, 271.

<sup>65</sup> See GIRM, nos. 86, 122; see LM, no. 26.

- When priest and ministers move from chair, to ambo, to altar, the different parts of the Mass are more clearly distinguished, and the presence of the Lord in word and sacrament is more effectively conveyed.

## *Cross*

55 The paschal mystery celebrated in the eucharistic liturgy was accomplished through the crucifixion and resurrection. Christians glory in the cross of the Lord (see Galatians 6:14). As a constant reminder of the cost of salvation and the symbol of Christian hope, the cross should be visible to the entire assembly during the eucharist. It may be carried in procession, or there may be a fixed cross on or near the altar.<sup>66</sup> Care should be taken not to multiply crosses in the place of worship and so detract from the effect of this symbol of the paschal mystery.

## *Books*

56 Books used in the celebration of the eucharist serve to communicate God's presence to us in the word or to articulate the Church's response to God in praise and adoration. In both capacities they facilitate the action of Christ in the Church.<sup>67</sup>

- Books from which the word of God is proclaimed are treated with veneration. They need to be of large size, strong binding, and noble design. Other books, including the Sacramentary, while worthy, need not draw attention to themselves. Pamphlets and leaflets detract from the visual integrity of the total liturgical action and should never be used by ministers as they exercise their particular ministry.<sup>68</sup>

## *Vesture*

57 Vestments serve several functions in the celebration of the eucharist. As festal clothing, for example, they suggest the ritual and solemn character of the eucharistic banquet, and as insignia, they identify the specific function or ministry in the assembly of those who wear them.<sup>69</sup>

- The garment common to all ministers is the alb, which can express unity and enhance the visual dignity of the celebration. Since albs no longer have the character of an undergarment, their form and design should complement the ritual and festive character of the celebration.
- The chasuble, worn with alb and stole, is the proper vestment of the presiding priest. It may be made from either natural or synthetic fabrics that are worthy and beautiful. Beauty should derive from the quality and cut of the fabric as much as from its ornamentation.<sup>70</sup>
- Concelebrating priests wear either a chasuble and stole, or a stole alone, over the alb. Vestments that differ in size, shape, and ornamentation can obscure unity, emphasise individualism, and detract from the presidential role of the presiding priest.

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<sup>66</sup> See GIRM, nos. 84, 270.

<sup>67</sup> See LM, no. 35.

<sup>68</sup> See LM, no. 37.

<sup>69</sup> See GIRM, no. 297.

<sup>70</sup> See GIRM, nos. 299, 305, 306.

- The deacon wears an alb, stole, and dalmatic; but the dalmatic may be omitted.<sup>71</sup>

### *Incense*

58 Incense has been used since before Christian times both as a sign of respect and honour and as a symbol of prayer rising before God. Incense suggests both the otherness of the transcendent God and the cloud which symbolised God's glory and presence in the midst of the Israelites. It can contribute powerfully to a sense of mystery. As a sweet-smelling aroma, it represents the prayers of the Church rising before God as an acceptable oblation (see Psalm 141:2; Book of Revelation 8:4).

- Incense, which when burning appeals to our sight and our sense of smell, should be used in amounts sufficient to be readily seen and smelled.
- In the introductory rites, incense may be carried in the entrance procession and used at the veneration of the altar. In the liturgy of the word, it may be carried in the gospel procession and used to venerate the Book of Gospels. In the liturgy of the eucharist, it may be used at the preparation of gifts to honour the elements and the altar and to acknowledge the presence and action of Christ in the priest celebrant and the other members of the assembly. It may also be used at the showing<sup>72</sup> of the elements after the words of the Lord in the eucharistic prayer.
- The use of incense at any of these points, or at all, is optional, and its use at any one point does not necessitate its use at all the others. It is used in order to express the solemnity of a particular celebration or to enhance a particular moment within a celebration.

### ADAPTING THE CELEBRATION TO PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES

59 The General Instruction and this introduction present the celebration which the Church regards as the norm and model of the eucharist: the principal Sunday celebration of the parish community. This celebration assumes the availability of all necessary resources, the participation of an assembly, and a range of ministers and musicians.<sup>73</sup>

60 But if every Mass were celebrated in identical form and with the same degree of solemnity, then the Sunday celebration would cease to be truly preeminent. The revised liturgical books clearly presuppose that every celebration, in whatever circumstances, will fully take account of the needs, capabilities, and situation of the community which assembles for it.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>See GIRM, nos. 81:2, 298, 300.

<sup>72</sup>See GIRM, no. 235.

<sup>73</sup>See GIRM, nos. 75, 77, 78.

<sup>74</sup>See GIRM, no. 313.

61 The liturgical celebrations of culturally and ethnically mixed groups require special attention. Weekday Masses, celebrations with smaller groups, celebrations outside churches or chapels, Masses with children, young people, the sick, or persons with disabilities, and ritual Masses (for example, funeral or wedding Masses) at which a significant number of the assembly may be noncommunicants or nonbelievers will necessarily impose different demands appropriate to the needs of the occasion.

- The conference of bishops may prepare guidelines for these liturgical celebrations.

62 Useful principles for adaptation or accommodation are suggested in the Roman Ritual for the rites of other sacraments, in *The Liturgy of the Hours*, and, more explicitly, in the Directory for Masses with Children. Some principles are also included in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and in the Order of Mass itself.

63 The General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours enunciates the principle of “progressive solemnity,” which recognises that the various parts of a liturgical celebration are not all of equal importance and admit of varying treatment, according to the significance of the day or hour being celebrated, the purpose of the various hours, the number and character of the community, and the number of available singers.<sup>75</sup>

64 The Directory for Masses with Children recognises that Mass may need to be accommodated to the needs of children when they constitute a significant proportion of the assembly. This does not suggest composing rites that are altogether special or different from the Order of Mass as it is usually celebrated. One of the purposes of specially prepared Masses for children is to lead the children to the celebration of Mass with adults, particularly the Sunday Mass of the community.<sup>76</sup>

- Three eucharistic prayers for use at Masses when a large proportion of children are present are provided (see pages 634-654). These prayers are intended to help achieve the active participation of children in the eucharistic prayer, the Church’s central prayer of praise and thanksgiving (see nos. 111-124). In language and their treatment of eucharistic themes these eucharistic prayers are suited to use with children ranging from early school age to early adolescence.

65 Some limited examples follow of the kinds of accommodations that may be considered.

- When an antiphon cannot be used according to its original purpose as a chant or processional refrain, it may be better to use it in other ways. For example, the opening antiphon could be used to provide a theme for an introductory admonition. Similarly, when the communion antiphon cannot be sung it may be preferable to use it as a focus for the period of silence after communion.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>See GILH, no. 273.

<sup>76</sup>See Congregation for Divine Worship, *Directory for Masses with Children*, 1 November 1973 (hereafter, DMC), nos. 19, 21: AAS 66 (1974), pp. 35-36.

<sup>77</sup>See Congregation for Divine Worship, Instruction *Calendaria particularia*, on the revision of particular calendars and of the propers for offices and Masses, 24 June 1970 (hereafter, CP), no. 40a: AAS 62 (1970), p. 661.

- At celebrations which are planned for children, it is permissible to use approved adaptations of the *Gloria*, profession of faith, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*, if they help to encourage the children's readier participation. But great care must be taken to ensure that these adaptations completely respect the meaning of the originals and their function in the rite. Such paraphrases should not be used at adult celebrations.<sup>78</sup>
- The Conferences of bishops may make provision for accommodations or simplifications in celebrations of small groups outside Sunday Mass.

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<sup>78</sup>See DMC, no. 31: AAS 66 (1974), p. 39.

## II. INTRODUCTORY RITES

66 In the introductory rites the assembly is called together in Christ and established again as the Church. The risen Lord is present in the midst of the assembly, which becomes visible as the body of Christ. Thus, the assembly itself is the first instance of Christ's presence in the liturgy. The function of these rites is to enable the community, coming together from a multiplicity of concerns and a variety of ways of life, to become aware of itself again as a gathered community, alert and ready to listen to the word and to celebrate the sacrament.<sup>79</sup>

- The introductory rites are led from the chair rather than from the altar or ambo.<sup>80</sup>

### ENTRANCE PROCESSION

67 The assembly's worship begins with the opening song and procession, which help to create an ambience of celebration, a sense of identity, and an awareness of the mystery being unfolded.<sup>81</sup>

- The opening song should be such that everyone is able in some degree to join in singing it. It may consist of an antiphon and psalm or another appropriate song. When no singing is possible, the recommended antiphon may appropriately be used by incorporating it into the introductory remarks that may follow the greeting.<sup>82</sup>
- A procession of ministers through and from the assembly expresses visibly the relationship of the priest celebrant and the other ministers to the congregation.
- Depending on the occasion, the procession is led by ministers carrying the thurible with burning incense, the cross, and two candles. They are followed by acolytes and other ministers, then the deacon or reader carrying the Book of Gospels, if it is to be used, or the Lectionary. Concelebrants, the deacon of the Mass, and the priest celebrant then follow. If the Book of Gospels has been carried, it is placed on the altar upon arrival in the sanctuary.

68 The altar is an abiding symbol of Christ and the centre of the eucharistic action.<sup>83</sup>

- The priest and deacon, together with concelebrants and other ministers in the procession, bow to the altar on arrival as a sign of reverence. If a tabernacle containing the blessed sacrament is in the vicinity, they genuflect.<sup>84</sup> Ministers who are carrying a liturgical object (for example, a cross, book, or candle), do not bow or genuflect. Afterward, the priest and deacon, and any concelebrants, make an additional reverence to the altar with a kiss.<sup>85</sup>
- On more solemn occasions, this reverence may be enhanced by the use of incense.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> See SC, art. 7; see GIRM, nos. 7, 24.

<sup>80</sup> See GIRM, no. 86.

<sup>81</sup> See GIRM, no. 25.

<sup>82</sup> See GIRM, no. 26; see CP, no. 40a: AAS 62 (1970), p. 661.

<sup>83</sup> See EuchMyst, no. 24: AAS 59 (1967), p. 554.

<sup>84</sup> See GIRM, no. 84.

<sup>85</sup> See GIRM, nos. 27, 84, 85, 129, 234:2.

- After the procession and the reverencing of the altar, the priest and deacon proceed to the chair. From there the priest greets the people and leads the opening rite.<sup>87</sup>

## GREETING

69 After making the sign of the cross together, the priest and people exchange formal greetings as a mutual acknowledgement and evocation of the presence of Christ in their midst and as a prayer for his sustaining power.<sup>88</sup>

- As the first dialogue between priest and people, the greeting and response should be both warm and reverent. Casual and personalised greetings that emphasise a merely human exchange and obscure the mystery of Christ's presence and action are inappropriate.

70 The Mass of the day may be introduced at this point. A very brief and well-prepared comment can help to create the appropriate atmosphere and give tone and orientation to the entire celebration.<sup>89</sup>

- At this point strangers, guests, and special groups may briefly be welcomed to the celebration.
- When significant numbers of children are present, they may be acknowledged and addressed directly at this point.<sup>90</sup>
- Though the introduction will normally be the function of the priest, on occasion it may be fitting for the deacon or some other member of the assembly to do this.

## OPENING RITE

71 One of the following opening rites is selected. The choice may be made on the basis of the liturgical season, the feast, the particular occasion, for example, a particular ritual Mass, or on the basis of the circumstances of the assembly that gathers for the celebration. Each of the forms of the opening rite begins with an invitation by the priest. On occasion the invitation may appropriately be incorporated into the introductory remarks that may follow the greeting.

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<sup>86</sup>See GIRM, no. 85.

<sup>87</sup>See GIRM, nos. 86, 130.

<sup>88</sup>See GIRM, no. 28.

<sup>89</sup>See GIRM, nos. 29, 86; see EP, no. 14: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 345-346.

<sup>90</sup>See DMC, no. 17: AAS 66 (1974), p. 35.

### *Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Water*

72 As they assemble, the people of God are attentive to the risen Christ. In so doing, they recognise themselves as reconciled sinners and prepare to receive the gift of word and sacrament. The blessing and sprinkling of water serves as a memorial of Easter and baptism. God is thanked for intervening to save us through the medium of water and is asked to continue to give forgiveness and life.

- Because of its emphasis on Easter and baptism, it may be particularly appropriate to do the blessing and sprinkling during the season of Easter.
- If the greeting and blessing take place at the door, the priest may sprinkle the people during the entrance procession.

### *Penitential Rite*

73 In the penitential rite the assembly, gathered in God's presence, recognises its sinfulness and confesses the mystery of Christ's love. This may take one of two forms, both of which conclude with a prayer of absolution.

- The first form, once a private prayer of preparation, is a general confession that invokes the support of the communion of saints and, specifically, of the community gathered for the eucharist.
- The second form comprises verses of the penitential psalms.
- The season of Lent is a particularly appropriate time to select the penitential rite.

### *Litany of Praise*

74 The litany of praise is addressed to Christ our Redeemer. A number of models are offered for imitation and adaptation. All such adaptations should, like the models provided, focus on Christ and his mercy.

- The litany of praise is sung or recited. The verses or tropes may be sung by a cantor or choir.<sup>91</sup>

### *Kyrie*

75 The *Kyrie* is an ancient chant by which the assembly acclaims the Lord and pleads for mercy.<sup>92</sup> The Roman Church adopted it from the Eastern liturgies, where it formed the response to various litanies of intercession. It may be used in English or in the original Greek.

- It is by nature a chant and, when used, is normally sung by all, alternating with the cantor or choir.

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<sup>91</sup>See GIRM, no. 30.

<sup>92</sup>See GIRM, no. 30.

## *Gloria*

76 The *Gloria* is one of the Church's most ancient, solemn hymns. In the West its use was originally restricted to the opening of only the most solemn eucharistic celebrations.

- The *Gloria* is by nature a festive hymn and is normally sung entirely, or in part, by the people.<sup>93</sup>
- Its use is particularly appropriate during the seasons of Christmas and Easter.
- The *Gloria* may not be used on the Sundays or weekdays of Advent and Lent.<sup>94</sup>

## *Other Opening Rites*

77 Another opening rite may be selected for particular occasions and in accord with the prescriptions of the respective liturgical books. These rites occur on certain special feasts, when the liturgy of the hours is combined with the Mass, or when special rites are celebrated during the Mass, for example, baptism, marriage, or funeral rites. Sometimes, for example, on Passion Sunday or on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, when an entrance procession forms part of this opening rite itself, the opening rite follows the form given for these occasions.

## OPENING PRAYER

78 The opening prayer completes the introductory rites. Through petition to God, it sets the tone of the celebration and prepares the assembly to hear the word of God.<sup>95</sup>

- As the culmination of the introductory rites, an opening prayer is always used. It may be sung or said.
- When paraphrases are permitted at Masses with children, they should respect the nature of this prayer.<sup>96</sup>
- After the invitation *Let us pray*, all observe some moments of silence in which they place themselves in God's presence and make their personal petitions.
- The opening prayer always ends with a full trinitarian conclusion, to which the assembly responds *Amen*.
- On Sundays, solemnities, and feasts of the Lord, besides the prayers taken directly from the Latin text, alternative opening prayers are provided that are inspired by the appointed readings for Years A, B, and C of the *Lectionary for Mass*. A number of these prayers are also found in Volume II for weekday use.

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<sup>93</sup>See GIRM, no. 31.

<sup>94</sup>See GIRM, no. 31.

<sup>95</sup>See GIRM, no. 32.

<sup>96</sup>See DMC, no. 51: AAS 66 (1974), p. 44.

### III. LITURGY OF THE WORD

79 The Mass is made up of the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the eucharist, which are so closely connected as to form one act of worship. In the word of God the divine covenant is announced; in the eucharist the new and everlasting covenant is embodied and renewed.<sup>97</sup>

80 The chosen people entered into a special covenant with God at Sinai, a covenant that was renewed and fulfilled on Calvary. By hearing the word proclaimed in worship, the faithful enter into the unending dialogue between God and the covenant people, a dialogue sealed in the sharing of the eucharistic food. The meaning of communion is proclaimed in the word; the message of Scripture is made actual once again in the communion banquet. The proclamation of the word is thus integral to the Mass and at its very heart.

81 The proper celebration of the liturgy of the word involves many elements and several ministers, but care is necessary so that the many human words and elements do not obscure the divine word itself. In this dialogue with the Lord, the people listen to the word, reflect on it in silence, respond to it in song, assimilate it, and apply it to their lives. Moved by it, they profess their faith and intercede for the needs of the Church and the world.

82 The *Lectionary for Mass*, revised at the direction of the Second Vatican Council, has opened up the treasures of the Bible, so that richer fare might be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word. The Introduction to the Lectionary speaks extensively of the word of God in the plan of salvation and in the life of the Church. All who share in the ministry of the word will want to study this introduction and take its teaching to heart.

83 The functions of the various ministers, and guidelines for their service, are given in the Introduction to the Lectionary and in the first part of this introduction.

#### BIBLICAL READINGS

84 In the word of God handed down in the Scriptures the community of faith even now hears God speaking to it. For this reason the biblical readings and their accompanying Scripture chants may not be omitted, shortened, or replaced by non-biblical texts.<sup>98</sup>

85 The proclamation of the gospel reading is the high point of the liturgy of the word. The other readings in their established sequence from the Old and New Testaments prepare the assembly for this proclamation.<sup>99</sup>

86 The principles governing the selection and distribution of these readings are explained in the Introduction to the Lectionary.

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<sup>97</sup>See GIRM, no. 8; see LM, no. 10.

<sup>98</sup>See GIRM, no. 33; see LM, no. 12.

<sup>99</sup>See LM, no. 13.

- When a prayerful silence is observed before or after a reading, the whole assembly is to take part in it. The reader does not move to or from the ambo during the period of silence.
- The liturgy of the word may, when it would be helpful, be introduced by a brief word on the background of the readings. Such comments, whether from the priest or another minister, should always be succinct and well prepared.<sup>100</sup>
- The readings may be sung, provided the form of singing respects the rhythms and genius of the language and does not obscure the words.
- The conclusion to the first and second readings *The word of the Lord* may be sung, even by someone other than the reader, so as to elicit from the faithful a sung response of gratitude for the word of God.<sup>101</sup>

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

87 The responsorial psalm follows the first reading and is an integral part of the liturgy of the word. After hearing and taking to heart God's word, the assembly responds with words which are themselves God-given. Words which have expressed the faith and feelings of God's people over the centuries are selected by the Church to express the appropriate response, whether of wonder and praise, repentance and sorrow, hope and trust, or joy and exultation.

88 The assembly is to be helped and encouraged to discern God's word in the psalms, to adopt them as their own prayer, and to experience them as the prayer of the Church.

- The psalms, the songs and hymns of Israel, are normally sung. This may be done in a variety of ways. The preferred form is responsorial, in which the psalmist or cantor sings the verses and the whole assembly takes up the response. In the direct form, which is also permitted, there is no intervening response and the cantor, or the whole assembly together, sings the verses consecutively.<sup>102</sup>
- But if other ways of singing or sharing the psalms are appropriate, they too are used,<sup>103</sup> so that the people's participation may be facilitated by every means.
- Even when it is impossible to sing the psalm, it may be possible to support and enrich its recitation with instrumental music.<sup>104</sup> Psalms should always be recited in a manner conducive to meditation.
- The common responsorial psalms, provided in the Lectionary for various seasons, may be used instead of the one assigned for the day, if that choice would facilitate sung participation.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> See LM, no. 15.

<sup>101</sup> See LM, no. 18.

<sup>102</sup> See LM, no. 20.

<sup>103</sup> See LM, no. 21.

<sup>104</sup> See LM, no. 22.

<sup>105</sup> See GIRM, no. 36; see LM, no. 89.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

89 The *Alleluia* or gospel acclamation is an acclamation which expresses the people's greeting of the Lord and their faith in his presence as he addresses them in the gospel reading.<sup>106</sup>

90 The gospel acclamation has traditionally accompanied the gospel procession, in which the Book of Gospels is carried to the ambo accompanied by lights and incense.

- The *Alleluia* or gospel acclamation looks forward to the gospel reading. It does not respond to the previous reading, from which it is separated by a distinct pause.
- If incense is to be used at the gospel reading, it is prepared after the second reading and before the gospel procession.
- The deacon who is to proclaim the gospel reading bows before the priest celebrant and asks for a blessing. If a priest reads the gospel, he bows before the altar and silently recites the prescribed prayer.
- The assembly stands while the procession moves to the ambo and the *Alleluia* is sung.
- As an acclamation, the *Alleluia* or gospel acclamation is sung by everyone present. The verse may be sung by cantor or choir (or even recited). If the acclamation cannot be sung, it is omitted.<sup>107</sup>

## GOSPEL READING

91 Because the proclamation of the gospel reading is the high point of the liturgy of the word, it is distinguished from the other readings by special marks of honour. Its proclamation is reserved to a deacon or, in his absence, a priest. The one who proclaims the gospel reading prepares himself, the deacon by receiving a blessing, the priest by prayer. The people stand to hear the gospel reading and acclaim Christ present and speaking to them. Servers with candles may stand on each side of the ambo, and the book may be incensed before the text is proclaimed. If the Book of Gospels is used, it is carried in procession from the altar to the ambo.<sup>108</sup>

- The proclamation of the gospel reading is never omitted, even at Masses with children at which an abbreviated liturgy of the word is permitted.<sup>109</sup>
- The gospel reading is proclaimed by a deacon. If no deacon is present, it is proclaimed by a priest other than the one presiding. Only if no deacon or other priest is present is it to be read by the priest who presides.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> See LM, no. 23.

<sup>107</sup> See LM, no. 23; see GIRM, no. 39.

<sup>108</sup> See GIRM, no. 35.

<sup>109</sup> See DMC, no. 42: AAS 66 (1974), p. 42.

<sup>110</sup> See GIRM, no. 34.

- The deacon (or priest) greets the people with *The Lord be with you*, and while announcing the gospel passage he makes the sign of the cross first on the book, then on his forehead, lips, and breast. The faithful also sign themselves in this way and then respond, *Glory to you, Lord*.<sup>111</sup>
- Even if the gospel reading itself is not sung, it may be helpful to sing the greeting and title of the gospel reading at the beginning and *The gospel of the Lord* at the end, so as to allow the people to sing their acclamation.<sup>112</sup> On more solemn occasions, it may be appropriate to repeat the sung *Alleluia* at the end of the gospel reading.

## HOMILY

92 The homily is an integral part of the liturgy and a necessary source of nourishment for the Christian life. By means of it the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of Christian living are expounded, most often from the Scriptures proclaimed but also from the other texts and rites of the liturgy.<sup>113</sup>

93 In the readings God's word is accessible to people of every age and condition, but the homily as a living explanation of the word increases its impact by assisting the faithful to assimilate it and apply it in their lives. It leads them from contemplation of the word to profound appropriation of the mystery of Christ and his sacrifice in a more wholehearted celebration of the eucharist and in their daily lives.<sup>114</sup>

94 If it is to fulfil its purpose, the homily must be the fruit of meditation, carefully prepared, and in length, style, and content sensitively adapted to the needs and capacities of all present.<sup>115</sup> This may well be more easily achieved if the priest prepares the homily in shared reflection and prayer with members or representatives of the congregation.

- On Sundays and holydays there must be a homily at all Masses celebrated with a congregation; it may not be omitted without a serious reason.<sup>116</sup>
- A homily is strongly recommended on the weekdays of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter and on other occasions when people come in considerable numbers. For the benefit of those people who are regular participants, and because it is indeed an integral part of the liturgy, a homily is appropriate at almost all Masses with a congregation.<sup>117</sup>
- The homily is ordinarily given by the priest who presides. A deacon or, at a concelebration, one of the concelebrating priests may be invited to preach.<sup>118</sup> On particular occasions someone besides a priest or deacon may be invited to preach the word of God. At Masses for children, for example, one of the adults better able to communicate with children may be asked to speak after

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<sup>111</sup> See GIRM, no. 95.

<sup>112</sup> See LM, no. 17.

<sup>113</sup> See GIRM, no. 41; see SC, art. 52.

<sup>114</sup> See GIRM, no. 9; see LM, no. 24.

<sup>115</sup> See GIRM, nos. 41, 73, 313; see LM, no. 24.

<sup>116</sup> See GIRM, no. 42; see LM, no. 25.

<sup>117</sup> See LM, no. 25.

<sup>118</sup> See GIRM, nos. 42, 61, 165.

the gospel reading.<sup>119</sup> Such preaching has its own importance, though it is not a homily. The one who gives the homily or speaks at this point should be a participant in the entire celebration and so experience the proclamation of the word on which the preaching is based and the consummation of the celebration in eucharistic communion.

- The priest celebrant gives the homily while standing or sitting at his chair or from the ambo.<sup>120</sup> Other homilists use the ambo. In particular circumstances, such as in an unrenovated church or at a celebration with children, the homilist may need to approach closer to the congregation in order to communicate effectively.
- The custom of beginning and ending the homily with the sign of the cross arose when the sermon was somewhat detached from the liturgy of the Mass. The practice is now inadvisable.<sup>121</sup>
- It is most appropriate that a period of silence follow the homily, so that the people may take the word of God to heart and prepare a response to it in prayer.<sup>122</sup>
- If catechumens are present, they may be kindly dismissed before the profession of faith in order to go and reflect together on the word proclaimed. Texts for this dismissal are provided in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*.<sup>123</sup>

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

95 In the profession of faith, the people respond and give their assent to the word of God heard in the readings and the homily. And before they celebrate the mystery of faith in the eucharist, they call to mind the rule of faith in a formulary approved by the Church.<sup>124</sup>

- The profession of faith is recited by priest and people together on Sundays and solemnities. It may also be said at other solemn celebrations.<sup>125</sup>
- The form customarily to be used is the Nicene Creed. At Masses with children, and where it is authorised at Masses with adults, the Apostles' Creed may be used. The Apostles' Creed is provided in two forms, one for recitation straight through, the other in the form of question and response.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> See DMC, no. 24: AAS 66 (1974), pp. 37-38.

<sup>120</sup> See LM, no. 26.

<sup>121</sup> See Congregation for Divine Worship, Reply, *Notitiae* 9 (1973), p. 178.

<sup>122</sup> See LM, no. 28.

<sup>123</sup> See The Roman Ritual, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 2nd English edition, 1985 (hereafter, RCIA), no. 67.

<sup>124</sup> See LM, no. 29.

<sup>125</sup> See GIRM, no. 44.

<sup>126</sup> See DMC, nos. 39, 49: AAS 66 (1974), pp. 41-42, 44.

- At the Easter Vigil, and at Masses in which baptism or confirmation is celebrated, the profession of faith is replaced by the renewal of baptismal promises. The renewal of baptismal promises may also replace the profession of faith at the Masses of Easter Sunday.<sup>127</sup> In Masses that include acceptance into the order of catechumens and in ritual Masses for the election or enrollment of names or for the scrutinies, the profession of faith may be omitted.<sup>128</sup>
- The origin and nature of the creed indicate that it is more naturally recited than sung. If it is sung, it should be in a way that involves the entire assembly.
- In the Nicene Creed, a profound bow is made by all at the phrase that begins *was incarnate of the Holy Spirit*.

## GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

96 Enlightened and moved by God's word, the assembly exercises its priestly function by interceding for all humanity. Because "the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of the people of this age and especially of the poor and those suffering in any way are the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of Christ's disciples,"<sup>129</sup> the Church prays not just for its own needs but for the salvation of the world, for civil authorities, for those oppressed by any burden, and for the local community, particularly those who are sick or who have died.<sup>130</sup>

97 Thus, even though the intercessions may be quite concrete or particular in content, they should always look beyond the concerns of the local assembly to the needs of the whole Church and of the wider world. As such, they are a sign of the communion of the particular assembly with all other assemblies and with the universal Church.

98 The priest celebrant directs the prayer from the chair. He briefly invites the people to pray, and at the end he draws their intercessions together in a brief concluding prayer. The intentions are proposed by a deacon, another minister, or members of the assembly at the ambo or another suitable place. After each intention, the faithful respond by silent prayer or a common response or both. They affirm the concluding prayer of the priest with their *Amen*.<sup>131</sup>

- The general intercessions are ordinarily included in all Masses.<sup>132</sup>
- Both the priest's introduction and the proposed intentions are addressed to the assembly, not to God. They are invitations or biddings to the faithful, who then pray for the suggested intention in the silence of their hearts and in a common petition.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> See Renewal of Baptismal Promises, The Easter Vigil, page 361, and Easter Day, page 370.

<sup>128</sup> See RCIA, nos. 68, 124, 143, 157, 164.

<sup>129</sup> Vatican Council II, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes*, 7 December 1965, no. 1.

<sup>130</sup> See LM, no. 30; see GIRM, nos. 45, 46.

<sup>131</sup> See GIRM, no. 47; see LM, no. 31.

<sup>132</sup> See GIRM, nos. 45, 220.

<sup>133</sup> See GIRM, no. 47.

- These intentions should be short, clear, and objective enough for the faithful to comprehend and respond to them without difficulty.
- The response they are to evoke is petition rather than praise, thanksgiving, or repentance.
- On particular occasions, when other sacraments or particular rites are celebrated in conjunction with the Mass, the range of intentions may be more closely concerned with the occasion; but even so, the intercessions should always include some general or universal intentions.<sup>134</sup>
- For each intention, the invitation to pray and the response may be sung or the entire intention may be sung or even spoken while music is played.
- Those who propose the intentions return to their place only after the completion of the concluding prayer.

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<sup>134</sup> See GIRM, no. 46.

## IV. LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

99 At the Last Supper, Christ instituted the sacrifice and paschal meal that make the sacrifice of the cross present in the Church. From the days of the apostles the Church has celebrated that sacrifice by carrying out what the Lord did and handed over to his disciples to do in his memory. Like him, it has taken bread and wine, given thanks to God over them, broken the bread, and shared the bread and cup of blessing as the body and blood of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 10:16). The Church's eucharist, in all its rich variety of forms and traditions, has always retained this basic shape: the taking of the elements of bread and wine in the preparation of the gifts, the act of thanksgiving in the eucharistic prayer, the breaking of the bread, the giving and sharing of the body and blood of Christ in communion.<sup>135</sup>

### PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

100 At the beginning of the liturgy of the eucharist the gifts that will become the Lord's body and blood are brought to the altar. This taking of bread and wine is a preparation of the gifts. It is not in itself the sacrifice or offering, but a preparation for the eucharistic prayer, the great act of blessing and thanksgiving, which constitutes the Church's memorial offering of Christ's sacrifice, and for communion.<sup>136</sup>

101 The Church encourages the faithful to bring forward, and even to provide, the elements through which Christ's offering will be made present, together with money and other gifts for the sustenance of Christ's body, especially in the poor and the needy.

102 The purpose of this rite, then, is to make the altar, the gifts which are placed on it, and the assembly ready for the eucharistic offering which is to follow.

### PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR

103 First, the altar, the Lord's table, is prepared as the centre of the eucharistic liturgy. Until this point in the celebration, with the exception of its veneration at the beginning, the altar has not been the focus of attention. It remains almost bare and unused during the liturgy of the word, which is centred at the ambo. Now the setting is prepared for the sacred meal.<sup>137</sup>

- Everything indicates that a new and important stage of the liturgy is about to commence. Lighting may be directed toward the altar. A corporal is laid out of sufficient size to accommodate all the vessels that may be brought to the altar now and at the time of communion.
- The corporal, purificators, and Sacramentary are requisites needed for the eucharistic offering. They are not themselves offerings or gifts and are not brought up in the procession of gifts. They should be brought reverently but without ceremony from a side table, along with the cup if it will be prepared at the altar.

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<sup>135</sup> See GIRM, no. 48.

<sup>136</sup> See GIRM, no. 49.

<sup>137</sup> See GIRM, nos. 49, 272.

- Since these are preparatory tasks, they are carried out by a deacon, acolyte, or other minister, or other members of the assembly.

## PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

104 It is one of the Church’s most ancient customs that the people themselves provided the materials for the eucharist. They also brought other foodstuffs to be blessed for their own use and for the poor. The rite of carrying up the gifts continues the spiritual value and meaning of the ancient custom. This is also the time to bring forward money or gifts for the poor and the Church.<sup>138</sup>

105 The procession with the gifts is a powerful expression of the assembly’s participation in the eucharist and in the social mission of the Church. It is an expression of the humble and contrite heart, the dispossession of self that is a necessary prerequisite for making the true offering which the Lord Jesus gave his people to make with him. The procession with the gifts expresses also our eager willingness to enter into the “holy exchange” with God: “accept the offerings you have given us, that we in turn may receive the gift of yourself.”<sup>139</sup>

- The collection of money takes place first. As an integral part of the eucharistic liturgy since apostolic times, its purpose and value will be better appreciated if, after the general intercessions, the priest celebrant, ministers, and people all sit and wait while the collection is taken and then made ready with the other gifts for the procession. The collection is not to be taken during the profession of faith or the general intercessions, nor should it continue during the prayer over the gifts or the eucharistic prayer. Music or song may begin with the collection and continue during the procession of gifts; it continues at least until the gifts have been placed on the altar.
- The elements of bread and wine are carried in the procession in vessels that can be seen by all the assembly. So far as is possible, the bread and wine should each be contained in a single vessel, so that priest and people may be seen to be sharing the same food and drink in the sacrament of unity.
- The gifts of bread, wine, and money are carried forward by members of the congregation. It is more expressive of the assembly’s identification with the gifts if the procession passes right through the assembly. The gifts are accepted by the priest, who may be assisted by the deacon and other ministers. The collection of money and other gifts are deposited near the altar or in another suitable place. The priest places only the vessels containing the bread and wine on the altar.<sup>140</sup>
- Besides money, gifts in kind and other real gifts for the poor are appropriate, but not token items that will be retrieved and returned to ordinary use after the celebration.

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<sup>138</sup> See GIRM, no. 49.

<sup>139</sup> See 29 December, prayer over the gifts.

<sup>140</sup> See GIRM, no. 49.

- The purpose of any music at this point is to accompany the collection, the procession, and the presentation of gifts, particularly when these will occupy a considerable period of time. Sung texts need not speak of bread and wine, nor of offering. Texts expressing joy, praise, community, as well as the spirit of the season, are appropriate. Since the presentation of gifts is preparatory, instrumental music or silence may often be more effective.

### *Placing of the Gifts on the Altar*

106 The formularies accompanying the placing of the gifts on the altar are based upon Jewish table-prayers. They are an expression of praise of God for the creation of the world and for human collaboration in the production of bread and wine that will become the medium of Christ's presence in the midst of the assembly.

- The priest holds the vessel containing the bread slightly above the altar and blesses God. He places the bread on the altar. He then holds the cup in the same way, blesses God, and places the cup on the altar.
- Since the taking of bread and wine is expressed primarily by the action, normally both formularies will be uttered inaudibly. If there is no music, the priest may say them aloud. In this case, the people may respond with the acclamation, *Blessed be God for ever*. The two formularies should be seen as a unit; it should never happen that one is said inaudibly, the other aloud.

### *Mixing of Wine and Water*

107 In the ancient world, wine was regularly tempered with water. In time this functional practice during the eucharist came to be interpreted mystically as symbolising either the hypostatic union or the union of Christ and the Church. Both understandings are included in the formula *By the mystery of this water and wine*, which is derived from an ancient Christmas collect.

- The preparation of the cup is a function of the deacon. When no deacon is present, the priest prepares the cup. The one who prepares the cup says the prayer *By the mystery* inaudibly.<sup>141</sup>
- The cup may be prepared<sup>142</sup> at the side table before the bread and wine are placed on the altar.

### *Incense*

108 Incense may be used at the preparation of the gifts to honour the elements and to acknowledge the presence and action of Christ in the priest celebrant, the ministers, and the rest of the assembly.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup>See GIRM, no. 133.

<sup>142</sup>See GIRM, no. 133.

<sup>143</sup>See GIRM, no. 133.

- The priest incenses the gifts and the altar. The deacon or other minister incenses the priest and the rest of the assembly.
- When the members of the assembly, including the other ministers, are incensed at this time, they stand.

### *Washing of Hands*

109 Though historically it may have been a practical necessity for the priest to wash his hands after assembling and arranging the elements of bread and wine and incensing them, the washing of hands was well known in early Christianity, as in Judaism, as a symbolic expression of the need for inner purity at the beginning of a religious action.

- For the sake of authenticity, this action needs to be performed with dignity and deliberation. An appreciable quantity of water is poured from a jug and the hands are dried with a towel.
- The words from Psalm 51, like the previous formulary *With humble and contrite hearts*, are an expression of the priest's personal preparation and are not pronounced audibly.

### PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

110 The prayer over the gifts concludes the preparation of the gifts and points forward to the eucharistic prayer.

- The priest invites the people to pray using either the formulary *Pray brothers and sisters* or simply *Let us pray*.
- The prayer may be sung or said; the assembly responds, *Amen*.
- After concluding the prayer over the gifts, the priest should make a distinct pause to make clear that the preparation of the gifts (the "taking") is complete and that the eucharistic prayer (the "giving thanks") is now about to begin.

### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

111 The eucharistic prayer, the centre and summit of the entire celebration, sums up what it means for the Church to celebrate the eucharist. It is a memorial proclamation of praise and thanksgiving for God's work of salvation, a proclamation in which the body and blood of Christ are made present by the power of the Holy Spirit and the people are joined to Christ in offering his sacrifice to the Father. The eucharistic prayer is proclaimed by the priest celebrant in the name of Christ and on behalf of the whole assembly, which professes its faith and gives its assent through dialogue, acclamations, and the *Amen*.<sup>144</sup> Since the eucharistic prayer is the summit of the Mass, its solemn nature and importance are enhanced when it is sung.

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<sup>144</sup>See GIRM, no. 54.

112 The eucharistic prayer is proclaimed over the people's gifts. In the rich and varied tradition of this prayer, the Church gives praise and thanks for God's holiness and justice and for all God's mighty deeds in creating and redeeming the human race, deeds which reached their climax in the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the eucharistic prayer the mystery of Christ's saving death and resurrection is recalled; the Last Supper is recounted; the memorial sacrifice of his body and blood is presented to the Father; and the Holy Spirit is invoked to sanctify the gifts and transform those who partake of them into the body of Christ, uniting the assembly and the whole Church and family of God, living and dead, into one communion of love, service, and praise to the glory of the Father.

113 The following eucharistic prayers are provided in the Sacramentary.

- Eucharistic Prayers I-IV are the principal prayers and are for use throughout the liturgical year.
- Eucharistic Prayers for Masses of Reconciliation I and II express thanksgiving in the context of the reconciliation won by Christ. They are particularly appropriate for use during the season of Lent and may be used at other times when the mystery of reconciliation is reflected in the readings or other texts of the Mass or is the reason for a particular gathering of the faithful.<sup>145</sup>
- Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children I-III may be used at Masses when children constitute a significant proportion of the assembly. These texts are for the purpose of enhancing the participation of children in this central prayer of the Mass and of preparing them to take full part in Masses with adults.<sup>146</sup> The eucharistic prayers for children, with their variety of acclamations, will be most effective in engaging the children when sung. The three prayers use different levels of language. Prayer I may be more suitable for those only recently introduced to the eucharist. Prayers II and III may be more appropriate as children grow in sacramental awareness and in familiarity with the eucharistic liturgy. The texts are rich in catechetical themes which may be drawn upon when preparing children for the eucharistic celebration and as the basis for reflecting with them afterward on, for example, the nature of the eucharist as thanksgiving for creation and salvation, the role of the Spirit and the real presence of Christ in the eucharist and the Church, the concepts of sacrifice, sacrament, and meal.
- The Eucharistic Prayer for Masses for Various Needs and Occasions may be used in various circumstances. Its proper prefaces and closely related intercessions make it particularly suited to use with the formularies of the Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, which do not have their own proper prefaces.<sup>147</sup>

114 The following elements may be recognised as characteristic of the eucharistic prayer. They do not all appear with equal force in every eucharistic prayer.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> See Congregation for Divine Worship, *Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children and for Masses of Reconciliation*, 1 November 1974 (hereafter, EPCR), Introduction, nos. 1-2.

<sup>146</sup> See EPCR, no. 1; see DMC, no. 52: AAS 66 (1974), pp. 44-45.

<sup>147</sup> See Eucharistic Prayer for Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, 6 August 1991, Introduction, no. 1.

<sup>148</sup> See GIRM, no. 55.

## *Dialogue*

115 Since the celebration of Mass is a communal action, the dialogue between priest celebrant and the assembly is of special value. It is not only an external sign of communal celebration, but also the means of greater interchange between priest and people.<sup>149</sup> The dialogue establishes at the outset that the eucharistic prayer is prayed in the person and power of the Lord who is with the Church, and in the name of the whole assembly and indeed of the whole Church in heaven and on earth. All are invited, in biblical terms, to lift up their hearts, that is, to raise up and place in God's presence their entire being, thoughts, memories, emotions, and expectations, in grateful attention and anticipation.

- The voice, gestures, and stance, the entire demeanour of the priest celebrant help to convey the importance and the urgency of this movement, lifting the assembly and stimulating it to gratitude and wonder. This may be most effectively achieved by singing.
- Before the dialogue, the priest may introduce the eucharistic prayer by suggesting very briefly particular motives for thanksgiving.<sup>150</sup>

## *Preface*

116 The praise and thanksgiving from which the entire eucharist takes its name is especially concentrated in the "preface," which proclaims the Church's thanks for the saving work of God. In the Eastern tradition this is a fixed part of the eucharistic prayer, beginning the praise of God and the rehearsal of God's mighty deeds that continue throughout the prayer. In the Roman tradition the preface has been a variable element, stressing one aspect of God's saving work according to the day, the feast, the season, or the occasion. Over eighty such prefaces from ancient and more recent sources are provided for use with Eucharistic Prayers I, II, and III.<sup>151</sup>

- The preface is not a preliminary to the eucharistic prayer, but the first part of it. It indicates a proclamation, a speaking out before God and the faithful, rather than a foreword or prelude. For this reason it is most appropriately sung.
- The eucharistic prayer is always expressed in the first person plural. It is the whole assembly of the faithful that joins itself to Christ in acknowledging the great things God has done and in offering the sacrifice, even when one voice speaks in the name of all. It is the responsibility of the priest, acting in the person of Christ, the head of the Church, to proclaim the prayer with and for the people, to engage their attention, and to elicit their involvement throughout.<sup>152</sup>
- Eucharistic Prayer II has a proper preface, based like the rest of the prayer on an ancient Roman model, but other prefaces may be substituted for it, especially those which similarly present the mystery of salvation.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> See GIRM, no. 14.

<sup>150</sup> See GIRM, no. 11.

<sup>151</sup> See GIRM, no. 55:1.

<sup>152</sup> See GIRM, nos. 7 and 54.

<sup>153</sup> See GIRM, no. 322:2.

- Eucharistic Prayer IV is constructed on an Eastern model. Its preface is a fixed and integral part of the prayer, whose themes continue beyond the *Sanctus*. For this reason, it is always to be used with its own preface. This is also true of the eucharistic prayers in the section, Eucharistic Prayers in Particular Circumstances.

### *Sanctus Acclamation*

117 In this acclamation the assembly joins its voice to that of all creation in giving glory to God, with words inspired by the vision of Isaiah (6:3). In each celebration of the eucharist, the Church is taken up into the eternal liturgy in which the entire communion of saints, the heavenly powers, and all of creation give praise to the God of the universe.

- This acclamation is an integral part of the eucharistic prayer. It belongs to priest and people together. Of its very nature it is a song and is meant to be sung, even if the preface is not. Choir or cantor parts may also be sung if they facilitate and enhance the congregation's participation.<sup>154</sup>

### *Epiclesis*

118 In these sections of the prayer, before and after the narrative of institution, the Church invokes God's Spirit to hallow the gifts and make them the body and blood of Christ and to gather those who receive them into a true communion of faith and love. Through the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit the repetition of the Lord's words of institution is efficacious, the memorial of Christ's death and resurrection is effected, and the Church is built up again as the body of Christ in the world.<sup>155</sup>

- The lifegiving power of the Spirit, who moved over the waters in the first days of creation and overshadowed Mary in the moment of the incarnation, is vividly expressed by the ancient gesture of the bringing together of the hands with the palms downward and extended over the elements to be consecrated. When done with great gravity and deliberation, this gesture can reinforce powerfully the understanding of the words and of the Spirit's action. This is a laying on of the hands and is the same sacramental gesture used in ordination, confirmation, the anointing of the sick, and the sacrament of reconciliation.
- In accord with ancient tradition, if there are concelebrating priests, they stretch out both their hands toward the elements. The full impact of this gesture can be achieved if the concelebrants adopt the same gesture as the presiding priest.<sup>156</sup>

### *Institution Narrative and Consecration*

119 At the heart of the eucharistic prayer, the account of the Last Supper is recited. Everything for which God has been thanked and praised, all that was accomplished in the history of salvation, is summed up and made present in the person of the crucified and risen Lord. The words of Jesus, in which he gave himself to his disciples as their food and drink, are repeated in the context of praise. In the power

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<sup>154</sup> See GIRM, no. 55:2.

<sup>155</sup> See GIRM, no. 55:3.

<sup>156</sup> See GIRM, no. 174:1.

of the Spirit, these words achieve what they promise and express: the presence of Christ and his sacrifice among his people assembled.<sup>157</sup>

- This narrative is an integral part of the one continuous prayer of thanksgiving and blessing. It should be proclaimed in a manner which does not separate it from its context of praise and thanksgiving.
- As a narrative it is also recited for the benefit of the assembly. It should therefore be proclaimed reverently, audibly, and intelligibly.
- On concluding the words over the bread, the priest shows the consecrated bread to the people, and subsequently does the same with the cup. The scale of the gesture will be indicated by the size and situation of the assembly. The gesture should be deliberate and reverent, but not prolonged; this would affect the unity and continuity of the eucharistic prayer.

### *Memorial Acclamation*

120 The memorial acclamation of the people in the eucharistic prayer confesses the Church's belief in the central mystery of our faith, the paschal mystery of Christ's death, resurrection, and presence among his people.

- The four memorial acclamations provided are not specific to the four eucharistic prayers; each may be used with any of the prayers.
- Each of the acclamations has a particular invitation. This invitation is directed to the assembly and helps indicate which acclamation is to follow. The invitation may be given by the priest celebrant or the deacon.
- As acclamations they are intended to be sung.

### *Anamnesis and Offering*

121 The whole action of the eucharist is done in obedience to the Lord's command, as a memorial of him. The Church understands this memorial as a living representation before God of the saving deeds which God has accomplished in Christ, so that their fullness and power may be effective here and now. In this memorial representation, the Church offers the one sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, a sacramental offering of the sacrifice made "once for all" by Christ, the "holy and living sacrifice" that "brings salvation to all the world." It is an offering made by the whole Church, but especially by those here and now assembled who, in the power of the Holy Spirit, offer themselves with and through Christ, the Victim and Priest who joins the Church's offering to his own.<sup>158</sup>

### *Intercessions*

122 By the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Church has become a single offering in Christ to the glory of God the Father. It now prays that the fruits of this sacrifice may be experienced throughout the Church and the world. (In Eucharistic Prayer I, the intercessions are divided, some before, some after the institution narrative.) The blessed Virgin Mary and the saints are named as the prime examples of the fruits of this redemptive sacrifice and as forerunners in the communion of the living and the dead. Praying in communion with Mary and the other saints of God, the

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<sup>157</sup> See GIRM, no. 55:4.

<sup>158</sup> See GIRM, no. 55:5 and 6.

assembly now intercedes for the living and the dead in union with the Lord, who for ever lives to make intercession (see Hebrews 7:25).<sup>159</sup>

- The saints enumerated in Eucharistic Prayer I are, besides the outstanding figures of the apostolic Church, the heroes and martyrs of the local Church of Rome who do not necessarily enjoy universal significance or particular devotion elsewhere in the Church. Their names may be omitted from Eucharistic Prayer I. On the other hand, local patrons or saints whose feast or memory is being celebrated may be mentioned in the intercessions of Eucharistic Prayer III.<sup>160</sup>
- If all of the bracketed saints in Eucharistic Prayer I are omitted, the commemoration becomes restricted to male saints only, with the exception of Mary the Mother of God. The names should be selected in such a way that male and female saints are included.

### *Doxology*

123 Faithful to the Jewish pattern of prayer known and used by Jesus and his disciples, the eucharistic prayer concludes where it began, with an ascription of praise and glory to God, which is endorsed and ratified by all present in their acclamation *Amen*. Saint Paul considered this ratification by the assembly to be essential to the thanksgiving prayer (see 1 Corinthians 14:15-16), and early Christian writers laid great stress on it as the people's confirmation of all that was proclaimed on their behalf by the priest.<sup>161</sup>

124 Through Christ, with him, and in him, all is turned to the Father's glory by the action of the Holy Spirit. At this climax of the prayer the consecrated elements are raised high in a gesture that vividly expresses the true nature of the eucharistic sacrifice as the offering of the Church through Christ the High Priest, with Christ, who is really present in the Church, in Christ, who has incorporated his people into himself by the action of the Holy Spirit.

- The profound importance of the assembly's ratification and acclamation can be difficult to bring out in the one short word *Amen*. At the very least it should be sung or spoken loudly both at the Sunday celebration and at simpler weekday celebrations. Musical settings which prolong the *Amen* or repeat it or even intersperse it between the phrases of the doxology sung by the priest can all help the assembly to experience and express its true power.
- At the conclusion of the eucharistic prayer, the priest should make a distinct pause to make clear that the eucharistic prayer (the "giving thanks") is complete and that the communion rite (the "breaking and sharing") is about to begin.

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<sup>159</sup> See GIRM, no. 55:7.

<sup>160</sup> See GNLYC, no. 49.

<sup>161</sup> See GIRM, no. 55:8.

## COMMUNION RITE

125 The eating and drinking together of the Lord's body and blood in a paschal meal is the culmination of the eucharist. The assembly is made ready to share in this banquet by a series of rites that lead from the eucharistic prayer directly to the communion. The themes underlying these rites are the mutual love and reconciliation that are both the condition and the fruit of worthy communion and the unity of the many in the one symbolised at both the natural and the sacramental level in the elements of bread and wine.<sup>162</sup>

- Though each of these rites (the Lord's Prayer, sign of peace, breaking of the bread) is important in itself, in the context of the whole celebration they constitute together a transition from one high point, the eucharistic prayer, to another, the sharing in communion. Their musical treatment should not be so elaborate as to give the impression that they are of greater significance than the giving thanks which precedes them or the eating and drinking which follows them and which is accompanied by communal song.

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

126 The community of the baptised is constituted as the family of God by the Spirit of adoption. In the fullness of this Spirit, who has once again been invoked upon it, the assembly calls on God as Father. Because of its themes of daily bread and mutual forgiveness, the Lord's Prayer has been used in all liturgical traditions as a most appropriate preparation for communion, "so that what is holy may be given to those who are holy."<sup>163</sup> The final petition is expanded into a prayer that concludes with the congregational doxology or acclamation *For the kingdom*, which was appended to the Lord's Prayer in some of the earliest liturgical texts and in texts of the New Testament.

- As the family prayer of all God's children, the Lord's Prayer belongs to the whole assembly. When sung, it is sung by everyone together. In this case, it will normally be desirable for the priest to sing the embolism that follows and for the priest and people together to sing the concluding acclamation *For the kingdom*.

### SIGN OF PEACE

127 A ritual kiss is mentioned in the oldest writings of the New Testament and is found in the eucharistic liturgy from the earliest days of the Church (see Romans 16:16). In most traditions it occurs before the presentation of gifts and is understood as a manifestation of that mutual love and reconciliation that Jesus called for before the offering of sacrifice (see Matthew 5:23). Eventually in the Roman tradition it found its place after the Lord's Prayer, whose themes of mutual forgiveness it echoes. In the early Church it was described as a "seal" placed on prayer.

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<sup>162</sup> See GIRM, no. 56.

<sup>163</sup> GIRM, no. 56:1.

128 The biblical concept of peace includes total well-being, a life in harmony with God and with ourselves, with our neighbours and with the whole of creation. Such peace can only be the pure gift of God. It is won for us by the risen Christ, present in the midst of the assembly, and so it is the peace of Christ that is exchanged.

129 The exchange of peace prior to the reception of communion is an acknowledgement that Christ whom we receive in the sacrament is already present in our neighbour. In this exchange the assembly acknowledges the insistent gospel truth that communion with God in Christ is enjoyed in communion with our sisters and brothers in Christ. The rite of peace is not an expression merely of human solidarity or good will; it is rather an opening of ourselves and our neighbours to a challenge and a gift from beyond ourselves. Like the *Amen* at communion, it is the acceptance of a challenge, a profession of faith that we are members, one with another, in the body of Christ.

- The peace is always exchanged, though the invitation which introduces it is optional, and the gesture by which it is exchanged may be determined by the conference of bishops in accord with the culture and customs of the people.<sup>164</sup>
- All the members of the assembly, ministers and people, turn to those immediately around them. It is not transmitted in sequence, as it were from a single source. Christ, who is its only source, is present and active in the assembly.
- The sign is sufficiently strong and expressive in itself not to need explanatory song or commentary.

## BREAKING OF THE BREAD

130 This characteristic action of Christ at the feeding of the multitude, at the Last Supper, and at his meals with the disciples after his resurrection was so central to the eucharist that it seems to have given its name to the entire celebration in the days of the apostles. The natural, the practical, the symbolic, and the spiritual are all inextricably linked in this most powerful symbol. Just as many grains of wheat are ground, kneaded, and baked together to become one loaf, which is then broken and shared out among many to bring them into one table-fellowship, so those gathered are made one body in the one bread of life which is Christ (see 1 Corinthians 10:17).

131 In order for the meaning of this symbolism to be perceived, both the bread and the breaking must be truly authentic and recognisable. The eucharistic bread is to “have the appearance of food” and is made so that it is able to be broken and distributed to at least some of the members of the assembly.<sup>165</sup>

- The faithful are not ordinarily to be given communion from the tabernacle with bread consecrated at a previous Mass.<sup>166</sup> When, for genuine pastoral reasons, for example, the late arrival of unexpected numbers, the bread consecrated at the Mass must be supplemented with reserved consecrated bread

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<sup>164</sup> See GIRM, no. 56:2.

<sup>165</sup> See GIRM, no. 283.

<sup>166</sup> See SC, art. 55; see *EuchMyst*, nos. 31-32: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 557-559; see GIRM, no. 56:8.

from the tabernacle, this may be brought reverently but without ceremony from the tabernacle to the altar at the breaking of the bread.

- The breaking of the bread is done with dignity and deliberation. It begins after the exchange of peace is completely finished, and the attention of the assembly is again focused on the action taking place at the holy table.
- The regular use of larger breads will foster an awareness of the fundamental eucharistic symbolism in which the whole assembly, priest and people, share in the same bread. At every Mass at least one large bread is broken into several portions. One of these portions is consumed by the priest, the rest are distributed to at least some other members of the assembly.
- During the breaking of the bread, the *Agnus Dei* is sung or said. The assembly calls on Jesus as the Lamb of God (see John 1:29, 36) who has conquered sin and death (see 1 Peter 1:18; Book of Revelation 5:6, 13:8). The *Agnus Dei* is a litany-song intended to accompany the action of breaking and may therefore be prolonged by repetition or by the insertion of invocations to Christ. It loses its entire purpose if a perfunctory breaking of bread is already completed before the *Agnus Dei* has even begun.
- If additional vessels are needed for the distribution of communion, they may be brought to the altar at this point. The consecrated bread is then divided among the plates or dishes and the consecrated wine is poured into the cups.
- If special ministers are to assist at communion, it is desirable that they come to the altar after the exchange of peace, in order to assist with the preparation of the vessels and the eucharistic elements.

## COMMUNION

### *Private Preparation of the Priest*

132 The prayer for the private preparation of the priest is recited inaudibly. At this time the faithful prepare themselves quietly and in their own way for communion.<sup>167</sup>

### *Invitation to Communion*

133 The consecrated elements are extended toward the congregation, whose members are invited to communion with words that express the confidence of the baptised and to which they respond with the humility of the centurion (see Matthew 8:9).

- Several formulas are provided for the invitation. Like all other introductions and invitations, these may be adapted for particular feasts or occasions but should always end with a recognisable cue to elicit the people's response *Lord, I am not worthy*.
- The priest celebrant holds out the consecrated bread and wine to the people in a gesture that is inviting but dignified.

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<sup>167</sup>See GIRM, no. 56:6.

## *Distribution of Communion*

134 Faithful to the Lord's command to his disciples to "Take and eat," "Take and drink," the assembly completes the eucharistic action by eating and drinking together the elements consecrated during the celebration. It is for this reason that the faithful should not ordinarily be given communion from the tabernacle. Also for this reason, it is most desirable that the faithful share the cup. Drinking at the eucharist is a sharing in the sign of the new covenant (see Luke 22:20), a foretaste of the heavenly banquet (see Matthew 26:29), a sign of participation in the suffering Christ (see Mark 10:38-39).<sup>168</sup> Provision should be made for this fullest form of participation in accord with the conditions laid down by the conference of bishops.

135 Although a communion procession is not obligatory or always possible, it should be the normal arrangement for both practical and symbolic reasons. It expresses the humble patience of the poor moving forward to be fed, the alert expectancy of God's people sharing the paschal meal in readiness for their journey, the joyful confidence of God's people on the march toward the promised land.

136 All signs of discrimination or distinctions among persons at the Lord's table are to be avoided.

- There should be a sufficient number of ministers to assist in the distribution of communion. This will normally mean two ministers of the cup to each minister of the consecrated bread.
- It is desirable that all who minister the eucharist take full part in the entire liturgy and thus experience the proclamation of the word, the eucharistic prayer, and the consummation of the celebration in eucharistic communion.
- When communion is administered under both kinds, the deacon who ministers the cup is to receive from it after the assembly.<sup>169</sup> This expression of eucharistic hospitality and service may also be followed by all other communion ministers in order to facilitate the distribution of communion in a timely and orderly manner. If there are many concelebrating priests, the communion of the assembly should not be delayed but should be begun after the presiding celebrant has communicated. There is no need for all the concelebrating priests to finish receiving communion before to the assembly can commence.
- Since the conference of bishops allows the reception of the consecrated bread in the hand, the choice whether to receive in this manner is the prerogative of the communicant.
- The pastor or priest celebrant should see to the full and proper implementation of communion under both kinds in accordance with the provisions made by the conference of bishops. Even when communion is given under both kinds, however, the communicant may refrain from drinking from the cup.
- Should communion under both kinds sometimes be given in the form of intinction, the communicant may choose to receive under the form of bread only. When communion in the form of intinction is given, the following formula is said, "The body and blood of Christ," and the communicant responds, "Amen."<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> See GIRM, nos. 48:3, 56:8, 240, 241, 242.

<sup>169</sup> See GIRM, no. 137.

<sup>170</sup> See GIRM, no. 246.

- The manner of reception customary in the community is followed so that communion may truly be a sign of familial union between all who share in the same table of the Lord.<sup>171</sup>
- By tradition the deacon ministers the cup.<sup>172</sup> Beyond this, no distinctions are made in the assignment of the consecrated elements to particular ministers for distribution. Therefore when a concelebrating priest or priests and other ministers share in the distribution, the elements are not assigned on the basis of any distinction between the ministers, cleric or lay, male or female. All may minister either element. This avoids any seeming depreciation of one or other of the consecrated elements or of a particular ministry.

### *Communion Song*

137 The communion of priest and people is traditionally accompanied by the singing of a psalm with a simple congregational refrain. Any psalm or other song is appropriate which expresses the spiritual unity of the communicants, shows the joy of all, and makes the communion procession an act of union of brothers and sisters in Christ. In its structure and its simplicity, it should encourage the participation of the entire assembly.<sup>173</sup>

- The communion song begins immediately after the common recital of *Lord, I am not worthy*.
- So as not to encumber the assembly with books or scripts during the procession, the song may be led by cantor or choir and include a repeated response from the assembly.
- Although several communion songs may be sung in succession, depending on the length of communion, it may be preferable to balance singing with periods of silence or instrumental music.
- Many traditional eucharistic hymns were composed for benediction of the blessed sacrament. They concentrate on adoration rather than on the action of communion and may not be appropriate as communion songs.

### *Cleansing of Vessels*

138 When communion is completed, the altar table is cleared again. The cleansing of the eucharistic vessels is a functional task, appropriately described by the term “cleansing.”

- Although performed with reverence, it should be done briefly and inconspicuously and is preferably left until after Mass.
- If possible, this cleansing is carried out at the side table. Only as a last resort should it be done at the altar, and if so, at the side rather than at the centre.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> See *EuchMyst*, no. 34, a: AAS 59 (1967), p. 560.

<sup>172</sup> See GIRM nos. 61, 244.

<sup>173</sup> See GIRM, no. 56:9.

<sup>174</sup> See GIRM, nos. 120, 238.

## PERIOD OF SILENCE OR SONG OF PRAISE

139 When communion is completed, the whole assembly may observe a period of total silence. In the absence of all words, actions, music, or movement, a moment of deep corporate stillness and contemplation may be experienced. Such silence is important to the rhythm of the whole celebration and is welcome in a busy and restless world.

- Silence and true stillness can be achieved if all, the assembly and its ministers, take part in it.
- This period of deep and tranquil communion is not to be interrupted by parish announcements, which if needed come correctly in the concluding rite, or by the taking of a collection. Nor should this silence be broken or overlaid by the public reading of devotional material.
- As an alternative or addition to silent contemplation, a psalm or song of praise may be sung. Since there has already been singing during communion,<sup>175</sup> silence may be more desirable.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

140 In a final presidential prayer that brings to a close the communion rite, the community of faith asks that the spiritual effects of the eucharist be experienced in its members' lives.<sup>176</sup>

- The prayer may be sung or said; the assembly responds, *Amen*.

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<sup>175</sup> See GIRM, nos. 56:10, 121.

<sup>176</sup> See GIRM, no. 56:11.

## V. CONCLUDING RITE

141 After the communion rite, the Mass closes with a brief concluding rite. Its purpose is to send the people forth to put into effect in their daily lives the paschal mystery and the unity in Christ which they have celebrated. They are given a sense of abiding mission, which calls them to witness to Christ in the world and to bring the gospel to the poor.

142 The concluding rite consists of the priest celebrant's greeting and blessing, which on certain days and occasions is expanded by the prayer over the people or other solemn forms. This is followed by the dismissal and an orderly procession of the ministers and the assembly. The whole rite may be preceded by necessary but brief pastoral announcements.<sup>177</sup>

- When another liturgical rite is to follow immediately, for example, the final commendation at a funeral, the entire concluding rite is omitted because these other rites will have their own form of conclusion.<sup>178</sup>

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

143 Just as the introductory comments by the priest at the beginning of the celebration may help the assembly to a better appreciation and experience of the mysteries celebrated in the eucharist, so also the pastoral announcements at the end may help the people make the transition from worship into renewed Christian witness in society. They should help people become aware of the faith life and pastoral activity of the community and invite participation in the ongoing work of the Church.

- Ordinarily announcements, when required, should be brief enough for the assembly to remain standing.
- In order to respect the dignity of the ambo as the place of God's word, announcements are made from some other place.
- Announcements may be made by the deacon, by the priest if he prefers, or by another member of the community chosen for this purpose.<sup>179</sup>

### GREETING

144 The greeting *The Lord be with you* helps the assembly to focus attention again on the prayerful aspect of blessing.

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<sup>177</sup>See GIRM, nos. 57, 123, 124.

<sup>178</sup>See GIRM, no. 126.

<sup>179</sup>See GIRM, no. 139.

## BLESSING

145 As Scripture attests, all beings are created and kept in existence by God's gracious goodness. They are themselves blessings from God and should move us to bless God in return. This is above all true since the Word has come in flesh to make all things holy by the mystery of the incarnation.

146 Blessings, therefore, refer first and foremost to God, whose majesty and goodness they extol, and they involve human beings, whom God governs and by divine providence protects.<sup>180</sup>

- The priest celebrant is encouraged to give a more solemn form of blessing on Sundays and holy days. He may use either a solemn blessing or a prayer over the people. When either of these forms of blessing is used, it is the function of the deacon, after the greeting, to invite the people to dispose themselves in reverence to receive the blessing.
- In the case of the solemn blessing, the priest extends his hands over the people as he sings or says the formula of the blessing in such a way that the assembly is clearly invited to respond with an *Amen* to each invocation. The threefold solemn blessings touch upon various aspects of a feast or of divine graciousness and often they affirm the mission of the eucharistic assembly.
- In the case of a prayer over the people, which by contrast is simpler and more general in content, the priest uses the same gesture of extending his hands over the people.
- When a bishop presides, in addition to these formularies he may use other special formularies of blessing (see page 856).
- All these various forms of blessing conclude always with the trinitarian formulary, during which the priest with his right hand traces the sign of the cross over the members of the assembly as they make the sign of the cross on themselves.

## DISMISSAL

147 The dismissal sends the members of the congregation forth to praise and bless the Lord in the midst of their daily responsibilities.<sup>181</sup>

- It is the deacon's role to say or sing the dismissal, which should be done in a way that invites the people's response.<sup>182</sup>
- The response *Thanks be to God* is a statement of grateful praise for encountering the risen Christ in the assembly's worship.
- Beginning at the Easter Vigil and up to and including the Second Sunday of Easter, the double *alleluia* is added to the dismissal and the response. It is also added on Pentecost.

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<sup>180</sup> See The Roman Ritual, *Book of Blessings*, 1987, General Introduction, no. 7.

<sup>181</sup> See GIRM, no. 57:2.

<sup>182</sup> See GIRM, no. 140.

- The words of dismissal should reflect the sacredness of the ritual. Casual remarks or secular forms of farewell are out of place as they detract from the dignity of the rite.
- The priest celebrant and deacon kiss the altar if they are near it at the time of the dismissal or pass it as they leave.<sup>183</sup>
- After giving the proper reverence to the altar, the ministers ordinarily leave in the same order in which they entered at the beginning of the celebration.<sup>184</sup>
- If they have not left earlier, ministers who are to bring communion to the sick may take their place immediately before the concelebrants in the procession.
- The procession may be accompanied by a psalm or song, a seasonal hymn, appropriate instrumental music, or silence.

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<sup>183</sup> See GIRM, nos. 125, 141.

<sup>184</sup> See GIRM, no. 125.





# THE LITURGICAL YEAR



## APOSTOLIC LETTER *MOTU PROPRIO*

### APPROVAL OF THE GENERAL NORMS FOR THE LITURGICAL YEAR AND THE NEW GENERAL ROMAN CALENDAR

POPE PAUL VI

Celebration of the paschal mystery is of supreme importance in Christian worship and the cycle of days, weeks, and the whole year unfolds its meaning: this is the teaching so clearly given us by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. Consequently, as to both the plan of the Proper of Seasons and of Saints and the revision of the Roman Calendar, it is essential that Christ's paschal mystery receive greater prominence in the reform of the liturgical year, for which the Council has given the norms.<sup>1</sup>

#### I

With the passage of centuries, it must be admitted, the faithful have become accustomed to so many special religious devotions that the principal mysteries of the redemption have lost their proper place in their minds. This was due partly to the increased number of vigils, feast days, and their octaves, partly to the gradual overlapping of various seasons in the liturgical year.

But it is also clear to everyone that our predecessors Saint Pius X and John XXIII, of blessed memory, laid down several rules aimed at restoring Sunday to its original rank and its place of esteem in the mind of all as the "first feast day of all."<sup>2</sup> They also restored the liturgical celebration of the season of Lent to its rightful place. It is true as well that our predecessor Pius XII decreed<sup>3</sup> for the Western Church restoration of the Easter Vigil at night, as the occasion for the people of God to reaffirm their spiritual covenant with Christ the risen Lord during the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation.

Faithful to the teaching of the Fathers and of the constant tradition of the Catholic Church, it is clear that these popes rightly perceived the true nature of the liturgical year's cycle. It is not simply the commemoration of the historical events by which Christ Jesus won our salvation through his death and a calling to mind of the past that instructs and nurtures the faithful, even the simplest, who meditate on it. They taught also that the celebration of the liturgical year "possesses a distinct sacramental power and efficacy to strengthen Christian life."<sup>4</sup> This is also our own mind and teaching.

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<sup>1</sup>See Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, SC), art. 102-111.

<sup>2</sup>SC, art. 106.

<sup>3</sup>See Congregation of Rites, Decree *Dominicae Resurrectionis*, 9 February 1951: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, Commentarium officiale (Vatican City; hereafter, AAS) 43 (1951), pp. 128-129.

Thus as we celebrate the “sacrament of the birth of Christ”<sup>5</sup> and his appearance in the world, it is right and proper for us to pray that “he, whose outward form is like our own, may reshape us inwardly by his grace.”<sup>6</sup> And that while we are celebrating his passage from death to life, we ask God that those who are reborn with Christ may “express in their lives the richness of the sacrament they have received in faith.”<sup>7</sup> In the words of the Second Vatican Council, “recalling thus the mysteries of redemption, the Church opens to the faithful the riches of the Lord’s powers and merits, so that these are in some way made present in every age in order that the faithful may lay hold on them and be filled with saving grace.”<sup>8</sup>

The purpose of the reordering of the liturgical year and of the norms accomplishing its reform, therefore, is nothing other than this, that through faith, hope, and charity the faithful may share more deeply in “the whole mystery of Christ” as it unfolds throughout the year.<sup>9</sup>

## II

We do not see as a conflict with this theme emphasising also the splendour of feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary, “who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son,”<sup>10</sup> and of memorials of the saints, which are rightly considered as the birthdays of “the martyrs and victors who lead us.”<sup>11</sup> Indeed “the feasts of the saints proclaim the wonderful works of Christ in his servants and display to the faithful fitting examples for their imitation.”<sup>12</sup> Further, the Catholic Church has always firmly and securely held that the feasts of the saints proclaim and renew Christ’s paschal mystery.<sup>13</sup>

Undeniably, however, over the course of the centuries more feasts of the saints were introduced than was necessary; therefore the Council properly pointed out: “Lest the feasts of the saints take precedence over the feasts commemorating the very mysteries of salvation, many of them should be left to be celebrated by a particular Church or nation or religious family; those only should be extended to the universal Church that commemorate saints of truly universal significance.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Congregation of Rites, General Decree *Maxima redemptionis nostrae mysteria*, 16 November 1955: AAS 47 (1955), pp. 839.

<sup>5</sup> Leo the Great, *Sermo XXVII in Nativitate Domini* 7, 1: *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series latina*, J.P. Migne, editor, Paris, 1844-1855 (hereafter, PL) 54, 216.

<sup>6</sup> See the Baptism of the Lord, opening prayer; see also *Missale Romanum, editio typica*, 1962, Epiphany, collect.

<sup>7</sup> See Monday of the octave of Easter, opening prayer; see also *Missale Romanum, editio typica*, 1962, Tuesday of Easter Week, collect.

<sup>8</sup> SC, art. 102.

<sup>9</sup> See SC, art. 102.

<sup>10</sup> SC, art. 103.

<sup>11</sup> See *Syriac Breviary* (5th Century), B. Mariani, editor (Rome, 1956), p. 27.

<sup>12</sup> SC, art. 111.

<sup>13</sup> See SC, art. 104.

<sup>14</sup> SC, art. 111.

To put these decrees of the Ecumenical Council into effect, the names of some saints have been deleted from the General Calendar, and permission was granted to restore the memorials and veneration of other saints in those areas with which they have been traditionally associated. As a result, the removal of the names of certain saints not known throughout the world from the Roman Calendar has allowed the addition of the names of martyrs born in regions where the gospel spread later in history. In consequence, the single catalogue displays in equal dignity as representatives of all peoples those who either shed their blood for Christ or were outstanding in their heroic virtues.

For these reasons we regard the new General Calendar drawn up for use in the Latin rite to be more in keeping with the spirituality and attitudes of the times and to be a clearer reflection of the Church's universality. In this last regard, the Calendar carries the names of the noblest of men and women who place before all the people of God striking examples of holiness and in a wide diversity of forms. The immense spiritual value of this to the whole Christian people hardly needs mention.

Therefore after carefully considering before the Lord all these matters, with our apostolic authority we approve the new General Roman Calendar drawn up by the Consilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy and also the general norms governing the arrangement of the liturgical year. The effective date for them is 1 January 1970. In accord with the decrees that the Congregation of Rites has prepared in conjunction with the Consilium, they will remain in force until the publication of the duly reformed Roman Missal and Breviary.

We decree all we have established *motu proprio* in this Letter to be valid and confirmed, notwithstanding, to the extent necessary, the constitutions and apostolic ordinations issued by our predecessors, as well as other directives, even those worthy of explicit mention and amendment.

Given at Saint Peter's in Rome, 14 February 1969, the sixth year of our pontificate.

Paul VI, Pope



# GENERAL NORMS FOR THE LITURGICAL YEAR AND THE CALENDAR

## CHAPTER ONE THE LITURGICAL YEAR

1 Christ's saving work is celebrated in sacred memory by the Church on fixed days throughout the course of the year. Each week on the day called the Lord's Day the Church commemorates the Lord's resurrection. Once a year at Easter the Church honours the resurrection of the Lord and his blessed passion with the utmost solemnity. In fact through the yearly cycle the Church unfolds the entire mystery of Christ and keeps the anniversaries of the saints.

During the different seasons of the liturgical year, the Church, in accord with traditional discipline, carries out the formation of the faithful by means of devotional practices, both interior and exterior, instruction, prayer, and works of penance and mercy.<sup>1</sup>

2 The principles given here may and must be applied to both the Roman Rite and all others; but the practical rules are to be taken as pertaining solely to the Roman Rite, except in matters that of their nature also affect the other rites.<sup>2</sup>

### TITLE I: LITURGICAL DAYS

#### THE LITURGICAL DAY IN GENERAL

3 Each day is made holy through the liturgical celebrations of the people of God, especially through the eucharistic sacrifice and the divine office.

The liturgical day runs from midnight to midnight, but the observance of Sunday and solemnities begins with the evening of the preceding day.

#### SUNDAY

4 The Church celebrates the paschal mystery on the first day of each week, known as the Lord's Day or Sunday. This follows a tradition handed down from the apostles and having its origin from the day of Christ's resurrection. Thus Sunday must be ranked as the first feast day of all.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, SC), art. 102-105.

<sup>2</sup>See SC, art. 3.

<sup>3</sup>See SC, art. 106.

5 Because of its special importance, the Sunday celebration gives way only to solemnities or feasts of the Lord. The Sundays of the seasons of Advent, Lent, and Easter, however, take precedence over all solemnities and feasts of the Lord. Solemnities occurring on these Sundays are transferred to the following Monday except in the case of their occurrence on Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) or on Easter Sunday.

6 By its nature, Sunday excludes any other celebration's being permanently assigned to that day, with these exceptions:

1. Sunday within the octave of Christmas is the feast of the Holy Family;
2. Sunday following 6 January is the feast of the Baptism of the Lord;
3. Sunday after Pentecost is the solemnity of the Holy Trinity;
4. the last Sunday in Ordinary Time is the solemnity of Christ the King.

7 In those places where the solemnities of the Epiphany of the Lord, the Ascension of the Lord, and the Body and Blood of Christ are not observed as holy days of obligation, they are assigned to a Sunday, which is then considered their proper day in the calendar. Thus:

1. the Epiphany of the Lord, to the Sunday falling between 2 January and 8 January;
2. the Ascension of the Lord, to the Seventh Sunday of Easter;
3. the Body and Blood of Christ, to the Sunday after Trinity Sunday.

#### SOLEMNITIES, FEASTS, AND MEMORIALS

8 As it celebrates the mystery of Christ in yearly cycle, the Church also venerates with a particular love blessed Mary, the Mother of God, and sets before the devotion of the faithful the memory of the martyrs and other saints.<sup>4</sup>

9 The saints of universal significance have celebrations obligatory throughout the entire Church. Other saints either are listed in the calendar for optional celebration or are left to the veneration of some particular Church, nation, or religious family.<sup>5</sup>

10 According to their importance, celebrations are distinguished from each other and named as follows: solemnities, feasts, memorials.

11 Solemnities are counted as the principal days in the calendar and their observance begins with Evening Prayer I of the preceding day. Some solemnities also have their own vigil Mass for use when Mass is celebrated in the evening of the preceding day.

12 The celebration of Easter and Christmas, the two greatest solemnities, continues for eight days, with each octave governed by its own rules.

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<sup>4</sup>See SC, art. 103-104.

<sup>5</sup>See SC, art. 111.

13 Feasts are celebrated within the limits of the natural day and accordingly do not have Evening Prayer I. Exceptions are feasts of the Lord that fall on a Sunday in Ordinary Time and in the season of Christmas and that replace the Sunday of-fice.

14 Memorials are either obligatory or optional. Their observance is integrated into the celebration of the occurring weekday in accord with the norms set forth in the General Instructions of the Roman Missal and the Liturgy of the Hours.

Obligatory memorials occurring on Lenten weekdays may only be celebrated as optional memorials.

Should more than one optional memorial listed in the calendar fall on the same day, only one may be celebrated; the others are omitted.

15 On Saturdays in Ordinary Time when there is no obligatory memorial, an optional memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary is allowed.

## WEEKDAYS

16 The days following Sunday are called weekdays. They are celebrated in different ways according to the importance each one has.

1. Ash Wednesday and the days of Holy Week, from Monday to Thursday inclusive, have precedence over all other celebrations.
2. The weekdays of Advent from 17 December to 24 December inclusive and all the weekdays of Lent have precedence over obligatory memorials.
3. Other weekdays give way to all solemnities and feasts and are combined with memorials.

## TITLE II: THE YEARLY CYCLE

17 By means of the yearly cycle the Church celebrates the whole mystery of Christ, from his incarnation until the day of Pentecost and the expectation of the Lord's coming again.<sup>6</sup>

## THE EASTER TRIDUUM

18 Christ redeemed humankind and gave perfect glory to God principally through his paschal mystery: dying he destroyed our death and rising he restored our life. Therefore the Easter triduum of the passion and resurrection of the Lord is the culmination of the entire liturgical year.<sup>7</sup> Thus the solemnity of Easter has the same kind of preeminence in the liturgical year that Sunday has in the week.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>See SC, art. 102.

<sup>7</sup>See SC, art. 5.

<sup>8</sup>See SC, art. 106.

19 The Easter triduum of the passion and resurrection of the Lord begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closes with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday, the Sunday of the Lord's resurrection.

20 On Good Friday<sup>9</sup> and, if possible, also on Holy Saturday until the Easter Vigil,<sup>10</sup> the Easter fast is observed everywhere.

21 The Easter Vigil, during the holy night when the Lord rose from the dead, ranks as the "mother of all holy vigils."<sup>11</sup> Keeping watch, the Church awaits Christ's resurrection and celebrates it in the sacraments. Accordingly, the entire celebration of this vigil should take place at night, that is, it should either begin after nightfall or end before the dawn of Sunday.

## THE SEASON OF EASTER

22 The fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost are celebrated in joyful exultation as one feast day, or better as one "great Sunday."<sup>12</sup>

These above all others are the days for the singing of the *Alleluia*.

23 The Sundays of this season rank as the Sundays of Easter and, after Easter Sunday itself, are called the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Sundays of Easter. The period of fifty sacred days ends on Pentecost Sunday.

24 The first eight days of the season of Easter make up the octave of Easter and are celebrated as solemnities of the Lord.

25 On the fortieth day after Easter the Ascension of the Lord is celebrated, except in places where, not being a holy day of obligation, it has been transferred to the Seventh Sunday of Easter (see no. 7).

26 The weekdays after the Ascension of the Lord until the Saturday before Pentecost inclusive are a preparation for the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

## THE SEASON OF LENT

27 Lent is a preparation for the celebration of Easter. For the Lenten liturgy disposes both catechumens and the faithful to celebrate the paschal mystery: catechumens, through the several stages of Christian initiation; the faithful, through reminders of their own baptism and through penitential practices.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>See Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution *Pœnitentini*, on Christian penance, 17 February 1966 (hereafter, *Pœnitentini*), II§3: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, Commentarium officiale (Vatican City; hereafter, AAS) 58 (1966), p. 184.

<sup>10</sup>See SC, art. 110.

<sup>11</sup>Augustine, *Sermo* 219: *Patrologiæ cursus completus: Series latina*, J.P. Migne, editor, Paris, 1844-1855 (hereafter, PL) 38, 1088.

<sup>12</sup>Athanasius, *Epis. fest. 1: Patrologiæ cursus completus: Series græca*, J.P. Migne, editor, (Paris, 1857-1866) 26, 1366.

<sup>13</sup>See SC, art. 109.

28 Lent runs from Ash Wednesday until the Mass of the Lord's Supper exclusive.

The *Alleluia* is not used from the beginning of Lent until the Easter Vigil.

29 On Ash Wednesday, which is the beginning of Lent and is observed everywhere as a fast day,<sup>14</sup> ashes are distributed.

30 The Sundays of this season are called the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent. The Sixth Sunday, which marks the beginning of Holy Week, is called Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday).

31 Holy Week has as its purpose the remembrance of Christ's passion, beginning with his Messianic entrance into Jerusalem.

At the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday morning the bishop, concelebrating Mass with his presbyterate, blesses the oils and consecrates the chrism.

## THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

32 Next to the yearly celebrations of the paschal mystery, the Church considers nothing more important than the memorial of Christ's birth and early manifestations. This is the purpose of the season of Christmas.

33 The season of Christmas runs from Evening Prayer I of Christmas until the Sunday after Epiphany or after 6 January, inclusive.

34 The Mass of the vigil of Christmas is used in the evening of 24 December, either before or after Evening Prayer I.

On Christmas itself, following an ancient tradition of Rome, three Masses may be celebrated: namely, the Mass at Midnight, the Mass at Dawn, and the Mass during the Day.

35 Christmas has its own octave, arranged as follows:

1. Sunday within the octave is the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. If there is no Sunday, the feast is celebrated on 30 December;
2. 26 December is the feast of Saint Stephen, First Martyr;
3. 27 December is the feast of Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist;
4. 28 December is the feast of the Holy Innocents;
5. 29, 30, and 31 December are days within the octave;
6. 1 January, the octave day of Christmas, is the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. It also recalls the conferral of the holy Name of Jesus.

36 The Sunday falling between 2 January and 5 January is the Second Sunday after Christmas.

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<sup>14</sup>See *Pœnitentini*, II§3: AAS 58 (1966), p. 184.

37 The Epiphany of the Lord is celebrated on 6 January, unless (where it is not observed as a holy day of obligation) it has been assigned to the Sunday occurring between 2 January and 8 January (see no. 7).

38 The Sunday falling after 6 January is the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.<sup>15</sup>

## THE SEASON OF ADVENT

39 Advent has a twofold character: as a time to prepare for the solemnity of Christmas when the Son of God's first coming to us is remembered; as a season when that remembrance directs the mind and heart to await Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons, the season of Advent is thus a period for devout and joyful expectation.

40 Advent begins with Evening Prayer I of the Sunday falling on or closest to 30 November and ends before Evening Prayer I of Christmas.

41 The Sundays of this season are named the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Sundays of Advent.

42 The weekdays from 17 December to 24 December inclusive serve to prepare more directly for the Lord's birth.

## ORDINARY TIME

43 Apart from those seasons having their own distinctive character, thirty-three or thirty-four weeks remain in the yearly cycle that do not celebrate a specific aspect of the mystery of Christ. Rather, especially on the Sundays, they are devoted to the mystery of Christ in its fullness. This period is known as Ordinary Time.

44 Ordinary Time begins on Monday after the Sunday following 6 January and continues until Tuesday before Ash Wednesday inclusive. It begins again on Monday after Pentecost and ends before Evening Prayer I of the First Sunday of Advent.

This is also the reason for the series of liturgical formularies found in both the Missal and *The Liturgy of the Hours* (Vol. III-IV), for Sundays and weekdays in this season.

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<sup>15</sup> In places where the solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord is transferred to Sunday and it falls on the 7th or 8th of January (coinciding with the normal day for celebrating the Baptism of the Lord), in those years, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord is observed on the following Monday (Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship, Decree *Celebratio Baptismatis Domini*, on the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, 7 October 1977).

## ROGATION AND EMBER DAYS

45 On rogation and ember days the practice of the Church is to offer prayers to the Lord for the needs of all people, especially for the productivity of the earth and for human labour, and to make public thanksgiving.

46 In order to adapt the rogation and ember days to various regions and the different needs of the faithful, the conferences of bishops should arrange the time and plan of their celebration.

Consequently, the competent authority should lay down norms, in view of local conditions, on extending such celebrations over one or several days and on repeating them during the year.

47 On each day of these celebrations the Mass should be one of the votive Masses for various needs and occasions that is best suited to the intentions of the petitioners.

## CHAPTER TWO

# THE CALENDAR

### TITLE I: CALENDAR AND CELEBRATIONS TO BE ENTERED

48 The arrangement for celebrating the liturgical year is governed by the calendar: the General Calendar, for use in the entire Roman Rite, or a particular calendar, for use in a particular Church or in families of religious.

49 In the General Calendar the entire cycle of celebrations is entered: celebrations of the mystery of salvation as found in the Proper of Seasons, of those saints having universal significance who must therefore be celebrated by everyone or of saints who show the universality and continuity of holiness within the people of God.

Particular calendars have more specialised celebrations, arranged to harmonise with the general cycle.<sup>16</sup> The individual Churches or families of religious should show a special honour to those saints who are properly their own.

Particular calendars, drawn up by the competent authority, must be approved by the Apostolic See.

50 The drawing up of a particular calendar is to be guided by the following considerations:

1. The Proper of Seasons (that is, the cycle of seasons, solemnities, and feasts that unfold and honour the mystery of redemption during the liturgical year) must be kept intact and retain its rightful preeminence over particular celebrations.
2. Proper celebrations must be coordinated harmoniously with universal celebrations, with care for the rank and precedence indicated for each in the Table of Liturgical Days. Lest particular calendars be enlarged disproportionately, individual saints may have only one celebration in the liturgical year. For persuasive pastoral reasons there may be another celebration in the form of an optional memorial marking the transfer or discovery of the bodies of patrons or founders of Churches or of families of religious.
3. Celebrations granted by indult may not duplicate other celebrations already contained in the cycle of the mystery of salvation, nor may they be multiplied out of proportion.

51 Although it is reasonable for each diocese to have its own calendar and propers for the office and Mass, entire provinces, regions, nations, or even larger areas may also have common calendars and propers, prepared with the cooperation of all the parties involved.

For the same reason, this principle may also be followed in the case of the calendars for several provinces of religious within the same civil territory.

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<sup>16</sup>See Congregation for Divine Worship, Instruction *Calendaria particularia*, on the revision of particular calendars and of the propers for offices and Masses, 24 June 1970: AAS 62 (1970), pp. 651-663.

52 A particular calendar is prepared by inserting in the General Calendar solemnities, feasts, and memorials proper to that calendar:

1. in a diocesan calendar, besides celebrations of its patrons and the dedication of the cathedral, the saints and the blessed who bear some special connection with that diocese, for example, as their birthplace, residence over a long period, or place of death;
2. in the calendar of religious, besides celebrations of their title, founder, or patron, those saints and blessed who were members of that religious family or had some special relationship with it;
3. in a calendar for individual churches, besides celebrations proper to a diocese or religious community, those celebrations that are proper to that church and are listed in the Table of Liturgical Days and also the saints who are buried in that church. Members of religious communities should join with the community of the local Church in celebrating the anniversary of the dedication of the cathedral and the principal patrons of the place and of the larger region where they live.

53 When a diocese or religious family has the distinction of having many saints and blessed, care must be taken not to overload the calendar of the entire diocese or institute. Consequently:

1. The first measure that can be taken is to have a common celebration of all the saints and the blessed of a given diocese or religious family or of some category.
2. Only the saints and blessed of particular significance for an entire diocese or religious family may be entered in the calendar with an individual celebration.
3. The other saints or blessed are to be celebrated only in those places with which they have closer ties or where their bodies are buried.

54 Proper celebrations should be entered in the calendar as obligatory or optional memorials, unless other provisions have been made for them in the Table of Liturgical Days or there are special historical or pastoral reasons. But there is no reason why some celebrations may not be observed with greater solemnity in some places than in the rest of the diocese or religious community.

55 Celebrations entered in a particular calendar must be observed by all who are bound to follow that calendar. Only with the approval of the Apostolic See may celebrations be removed from a calendar or changed in rank.

## TITLE II: THE PROPER DATE FOR CELEBRATIONS

56 The Church's practice has been to celebrate the saints on the date of their death ("birthday"), a practice it would be well to follow when entering proper celebrations in particular calendars.

Nevertheless, even though proper celebrations have special importance for individual local Churches or religious families, it is of great advantage that there be as much unity as possible in the observance of solemnities, feasts, and obligatory memorials listed in the General Calendar.

In entering proper celebrations in a particular calendar, therefore, the following are to be observed.

1. Celebrations listed in the General Calendar are to be entered on the same date in a particular calendar, with a change in rank of celebration if necessary.

This also applies to diocesan or religious calendars when celebrations proper to an individual church alone are added.

2. Celebrations for saints not included in the General Calendar should be assigned to the date of their death. If the date of death is not known, the celebrations should be assigned to a date associated with the saint on some other grounds, such as the date of ordination or of the discovery or transfer of the saint's body; otherwise it is celebrated on a date unimpeded by other celebrations in that particular calendar.

3. If the date of death or other appropriate date is impeded in the General Calendar or in a particular calendar by another obligatory celebration, even of lower rank, the celebrations should be assigned to the closest date not so impeded.

4. If, however, it is a question of celebrations that cannot be transferred to another date because of pastoral reasons, the impeding celebration should itself be transferred.

5. Other celebrations, granted by indult, should be entered on a date more pastorally appropriate.

6. The cycle of the liturgical year should stand out with its full preeminence, but at the same time the celebration of the saints should not be permanently impeded. Therefore, dates that most of the time fall during Lent and the octave of Easter, as well as the weekdays between 17 December and 31 December, should remain free of any particular celebration, unless it is a question of optional memorials, feasts found in the Table of Liturgical Days under no. 8: 1, 2, 3, 4, or solemnities that cannot be transferred to another season.

The solemnity of Saint Joseph (19 March), except where it is observed as a holy day of obligation, may be transferred by the conferences of bishops to another day outside Lent.

57 If some saints or blessed are listed in the calendar on the same date, they are always celebrated together whenever they are of equal rank, even though one or more of them may be more proper to that calendar. If one or other of these saints or blessed is to be celebrated with a higher rank, that office alone is observed and the others are omitted, unless it is appropriate to assign them to another date in the form of an obligatory memorial.

58 For the pastoral advantage of the faithful, it is permissible to observe on the Sundays in Ordinary Time those celebrations that fall during the week and have special appeal to the devotion of the faithful, provided the celebrations take precedence over these Sundays in the Table of Liturgical Days. The Mass for such celebrations may be used at all the Masses at which the people are present.

59 Precedence among liturgical days relative to their celebration is governed solely by the following table.

TABLE OF LITURGICAL DAYS  
(according to their order of precedence)

I

1. Easter triduum of the Lord's passion and resurrection.
2. Christmas, the Epiphany of the Lord, the Ascension of the Lord, and Pentecost.  
Sundays of the seasons of Advent, Lent, and Easter.  
Ash Wednesday.  
Weekdays of Holy Week from Monday to Thursday inclusive.  
Days within the octave of Easter.
3. Solemnities of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and saints listed in the General Calendar.  
Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls).
4. Proper solemnities, namely:
  1. Solemnity of the principal patron of the place, that is, the city or state.
  2. Solemnity of the dedication of a particular church and the anniversary.
  3. Solemnity of the title of a particular church.
  4. Solemnity of the title, or of the founder, or of the principal patron of a religious order or congregation.

II

5. Feasts of the Lord listed in the General Calendar.
6. Sundays of the season of Christmas and Sundays in Ordinary Time.
7. Feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the saints in the General Calendar.
8. Proper feasts, namely:
  1. Feast of the principal patron of the diocese.
  2. Feast of the anniversary of the dedication of the cathedral.
  3. Feast of the principal patron of a region or province, or a country, or of a wider territory.
  4. Feast of the title, founder, or principal patron of an order or congregation and of a religious province, without prejudice to the directives in no. 4.
  5. Other feasts proper to an individual church.
  6. Other feasts listed in the calendar of a diocese or of an order or congregation.
9. Weekdays of Advent from 17 December to 24 December inclusive.  
Days within the octave of Christmas.  
Weekdays of Lent.

### III

10. Obligatory memorials in the General Calendar.
11. Proper obligatory memorials, namely:
  1. Memorial of a secondary patron of the place, diocese, region, or province, nation or wider territory, or of an order or congregation and of a religious province.
  2. Other obligatory memorials listed in the calendar of a diocese, or of an order or congregation.
12. Optional memorials; but these may be celebrated even on the days listed in no. 9, in the special manner described by the General Instructions of the Roman Missal and the Liturgy of the Hours.

In the same manner obligatory memorials may be celebrated as optional memorials if they happen to fall on Lenten weekdays.

13. Weekdays of Advent up to 16 December inclusive.  
Weekdays of the season of Christmas from 2 January until the Saturday after the Epiphany of the Lord.  
Weekdays of the season of Easter from Monday after the octave of Easter until the Saturday before Pentecost inclusive.  
Weekdays in Ordinary Time.

60 If several celebrations fall on the same day, the one that holds the highest rank according to the preceding Table of Liturgical Days is observed. But a solemnity impeded by a liturgical day that takes precedence over it should be transferred to the closest day not listed on nos. 1-8 in the table of precedence; the rule of no. 5 remains in effect. Other celebrations are omitted that year.

61 If the same day were to call for celebration of Evening Prayer of that day's office and Evening Prayer I of the following day, Evening Prayer of the day with the higher rank in the Table of Liturgical Days takes precedence; in cases of equal rank, Evening Prayer of the actual day takes precedence.



# CALENDAR

When no rank is given for the celebration, it is an optional memorial.

## JANUARY

1	Mary, Mother of God (Octave of Christmas)	solemnity
2	Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, bishops, doctors of the Church	memorial
6	The Epiphany of the Lord (or Sunday between 2 January and 8 January)	solemnity
7	Raymond of Penyafort, presbyter, religious	
13	Hilary, bishop, doctor of the Church	
17	Anthony, abbot	memorial
20	Fabian, pope, martyr Sebastian, martyr	
21	Agnes, virgin, martyr	memorial
22	Vincent, deacon, martyr	
24	Francis de Sales, bishop, religious founder, doctor of the Church	memorial
25	The Conversion of Paul, apostle	feast
26	Timothy and Titus, bishops	memorial
27	Angela Merici, virgin, religious founder, educator	
28	Thomas Aquinas, presbyter, religious, doctor of the Church	memorial
31	John Bosco, presbyter, religious founder, educator	memorial
	The Baptism of the Lord (Sunday after 6 January or Sunday after the Epiphany of the Lord)	feast

## FEBRUARY

2	The Presentation of the Lord	feast
3	Blase, bishop, martyr Ansgar, bishop, missionary	
5	Agatha, virgin, martyr	memorial
6	Paul Miki, religious, missionary, martyr, and his Companions, martyrs	memorial
8	Jerome Emiliani, educator, religious founder	
10	Scholastica, virgin, religious	memorial
11	Our Lady of Lourdes	
14	Cyril, religious, missionary, and Methodius, bishop, missionary	memorial
17	Seven Founders of the Order of Servites, religious	
21	Peter Damian, bishop, religious, doctor of the Church	
22	The Chair of Peter, apostle	feast
23	Polycarp, bishop, martyr	memorial

## MARCH

4	Casimir	
7	Perpetua and Felicity, martyrs	memorial
8	John of God, religious founder	
9	Frances of Rome, married woman, religious founder	
17	Patrick, bishop, missionary	
18	Cyril of Jerusalem, bishop, doctor of the Church	
19	Joseph, Husband of the Virgin Mary	solemnity
23	Toribio de Mogrovejo, bishop	
25	The Annunciation of the Lord	solemnity

## APRIL

2	Francis of Paola, hermit, religious founder	
4	Isidore, bishop, doctor of the Church	
5	Vincent Ferrer, presbyter, religious, missionary	
7	John Baptist de la Salle, presbyter, religious founder, educator	memorial
11	Stanislaus, bishop, martyr	memorial
13	Martin I, pope, martyr	
21	Anselm, bishop, religious, doctor of the Church	
23	George, martyr Adalbert, bishop, religious, martyr	
24	Fidelis of Sigmaringen, presbyter, religious, martyr	
25	Mark, evangelist	feast
28	Peter Chanel, presbyter, religious, missionary, martyr Louis Marie de Montfort, presbyter	
29	Catherine of Siena, virgin, doctor of the Church	memorial
30	Pius V, pope, religious	

## MAY

1	Joseph the Worker	
2	Athanasius, bishop, doctor of the Church	memorial
3	Philip and James, apostles	feast
12	Nereus and Achilleus, martyrs Pancras, martyr	
14	Matthias, apostle	feast
18	John I, pope, martyr	
20	Bernardine of Siena, presbyter, religious, missionary	
25	Bede the Venerable, presbyter, religious, doctor of the Church Gregory VII, pope, religious Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi, virgin, religious	
26	Philip Neri, presbyter	memorial
27	Augustine of Canterbury, bishop, religious, missionary	
31	The Visit of the Virgin Mary to Elizabeth	feast
	The Holy Trinity (First Sunday after Pentecost)	solemnity
	The Body and Blood of Christ (Thursday or Sunday after Holy Trinity)	solemnity
	The Sacred Heart of Jesus (Friday following Second Sunday after Pentecost)	solemnity
	The Immaculate Heart of Mary (Saturday following Second Sunday after Pentecost)	memorial

## JUNE

1	Justin, martyr	memorial
2	Marcellinus and Peter, martyrs	
3	Charles Lwanga, catechist, martyr, and his Companions, martyrs	memorial
5	Boniface, bishop, religious, missionary, martyr	memorial
6	Norbert, bishop, religious founder	
9	Ephrem of Syria, deacon, doctor of the Church	
11	Barnabas, apostle	memorial
13	Anthony of Padua, presbyter, religious, doctor of the Church	memorial
19	Romuald, abbot, religious founder	
21	Aloysius Gonzaga, religious	memorial
22	Paulinus of Nola, bishop John Fisher, bishop, martyr, and Thomas More, married man, martyr	
24	The Birth of John the Baptist	solemnity
27	Cyril of Alexandria, bishop, doctor of the Church	
28	Irenaeus, bishop, martyr	memorial
29	Peter and Paul, apostles	solemnity
30	The First Martyrs of Rome	

## JULY

3	Thomas, apostle	feast
4	Elizabeth of Portugal, married woman, queen	
5	Anthony Mary Zaccaria, presbyter, religious founder	
6	Maria Goretti, virgin, martyr	
11	Benedict, abbot, religious founder	memorial
13	Henry, married man, ruler	
14	Camillus de Lellis, presbyter, religious founder	
15	Bonaventure, bishop, religious, doctor of the Church	memorial
16	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	
21	Lawrence of Brindisi, presbyter, religious, doctor of the Church	
22	Mary Magdalene, disciple of the Lord	memorial
23	Bridget of Sweden, married woman, religious founder	
25	James, apostle	feast
26	Joachim and Ann, parents of the Virgin Mary	memorial
29	Martha, disciple of the Lord	memorial
30	Peter Chrysologus, bishop, doctor of the Church	
31	Ignatius of Loyola, presbyter, religious founder	memorial

## AUGUST

1	Alphonsus Mary Liguori, bishop, religious founder, doctor of the Church	memorial
2	Eusebius of Vercelli, bishop Peter Julian Eymard, presbyter, religious founder	
4	John Mary Vianney, presbyter	memorial
5	The Dedication of the Basilica of Saint Mary in Rome	
6	The Transfiguration of the Lord	feast
7	Sixtus II, pope, martyr, and his Companions, martyrs Cajetan, presbyter, religious founder	
8	Dominic, presbyter, religious founder	memorial
10	Lawrence, deacon, martyr	feast
11	Clare, virgin, religious founder	memorial
13	Pontian, pope, martyr, and Hippolytus, presbyter, martyr	
14	Maximilian Mary Kolbe, presbyter, religious, martyr	memorial
15	The Assumption of the Virgin Mary into Heaven	solemnity
16	Stephen of Hungary, married man, ruler	
19	John Eudes, presbyter, religious founder, educator	
20	Bernard, abbot, doctor of the Church	memorial
21	Pius X, pope	memorial
22	The Queenship of the Virgin Mary	memorial
23	Rose of Lima, virgin	
24	Bartholomew, apostle	feast
25	Louis of France, married man, ruler Joseph Calasanz, presbyter, religious founder, educator	
27	Monica, married woman	memorial
28	Augustine, bishop, doctor of the Church	memorial
29	The Martyrdom of John the Baptist	memorial

## SEPTEMBER

3	Gregory the Great, pope, religious, doctor of the Church	memorial
8	The Birth of the Virgin Mary	feast
9	Peter Claver, presbyter, religious	
13	John Chrysostom, bishop, doctor of the Church	memorial
14	The Holy Cross	feast
15	Our Lady of Sorrows	memorial
16	Cornelius, pope, martyr, and Cyprian, bishop, martyr	memorial
17	Robert Bellarmine, bishop, religious, doctor of the Church	
19	Januarius, bishop, martyr	
20	Andrew Kim Taegon, presbyter, martyr, Paul Chong Hasang, catechist, martyr, and their Companions, martyrs	memorial
21	Matthew, apostle, evangelist	feast
26	Cosmas and Damian, martyrs	
27	Vincent de Paul, presbyter, religious founder	memorial
28	Wenceslaus, ruler, martyr Lawrence Ruiz, married man, martyr, and his Companions, martyrs	
29	Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, archangels	feast
30	Jerome, presbyter, doctor of the Church	memorial

## OCTOBER

1	Thérèse of the Child Jesus, virgin, religious, doctor of the Church	memorial
2	The Guardian Angels	memorial
4	Francis of Assisi, religious founder	memorial
6	Bruno, presbyter, hermit, religious founder	
7	Our Lady of the Rosary	memorial
9	Denis, bishop, martyr, and his Companions, martyrs John Leonardi, presbyter, religious founder	
14	Callistus I, pope, martyr	
15	Teresa of Jesus, virgin, religious, doctor of the Church	memorial
16	Hedwig, married woman, religious Margaret Mary Alacoque, virgin, religious	
17	Ignatius of Antioch, bishop, martyr	memorial
18	Luke, evangelist	feast
19	John de Brébeuf and Isaac Jogues, presbyters, religious, missionaries, martyrs, and their Companions, martyrs Paul of the Cross, presbyter, religious founder	
23	John of Capestrano, presbyter, religious, missionary	
24	Anthony Mary Claret, bishop, religious founder	
28	Simon and Jude, apostles	feast

## NOVEMBER

1	All Saints	solemnity
2	The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed	
3	Martin de Porres, religious	
4	Charles Borromeo, bishop	memorial
9	The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome	feast
10	Leo the Great, pope, doctor of the Church	memorial
11	Martin of Tours, bishop	memorial
12	Josaphat, bishop, religious, martyr	memorial
15	Albert the Great, bishop, religious, doctor of the Church	
16	Margaret of Scotland, married woman, queen Gertrude the Great, virgin, religious	
17	Elizabeth of Hungary, married woman, religious	memorial
18	The Dedication of the Basilicas of the Apostles Peter and Paul in Rome	
21	The Presentation of the Virgin Mary	memorial
22	Cecilia, virgin, martyr	memorial
23	Clement I, pope, martyr Columban, abbot, missionary	
24	Andrew Dung-Lac, presbyter, martyr, and his Companions, martyrs	memorial
30	Andrew, apostle	feast
	Christ the King (Last Sunday in Ordinary Time)	solemnity

## DECEMBER

3	Francis Xavier, presbyter, religious, missionary	memorial
4	John of Damascus, presbyter, religious, doctor of the Church	
6	Nicholas, bishop	
7	Ambrose, bishop, doctor of the Church	memorial
8	The Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary	solemnity
11	Damasus I, pope	
12	Jane Frances de Chantal, married woman, religious founder	
13	Lucy, virgin, martyr	memorial
14	John of the Cross, presbyter, religious, doctor of the Church	memorial
21	Peter Canisius, presbyter, religious, doctor of the Church	
23	John of Kanty, presbyter	
25	The Birth of the Lord	solemnity
26	Stephen, first martyr	feast
27	John, apostle, evangelist	feast
28	The Holy Innocents, martyrs	feast
29	Thomas Becket, bishop, martyr	
31	Sylvester I, pope	
	The Holy Family (Sunday within the octave of the Birth of the Lord or, if there is no Sunday within the octave, 30 December)	feast

## TABLE OF PRINCIPAL CELEBRATIONS OF THE LITURGICAL YEAR

Year	LECTIONARY CYCLE		Ash	Easter	Ascension	Pentecost	Body and Blood of Christ
	Sunday	Weekday	Wednesday		Thursday		
1998	C	II	25 Feb	12 Apr	21 May	31 May	11 June
1999	A	I	17 Feb	4 Apr	13 May	23 May	3 June
2000	B	II	8 Mar	23 Apr	1 June	11 June	22 June
2001	C	I	28 Feb	15 Apr	24 May	3 June	14 June
2002	A	II	13 Feb	31 Mar	9 May	19 May	30 May
2003	B	I	5 Mar	20 Apr	29 May	8 June	19 June
2004	C	II	25 Feb	11 Apr	20 May	30 May	10 June
2005	A	I	9 Feb	27 Mar	5 May	15 May	26 May
2006	B	II	1 Mar	16 Apr	25 May	4 June	15 June
2007	C	I	21 Feb	8 Apr	17 May	27 May	7 June
2008	A	II	6 Feb	23 Mar	1 May	11 May	22 May
2009	B	I	25 Feb	12 Apr	21 May	31 May	11 May
2010	C	II	17 Feb	4 Apr	13 May	23 May	3 June
2011	A	I	9 Mar	24 Apr	2 June	12 June	23 June
2012	B	II	22 Feb	8 Apr	17 May	27 May	7 June
2013	C	I	13 Feb	31 Mar	9 May	19 May	30 May
2014	A	II	5 Mar	20 Apr	29 May	8 June	19 June
2015	B	I	18 Feb	5 Apr	14 May	24 May	4 June
2016	C	II	10 Feb	27 Mar	5 May	15 May	26 May
2017	A	I	1 Mar	16 Apr	25 May	4 June	15 June
2018	B	II	14 Feb	1 Apr	10 May	20 May	31 May
2019	C	I	6 Mar	21 Apr	30 May	9 June	20 June
2020	A	II	26 Feb	12 Apr	21 May	31 May	11 June
2021	B	I	17 Feb	4 Apr	13 May	23 May	3 June
2022	C	II	2 Mar	17 Apr	26 May	5 June	16 June
2023	A	I	22 Feb	9 Apr	18 May	28 May	8 June
2024	B	II	14 Feb	31 Mar	9 May	19 May	30 May
2025	C	I	5 Mar	20 Apr	29 May	8 June	19 June
2026	A	II	18 Feb	5 Apr	14 May	24 May	4 June
2027	B	I	10 Feb	28 Mar	6 May	16 May	27 May
2028	C	II	1 Mar	16 Apr	25 May	4 June	15 June
2029	A	I	14 Feb	1 Apr	10 May	20 May	31 May
2030	B	II	6 Mar	21 Apr	30 May	9 June	20 June

Year	LECTIONARY CYCLE Sunday Weekday		WEEKS IN ORDINARY TIME				First Sunday of Advent
			<i>before season of Lent</i>		<i>after season of Easter</i>		
			Number of Weeks	Ending	Beginning	Week Number	
1998	C	II	7	24 Feb	1 June	9	29 Nov
1999	A	I	6	16 Feb	24 May	8	28 Nov
2000	B	II	9	7 Mar	12 June	10	3 Dec
2001	C	I	8	27 Feb	4 June	9	2 Dec
2002	A	II	5	12 Feb	20 May	7	1 Dec
2003	B	I	8	4 Mar	9 June	10	30 Nov
2004	C	II	7	24 Feb	31 May	9	28 Nov
2005	A	I	5	8 Feb	16 May	7	27 Nov
2006	B	II	8	28 Feb	5 June	9	3 Dec
2007	C	I	7	20 Feb	28 May	8	2 Dec
2008	A	II	4	5 Feb	12 May	6	30 Nov
2009	B	I	7	24 Feb	1 June	9	29 Nov
2010	C	II	6	16 Feb	24 May	8	28 Nov
2011	A	I	9	8 Mar	13 June	11	27 Nov
2012	B	II	7	21 Feb	28 May	8	2 Dec
2013	C	I	5	12 Feb	20 May	7	1 Dec
2014	A	II	8	4 Mar	9 June	10	30 Nov
2015	B	I	6	17 Feb	25 May	8	29 Nov
2016	C	II	5	9 Feb	16 May	7	27 Nov
2017	A	I	8	28 Feb	5 June	9	3 Dec
2018	B	II	6	13 Feb	21 May	7	2 Dec
2019	C	I	8	5 Mar	10 June	10	1 Dec
2020	A	II	7	25 Feb	1 June	9	29 Nov
2021	B	I	6	16 Feb	24 May	8	28 Nov
2022	C	II	8	1 Mar	6 June	10	27 Nov
2023	A	I	7	21 Feb	29 May	8	3 Dec
2024	B	II	6	13 Feb	20 May	7	1 Dec
2025	C	I	8	4 Mar	9 June	10	30 Nov
2026	A	II	6	17 Feb	25 May	8	29 Nov
2027	B	I	5	9 Feb	17 May	7	28 Nov
2028	C	II	8	29 Feb	5 June	9	3 Dec
2029	A	I	6	13 Feb	21 May	7	2 Dec
2030	B	II	8	5 Mar	10 June	10	1 Dec

## TABLE OF RUBRICS GOVERNING RITUAL AND OTHER MASSES

The following table of rubrics governs when celebrations using the formularies from Ritual Masses, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, Votive Masses, and Masses for the Dead are permitted within the liturgical year.

### SIGLA

- V1 = Ritual Masses (General Instruction of the Roman Missal [hereafter, GIRM], no. 330).  
Masses for various needs and occasions and votive Masses, in cases of serious need or pastoral advantage, at the direction of the local Ordinary or with his permission (GIRM, no. 332).
- V2 = Masses for various needs and occasions and votive Masses, in cases of serious need or pastoral advantage, at the discretion of the rector of the church or the priest celebrant (GIRM, no. 333).
- V3 = Masses for various needs and occasions and votive Masses chosen by the priest celebrant in favour of the devotion of the people (GIRM, no. 329:2 and 3).
- D1 = Funeral Mass (GIRM, no. 336).
- D2 = Mass on the occasion of news of a death, final burial, or the first anniversary (GIRM, no. 337).
- D3 = Daily Mass for the dead (GIRM, no. 337). When D1 and D2 are not permitted, neither is D3.
- + = permitted.
- = not permitted.

1. Solemnities of precept	V1- D1-		
2. Sundays of the seasons of Advent, Lent, and Easter	V1- D1-		
3. Holy Thursday, Easter Triduum	V1- D1-		
4. Solemnities not of precept, All Souls	V1- D1+		
5. Ash Wednesday, weekdays of Holy Week	V1- D1+		
6. Days in the octave of Easter	V1- D1+		
7. Sundays of Christmas and Sundays in Ordinary Time	V1+ D1+	V2- D2-	
8. Feasts	V1+ D1+	V2- D2-	
9. Weekdays of the season of Advent from 17 to 24 December	V1+ D1+	V2- D2+	
10. Days in the octave of Christmas	V1+ D1+	V2- D2+	
11. Weekdays of the season of Lent	V1+ D1+	V2- D2+	
12. Obligatory memorials	V1+ D1+	V2+ D2+	
13. Weekdays of the season of Advent to 16 December	V1+ D1+	V2+ D2+	
14. Weekdays of the season of Christmas from 2 January	V1+ D1+	V2+ D2+	
15. Weekdays of the season of Easter	V1+ D1+	V2+ D2+	
16. Weekdays in Ordinary Time	V1+ D1+	V2+ D2+	V3+ D3+





## THE PROPER OF SEASONS

*Now is the time of salvation,  
this is the year of the Lord's favour*

SEE 2 CORINTHIANS 6:2



## SEASON OF ADVENT

*Behold! I am coming soon,  
says the Lord*  
REVELATION 22:7



## SEASON OF ADVENT

1 In the course of the year, the Church unfolds the whole mystery of Christ from the incarnation and nativity to the Ascension, Pentecost, and the expectation of the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord.<sup>1</sup> The season of Advent, at the conclusion of the calendar year and the beginning of the Church's year, embraces both ends of this cycle. Advent begins with Evening Prayer I of the First Sunday of Advent and ends on 24 December, before Evening Prayer I of Christmas.

2 In some parts of the Church where baptism was once celebrated at Epiphany, the forty days prior to it were devoted to ascetical preparation, and Advent took on several of the liturgical features of Lent. Now, however, "it is no longer considered a penitential season but a time of joyful expectation."<sup>2</sup>

3 Advent has a twofold character. It is the season to prepare for Christmas, when Christ's first coming is remembered, and it is the "season when that remembrance directs the mind and heart to await Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons, the season of Advent is thus a period for devout and joyful expectation."<sup>3</sup>

4 This twofold character is reflected in the two stages of Advent, each with its own special focus expressed in the corresponding preface of the eucharistic prayer. From the first Sunday to 16 December, the liturgy expresses the eschatological expectation of Advent, the watchfulness of God's people looking forward to the time when Christ will come "again in glory and majesty," and "the salvation promised us will be ours."<sup>4</sup> From 17 December until Christmas eve, the texts proper to each day prepare us more directly to celebrate the Lord's birth, "our hearts filled with wonder and praise."<sup>5</sup>

5 Advent is not simply a preparation to commemorate the historical event of Christmas nor primarily an expectation of the parousia, but is rather an anticipation or a beginning of the celebration of the integral mystery of the incarnation, the advent and the epiphany of the Son of God in flesh and in majesty. The Christian community lives in an "interim" time between two historical events: the coming of Christ in the flesh and his coming in glory at the end of time. The Church is called to be strong in faith "as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963, art. 102; see Congregation of Rites, General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar, 21 March 1969 (hereafter, GNLYC), no. 17.

<sup>2</sup> See Congregation of Rites, *The Roman Calendar: Text and Commentary*, English ed., 1975, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> GNLYC, no. 39.

<sup>4</sup> Preface of Advent I.

<sup>5</sup> Preface of Advent II; see GNLYC, no. 42; see The Roman Missal, *Lectionary for Mass*, 2nd English edition, 1981, Introduction, no. 94.

<sup>6</sup> Order of Mass, communion rite; see Titus 2:13.

- The use of violet in Advent suggests a state of unfulfilled readiness and should no longer be regarded as an expression of penitence. It serves to set off the joyful white of Christmas with greater dramatic effect.
- For the same reason, music in Advent may be more restrained, for example, in the use of the organ and other instruments. The *Gloria* is not used as the opening rite in Advent, not because it is a penitential season, but so that the hymn of the angels may resound with greater freshness on Christmas night.
- In all three years of the lectionary cycle, the focus of each Sunday is clearly identifiable: on the first Sunday, the return of the Lord; on the second, John the Baptist's call to conversion; on the third, the relationship of John to Jesus; on the fourth, Mary and the events immediately preceding Christ's birth.

6 Advent, as a period of expectation and preparation, is closely related to, yet distinct from, the feast of Christmas for which it prepares. This can create a certain tension in those places where the weeks before Christmas are exploited for commercial purposes or where social celebrations of the feast are anticipated in schools and places of work.

- Popular devotions should respect the nature and character of Advent and should be consistent with the themes presented in the *Lectionary for Mass* and the Sacramentary volume of the Missal. Songs, carols, and devotions which focus on the nativity itself are out of place in Advent, especially before 17 December.
- Where they are the custom, the Advent wreath and the Jesse tree, which help to sustain an expectant orientation toward Christmas, can assist the liturgical celebration and may be associated with the celebration of Mass.
- Vigils, services of light, and celebrations of reconciliation may be very effective in fostering a sense of watchfulness and prayer and in disposing the community to a more fruitful participation in the Masses of Advent.



## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

OPENING  
PRAYER

Almighty God,  
strengthen the resolve of your faithful people  
to prepare for the coming of your Christ  
by works of justice and mercy,  
so that when we go forth to meet him  
he may call us to sit at his right hand  
and possess the kingdom of heaven.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

YEAR A

God of majesty and power,  
amid the clamour of our violence  
your Word of truth resounds;  
upon a world made dark by sin  
the Sun of Justice casts his dawning rays.

Keep your household watchful  
and aware of the hour in which we live.  
Hasten the advent of that day  
when the sounds of war will be for ever stilled,  
the darkness of evil scattered,  
and all your children gathered into one.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

Rend the heavens and come down,  
O God of all the ages!  
Rouse us from sleep,  
deliver us from our heedless ways,  
and form us into a watchful people,  
that, at the advent of your Son,  
he may find us doing what is right,  
mindful of all you command.

Grant this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C

God our Saviour,  
you utter a word of promise and hope  
and hasten the day of justice and freedom,  
yet we live in a world forgetful of your word,  
our watchfulness dulled by the cares of life.

Keep us alert.

Make us attentive to your word,  
ready to look on your Son  
when he comes with power and great glory.  
Make us holy and blameless,  
ready to stand secure  
when the day of his coming shakes the world with terror.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Accept, Lord, our offerings,  
chosen from among your many gifts,  
and let this present expression of our reverence  
become for us the pledge of eternal redemption.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER: Preface of Advent I, page 450; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
grant that in our journey through this passing world  
we may learn from these mysteries  
to cherish even now the things of heaven  
and to cling to the treasures that never pass away.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 797.

## SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

OPENING  
PRAYER

Almighty and merciful God,  
do not let our earthly concerns  
keep us from hastening to meet your Son,  
but teach us the heavenly wisdom  
that makes us his true companions.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING PRAYER  
YEAR A

Your kingdom is at hand,  
O God of justice and peace;  
you made John the Baptist its herald  
to announce the coming of your Christ,  
who baptises with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Give us a spirit of repentance  
to make us worthy of the kingdom.  
Let complacency yield to conviction,  
that in our day justice will flourish  
and conflict give way  
to the peace you bestow in Christ.

Grant this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

With tender comfort and transforming power  
you come into our midst,  
O God of mercy and might.

Make ready a way in the wilderness,  
clear a straight path in our hearts,  
and form us into a repentant people,  
that the advent of your Son  
may find us watchful and eager for the glory he reveals.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C

God of our salvation,  
you straighten the winding ways of our hearts  
and smooth the paths made rough by sin.

Make our conduct blameless,  
keep our hearts watchful in holiness,  
and bring to perfection the good you have begun in us.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
in your goodness  
be pleased with our prayers and offerings  
and, since we can merit nothing of ourselves,  
come to our rescue with your mercy.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Advent I, page 450; interpolation for Eucharistic  
Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord,  
you have nourished us with the food of life.  
Through our partaking of this sacrament  
teach us to judge wisely the things of earth  
and to cherish those of heaven.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 797.

## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

OPENING  
PRAYER

Gracious God,  
your people look forward in hope  
to the festival of our Saviour's birth.  
Give us the strength to reach that happy day of salvation  
and to celebrate it with hearts full of joy.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

YEAR A

God of glory and compassion,  
at your touch the wilderness blossoms,  
broken lives are made whole,  
and fearful hearts grow strong in faith.

Open our eyes to your presence  
and awaken our hearts to sing your praise.  
To all who long for your Son's return  
grant perseverance and patience,  
that we may announce in word and deed  
the good news of the kingdom.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

O God, most high and most near,  
you send glad tidings to the lowly,  
you hide not your face from the poor;  
those who dwell in darkness you call into the light.

Take away our blindness,  
remove the hardness of our hearts,  
and form us into a humble people,  
that, at the advent of your Son,  
we may recognise him in our midst  
and find joy in his saving presence.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C

Almighty God,  
you sent your Son into a world  
where the wheat must be winnowed from the chaff  
and evil clings even to what is good.

Let the fire of your Spirit  
purge us of greed and deceit,  
so that, purified, we may find our peace in you  
and you may delight in us.

Grant this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
may the continual offering of the eucharistic sacrifice  
carry out the mystery of our redemption  
and accomplish your saving work among us.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Advent I or II, pages 450-452; interpolation for  
Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

We implore your mercy, O Lord,  
that the power of these divine mysteries may free us from sin  
and prepare us for the approaching feast of Christmas.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 797.

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

OPENING  
PRAYER

Pour forth, O Lord, your grace into our hearts:  
once through the message of an angel  
you revealed to us the incarnation of Christ your Son;  
now lead us through his passion and cross  
to the glory of the resurrection.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING PRAYER  
YEAR A

Eternal God,  
in the psalms of David,  
in the words of the prophets,  
in the dream of Joseph  
your promise is spoken.  
At last, in the womb of the Virgin Mary  
your Word takes flesh.

Teach us to welcome Jesus, the promised Emmanuel,  
and to preach the good news of his coming,  
that every age may know him  
as the source of redemption and grace.

Grant this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

Here in our midst, O God of mystery,  
you disclose the secret hidden for countless ages.  
For you we wait, for you we listen.

Upon hearing your voice  
may we, like Mary, embrace your will  
and become a dwelling fit for your Word.

Grant this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C

Who are we, Lord God,  
that you should come to us?  
Yet you have visited your people  
and redeemed us in your Son.

As we prepare to celebrate his birth,  
make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your Word,  
and move us by your Spirit to bless your wonderful works.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain,  
whose day draws near:  
your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
may the power of the Spirit  
which came upon Mary and made her womb fruitful  
sanctify the gifts we have placed on this altar.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Advent II, page 452; interpolation for Eucharistic  
Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

In this communion, almighty God,  
you have given us the pledge of eternal redemption.  
Grant that the closer we come to the feast of Christmas,  
the more eagerly we may prepare to celebrate  
the saving mystery of your Son's birth.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 797.



## SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

*The goodness and loving-kindness  
of God our Saviour has appeared among us*

SEE TITUS 3:4



## SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

1 The season of Christmas begins with Evening Prayer I of Christmas and concludes with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, that is, the Sunday after Epiphany or after 6 January. This season celebrates the birth of Christ and his early manifestations, and the Church considers it second only to the annual celebration of the Easter mystery.<sup>1</sup>

2 In the earliest centuries, the Church had but one feast, the weekly and yearly celebration of the paschal mystery. Soon the Church began to celebrate the birth and manifestation of Christ, the sun of justice (see Malachi 4:2) and light of the world (see John 8:12). This feast coincided with the winter solstice. Since the days of Saint Leo the Great, the texts of the season have expressed the Church's understanding of Christmas as more than the simple commemoration of a historical event. It is rather the celebration of a mystery, not a separate mystery independent of the paschal mystery, but the beginnings of that mystery of salvation. From the first moments of his human existence, Christ was achieving humanity's redemption. The Christ who was to die and rise for us is recognised as the incarnate Son of God: "Today a new day dawns, the day of our redemption, prepared by God from ages past, the beginning of our never ending gladness."<sup>2</sup>

3 A high point of the Christmas celebration is the reading of Saint John's prologue, which proclaims that "the Word was made flesh and lived among us" (John 1:14). All the readings and prayers lead up to, or echo, this conviction, proclaimed by the great councils of Nicaea, Ephesus, and Chalcedon and celebrated in the Christmas liturgy as the "holy exchange," whereby "we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity."<sup>3</sup>

4 The Church celebrates the one true light, the light that banishes darkness.<sup>4</sup>

- The Christmas image of light, of night giving way to day, is reinforced by the sequence of the Mass texts. Texts are provided for Christmas Masses in the evening (vigil), at midnight, at dawn, and during the day. The texts of these several celebrations are meant to be used at the actual time of day indicated by the titles of the celebrations.
- The *Gloria* is inspired by the song of the angels at the birth of Christ (see Luke 2:14). On Christmas night it is heard for the first time since the beginning of Advent. On this occasion above all others it should be sung by the whole assembly with joy and festive fervour.

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<sup>1</sup> See Congregation of Rites, General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar, 21 March 1969 (hereafter, GNLYC), nos. 32 and 33.

<sup>2</sup> *The Liturgy of the Hours*, Christmas, Office of Readings, responsory.

<sup>3</sup> The Birth of the Lord, Mass at Midnight, prayer over the gifts; Order of Mass, preparation of the gifts.

<sup>4</sup> See the Birth of the Lord, Mass at Midnight, opening prayer; see Fifth Day in the Octave of Christmas, opening prayer.

- Symbols of the triumph of light over darkness and of life over death, for example, in some places candlelight and evergreens, are traditionally used to decorate the church and assist devotion.
- The rich images of new light and new life provide many creative possibilities for decorating the church in harmony with the local culture and traditions. The symbol of light recalls the Christian celebration of Easter and helps to link the incarnation with the paschal mystery of salvation. The symbol will be expressed differently in the northern hemisphere, where Christmas occurs at the winter solstice, and the southern hemisphere, where it coincides with the height of summer.
- The manger scene can be of great assistance to all in recalling the story and the circumstances of Jesus' birth in history and in rekindling a sense of wonder and simplicity. By its design or location, however, it should not displace or overshadow the signs of the Lord's real presence and activity in word and sacrament, in the assembly and in its ministers.

5 Christmas has its own octave, during which the feasts of Saint Stephen (26 December), Saint John (27 December), and the Holy Innocents (28 December) are celebrated. These saints are seen as having a particular relation to the Christmas mystery and were traditionally honoured as "companions of Christ." The Sunday occurring within the octave is celebrated as the feast of the Holy Family.<sup>5</sup>

6 The octave day itself, 1 January, is observed as the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, and like the Fourth Sunday of Advent it highlights the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the incarnation and manifestation of the Lord. It also recalls the conferral of the holy Name of Jesus.<sup>6</sup> In some places people seek God's blessing for the year that begins on this day.

7 In the Eastern Churches the solemnity of the Epiphany was the original feast of Christ's birth. When adopted by the West, it became a celebration of the revelation of God's eternal plan of salvation in Christ, manifested as "the light to enlighten all nations" and represented traditionally in the story of the Magi.<sup>7</sup> From early times it was associated also with a commemoration of the Lord's baptism when he was anointed as Messiah and revealed as God's Son.

- The Epiphany is celebrated on 6 January or, wherever it is not observed as a day of obligation, on the Sunday falling between 2 and 8 January.<sup>8</sup>
- The custom of keeping Christmas decorations until Epiphany has been celebrated helps to show that Christmas and Epiphany are but two aspects of the same feast. It would be even more appropriate to extend this custom through the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, the close of the season of Christmas.

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<sup>5</sup> See GNLYC, no. 35.

<sup>6</sup> See GNLYC, no. 35.

<sup>7</sup> Preface, Epiphany of the Lord.

<sup>8</sup> See GNLYC, no. 37.

8 The Baptism of the Lord is now celebrated separately on the Sunday after 6 January.<sup>9</sup> (In those places where the Epiphany is transferred to Sunday when the Epiphany falls on 7 or 8 January, the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the following Monday.<sup>10</sup>) The Baptism of the Lord brings to a close the Christmas season and recalls the opening of Jesus' public mission and ministry. The voice from the cloud acknowledging Christ as the beloved Son of God ushers the Church into Ordinary Time and its weekly proclamation of the life and teaching of the Lord.

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<sup>9</sup> See GNLYC, no. 38.

<sup>10</sup> Congregation for Sacraments and Divine Worship, Decree *Celebratio Baptismatis Domini* on the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, 7 October 1977.

25 DECEMBER  
SOLEMNITY

## THE BIRTH OF THE LORD

### VIGIL MASS

This Mass is celebrated during the evening of 24 December, before or after Evening Prayer I of Christmas.

#### OPENING PRAYER

Eternal God,  
every year you gladden our hearts  
by renewing our hope of redemption;  
grant that we who accept your only Son as our Redeemer  
may face him with confidence when he comes as our judge,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

#### ALTERNATIVE OPENING PRAYER

God of Abraham and Sarah,  
of David and his descendants,  
unwearied is your love for us  
and steadfast your covenant;  
wonderful beyond words  
is your gift of the Saviour,  
born of the Virgin Mary.

Count us among the people in whom you delight,  
and by this night's marriage of earth and heaven  
draw all generations into the embrace of your love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: When the Nicene Creed is used, all genuflect during the words  
**was incarnate . . . made man.**

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
make our hearts more ready  
to observe this solemn vigil,  
for you teach us to see in these mysteries  
the beginning of our redemption.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Christmas I-III, pages 454-458; interpolation for  
Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Give us new life, Lord God,  
as we celebrate the birth of your only Son,  
who in this heavenly sacrament  
has become our food and drink.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 798.

On Christmas day, all priests may celebrate or concelebrate three Masses, provided  
that they are celebrated at their true times.

## MASS AT MIDNIGHT

The Mass at midnight may appropriately be preceded by a public celebration of the Office of Readings from the Liturgy of the Hours; this office also may be expanded into the form of a protracted vigil (see General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, nos. 215 and 71). If there is no interval between this vigil and the Mass, the ministers of the Mass may be present and vested during the vigil, and in place of the *Te Deum*, the *Gloria* is sung and the Mass continues with the opening prayer.

### OPENING PRAYER

God our Creator,  
who made this most holy night radiant  
with the splendour of the one true light,  
grant in your mercy  
that, as we celebrate on earth the mystery of that light,  
we may also rejoice in its fullness in heaven.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

### ALTERNATIVE OPENING PRAYER

Good and gracious God,  
on this holy night you gave us your Son,  
the Lord of the universe, wrapped in swaddling clothes,  
the Saviour of all, lying in a manger.

On this holy night  
draw us into the mystery of your love.  
Join our voices with the heavenly host,  
that we may sing your glory on high.  
Give us a place among the shepherds,  
that we may find the one for whom we have waited,  
Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: When the Nicene Creed is used, all genuflect during the words  
**was incarnate . . . made man.**

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Accept our offerings, Lord God, on this festive night,  
that through this holy exchange  
we may become like Christ,  
in whom our nature is united to your Godhead.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Christmas I-III, pages 454-468; interpolation for  
Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
we celebrate with joy the birth of our Redeemer.  
Grant that through worthy and holy lives  
we may be welcomed into his glorious company for ever.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 798.

## MASS AT DAWN

OPENING  
PRAYER

God of splendour,  
at the birth of your incarnate Word  
we are bathed in new radiance;  
grant that the light which shines in our hearts through faith  
may also show forth in our actions.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

Today, O God of light,  
your loving-kindness dawns,  
your tender compassion shines upon us,  
for in our Saviour, born of human flesh,  
you reveal your gracious gift  
of our birth to life eternal.

Fill us with wonder on this holy day:  
let us treasure in our hearts  
what we have been told,  
that our lives may proclaim  
your great and gentle mercy.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: When the Nicene Creed is used, all genuflect during the words  
**was incarnate . . . made man.**

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
may the gifts we offer on this feast of our Saviour's birth  
be worthy of the mystery we celebrate:  
just as the child who was born today  
shone forth also as God,  
so let these fruits of creation  
confer upon us that which is divine.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Christmas I-III, pages 454-458; interpolation for  
Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord,  
as we rejoice in the birth of your Son,  
grant us the grace  
to affirm this great mystery with steadfast faith  
and to embrace it with an ever growing love.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 798.

## MASS DURING THE DAY

OPENING  
PRAYER

O God,  
you wonderfully created human nature  
and even more wonderfully restored its dignity.  
Give us the grace to share in the divinity of Christ,  
who humbled himself to share in our humanity.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

We praise you, gracious God,  
for the glad tidings of peace,  
the good news of salvation:  
your Word became flesh,  
and we have seen his glory.

Let the radiance of that glory  
enlighten the lives  
of those who celebrate his birth.

Reveal to all the world  
the light no darkness can extinguish,  
our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: When the Nicene Creed is used, all genuflect during the words  
**was incarnate . . . made man.**

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
on this solemn day accept the offering  
which has brought us reconciliation and perfect peace  
and is the full expression of our worship.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Christmas I-III, pages 454-458; interpolation for  
Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Merciful God,  
grant that the Saviour of the world,  
who was born this day  
to bring us new and divine life,  
may bestow upon us the gift of life everlasting.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 798.

SUNDAY WITHIN  
THE OCTAVE OF  
CHRISTMAS  
FEAST

## THE HOLY FAMILY

This feast was established as part of the Christmas season in 1921 following promotion of the cult in the nineteenth century; it was linked to the octave of Christmas in 1969. The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, itself subject to the difficulties and social pressures of its time, is offered as a model for Christian family life today.

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If Christmas falls on a Sunday, the feast of the Holy Family is celebrated on 30 December.

OPENING  
PRAYER

God of blessings,  
in the Holy Family you give us the model  
of a household drawn together in love.  
Grant that we may follow their example  
and be welcomed with joy into your home in heaven.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE

OPENING      YEAR A  
PRAYER

Loving God,  
guardian of our homes,  
when you entrusted your Son  
to the care of Mary and Joseph,  
you did not spare them the pains  
that touch the life of every family.

Teach us to rely on your word,  
that in our trials as in our joys  
we may be clothed in gentleness and patience  
and united in love.  
Make us ever-thankful  
for the blessings you give us  
through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

O God,  
you cradle us at the beginning of life  
and embrace us at our journey's end,  
for you love us as your own.

Bind our families together  
and deepen our faith,  
that, like the Holy Family of Nazareth,  
we may grow in wisdom,  
obedient to your word.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C      As your sons and daughters, O loving God,  
we come before you in thanksgiving,  
called and united by your eternal Word.

Teach us to ponder the mystery of Nazareth,  
that we may always find in you  
the source of our strength  
and the unity of our families.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

We beg you, Lord,  
accept the sacrifice which makes our peace with you  
and, through the prayers of Mary, the virgin Mother of God,  
and of blessed Joseph, her husband,  
unite our families in your grace and peace.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Christmas I-III, pages 454-458; interpolation for  
Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Merciful Father,  
you have refreshed us with this heavenly sacrament.  
Grant us the grace to follow closely  
the example of the Holy Family,  
that, after the trials of this present life,  
we may be welcomed into their company for ever.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 798.

1 JANUARY  
SOLEMNITY

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

The Virgin Mary was already venerated as Mother of God when, in 431, the Council of Ephesus acclaimed her *Theotokos* (God-bearer). Her role in the mystery of the incarnation was celebrated on this day in Rome in the seventh century but was soon eclipsed by other feasts of Mary. Restored to the liturgical calendar in 1931, and to this day in 1969, the feast celebrates from a Marian perspective the Word made flesh, and so enriches the observance of the octave of Christmas and provides a solemn beginning to the New Year.

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OPENING  
PRAYER

O God,  
through the fruitful virginity of blessed Mary  
you offered to the human race  
the treasures of eternal salvation.  
Let us experience the power of her prayers,  
for through her we have received the author of life, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

Most high God,  
you come near to us this Christmas season  
in the child born of the Virgin Mary.  
In the depths of darkness, she gave birth to light;  
in the depths of silence, she brought forth the Word.  
  
Grant that we who ponder these things in our hearts  
may recognise in her child  
our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

You, O God, are the beginning of every good  
and bring all things to perfection.  
On this feast of Mary, the Mother of God,  
grant that, as we delight in your first gifts of grace,  
we may rejoice one day in their glorious fulfilment.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of the Blessed Virgin Mary I, page 530; interpolation for  
Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord,  
as we joyfully proclaim the Virgin Mary  
to be Mother of your Son and Mother of the Church,  
we ask that this heavenly sacrament  
by which we have been nourished  
may bring us to life everlasting.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 815.

## SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

OPENING  
PRAYER

All-powerful and ever-living God,  
glory of those who believe in you,  
fill the world with your splendour  
and show every nation the radiance of your light.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

God most high,  
your only Son embraced the weakness of our flesh  
to give us the power to become your children;  
your eternal Word chose to dwell among us,  
that we might live in your presence.

Grant us a spirit of wisdom  
to know how rich is the glory you have made our own,  
and how great the hope to which we are called  
in Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
as we recall the birth of your only Son,  
make holy the gifts we bring,  
for his coming shows us the way of truth  
and promises life in the kingdom of heaven,  
where he lives and reigns for ever and ever.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Christmas I-III, pages 454-458.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
let the workings of this holy mystery  
rid us of all that is evil  
and bring to fulfilment  
those things for which we rightly yearn.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 798.

6 JANUARY  
SOLEMNITY

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Epiphany is the earliest Christmas feast, originating in the East in the third century and passing to the West in the fourth century. A celebration of the divine “manifestation” or “coming,” in the East it commemorates the baptism of the Lord and in the West the visit of the Magi. These wise men represent all peoples on earth, to whom the mystery of the incarnation is now revealed.

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Where the solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord is not observed as a holyday of obligation, it is celebrated on the Sunday between 2 January and 8 January, which is then considered its proper day in the calendar.

OPENING  
PRAYER

God of mystery,  
on this day you revealed your only Son to the nations  
by the guidance of a star.  
We know you now by faith;  
lead us into that presence  
where we shall behold your glory face to face.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

Lord God of the nations,  
we have seen the star of your glory  
rising in splendour.  
The radiance of your incarnate Word  
pierces the darkness that covers the earth  
and signals the dawn of peace and justice.

Make radiant the lives of your people  
with that same brightness,  
and beckon all the nations  
to walk as one in your light.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
accept the gifts of your Church,  
which offers you today not gold, frankincense, and myrrh,  
but the one who in these gifts is proclaimed, offered,  
and received,  
Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of the Epiphany of the Lord, page 460; interpolation for  
Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Guide us always and everywhere, Lord,  
by your light from on high,  
that we may discern with clear minds  
and treasure with deep affection  
the mystery you have given us to share.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 800.

FEAST      THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Drawing from the Eastern tradition of Epiphany, the West has remembered the baptism of the Lord on the octave of the Epiphany since the eighth century. The feast was formally introduced into the Roman calendar in 1960 and is now celebrated on the Sunday after the Epiphany as the conclusion to the season of Christmas. It commemorates the revelation of Jesus as God's beloved Son, the Christ, anointed by the Spirit.

If the Epiphany of the Lord is celebrated on Sunday, 7 or 8 January, then the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the following Monday.

OPENING  
PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God,  
when Christ was baptised in the river Jordan,  
the Holy Spirit came upon him  
and your voice declared him your beloved Son.  
Keep all who are reborn of water and the Spirit  
as children of adoption in whom you are well pleased.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

OR:    O God,  
your only-begotten Son has appeared in human flesh;  
grant that he, whose outward form is like our own,  
may reshape us inwardly by his grace.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE

OPENING      YEAR A  
PRAYER

God of the covenant,  
you anointed your beloved Son  
with the power of the Holy Spirit  
to be light for the nations  
and release for captives.

Grant that we who are born again  
of water and the Spirit  
may proclaim with our lips the good news of his peace  
and show forth in our lives the victory of his justice.

We make our prayer through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B      God of salvation,  
in the river Jordan you bathed your Son Jesus in glory  
and revealed him as your obedient servant.

In spirit and in power  
rend the heavens and come down to us.  
Strengthen us to acknowledge your Christ,  
that we who are reborn in his likeness  
may walk with him the path of obedience.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C      Open the heavens,  
almighty Father,  
and pour out your Spirit  
upon your people gathered in prayer.

Renew the power of our baptismal cleansing  
and fill us with zeal for good deeds.  
Let us hear your voice once again,  
that we may recognise in your beloved Son  
our hope of inheriting eternal life.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
in the splendour of eternal light,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
accept the gifts of your faithful people,  
presented on this day  
when Jesus was proclaimed your beloved Son.  
Let our offering become the sacrifice of him  
who has washed away the sins of the world  
and who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of the Baptism of the Lord, page 462.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Refreshed by these holy gifts, Lord God,  
we seek your mercy,  
that, by listening faithfully to your only Son,  
we may be your children in name and in truth.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, pages 806-814.

Ordinary Time begins on the Monday following this Sunday and continues until the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Sunday Mass texts for Ordinary Time begin on page 868.



## SEASON OF LENT

*Jesus proclaimed his message:  
Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand*

SEE MATTHEW 4:17



## SEASON OF LENT

1 Lent is the season in which we “prepare with joy for the paschal feast,”<sup>1</sup> with minds and hearts renewed. In Lent, the community of faith is blessed with a spirit of loving reverence for God and of willing service to neighbour. The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes before the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday.<sup>2</sup>

### BAPTISMAL AND PENITENTIAL THEMES

2 The liturgy of Lent is marked by two closely related themes, the baptismal and the penitential.<sup>3</sup> It is a time of purification and enlightenment for the elect, those preparing to receive the sacraments of Easter initiation. In this they are helped by the local Church, the whole community of the faithful, who recall their own baptism and prepare for its renewal. Both the elect and the local community join together in a spirit of repentance and conversion of heart, making Lent a time of spiritual recollection for the whole Church as it prepares for the celebration of Easter.<sup>4</sup>

3 Therefore Lent is a time for more intense prayer and reflection and for particular attention to the word of God.<sup>5</sup> This takes place above all in the Sunday eucharist. Lenten penance is not “only inward and individual, but also outward and social.”<sup>6</sup> Prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and other works of charity are the traditional ways of deepening conversion to Christ.

4 The celebration of the Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names usually coincides with the beginning of Lent. By means of this rite, the candidates for initiation are accepted for their final preparation for the sacraments of initiation. The Church’s acceptance of the candidates is founded on the election by God, in whose name the Church acts. As a pledge of fidelity, they inscribe their names in the book containing the list of those who have been chosen for initiation.<sup>7</sup>

- Sponsors and godparents, as well as catechists, priests, and deacons have particular responsibilities toward the elect. They show the elect how to practice the gospel in personal and social life, sustain them in

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<sup>1</sup> Preface of Lent I.

<sup>2</sup> See Congregation of Rites, General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar, 21 March 1969 (hereafter, GNLYC), no. 28.

<sup>3</sup> See Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, SC), art. 109.

<sup>4</sup> See The Roman Ritual, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (hereafter, RCIA), Introduction, no. 9; see RCIA, no. 125.

<sup>5</sup> See SC, art. 109.

<sup>6</sup> SC, art. 110.

<sup>7</sup> See RCIA, nos. 105 and 106.

moments of hesitancy or anxiety, guide them, and bear witness on their behalf before the whole community.<sup>8</sup>

- The presence of the elect in the midst of the community and their gracious dismissal from the eucharistic assembly during Lent are strong symbols of the baptismal character of the season. The celebration of the scrutinies during the parish Sunday eucharist not only heals and strengthens the elect, but helps all the faithful to deepen their own conversion.
- As the season of Lent leads the elect to the sacraments of initiation, so it leads the faithful to celebrate the sacrament of penance, which restores them from sin to baptismal innocence and reconciles them to God and the Church. Opportunities for communal and individual forms of reconciliation should be provided, especially toward the end of Lent.<sup>9</sup>
- Because Lent is a time of preparation for the Easter sacraments, parents and godparents of infants to be baptised are also to receive appropriate formation so that the infants can be baptised on Easter Sunday, either at the Vigil or at one of the Masses during the day, or on one of the Sundays of Easter.<sup>10</sup>
- A homily is recommended at weekday Masses during Lent; intercession for the elect and for sinners is especially appropriate in this season; and the Eucharistic Prayers for Masses of Reconciliation may be especially suitable.<sup>11</sup>
- Music should reflect the more sober mood of Lent and thus provide a contrast with the festive music of the Easter season which follows. The *Gloria* is not used as the opening rite at Mass and the *Alleluia* is replaced by other gospel acclamations.<sup>12</sup>
- The use of violet vestments and the simplicity of decoration in the church reflect the penitential nature of this season.<sup>13</sup> In those places where the conference of bishops has decided that the custom be maintained of covering crosses and images in the church during the last two weeks of Lent, the crosses are uncovered after the Good Friday liturgy, and other images before the Easter Vigil.
- Penitential services, the Liturgy of the Hours, and devotions such as the Stations of the Cross can play a part in stirring up a spirit of repentance during the season of Lent.

## THE ROLE OF THE BISHOP

5 The celebration of the Easter mystery is the high point of the Church's year and is accomplished with the utmost solemnity. The intimately related seasons of

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<sup>8</sup> See RCIA, Introduction, no. 11.

<sup>9</sup> See The Roman Ritual, *Rite of Penance*, Introduction, no. 13.

<sup>10</sup> See The Roman Ritual, *Rite of Baptism for Children*, Introduction, no. 9.

<sup>11</sup> See General Instruction of the Roman Missal (hereafter, GIRM), no. 42; see SC, art. 109.

<sup>12</sup> See GNLYC, no. 28; see GIRM, nos. 31 and 37.

<sup>13</sup> See GIRM, no. 308.

Lent and Easter are therefore an eminently suitable time for the bishop as chief shepherd of the diocese to gather the flock of God's people for special liturgical celebrations. Thus it becomes clear that initiation, reconciliation, and healing are essentially ecclesial acts.<sup>14</sup>

- As the focal point of the church's concern for the catechumens, admission to election belongs to the bishop. The presiding celebrant for the rite is the bishop himself or one who acts as his delegate.<sup>15</sup>
- Following the ancient custom of the Church of Rome, the bishop is strongly encouraged to gather the faithful on Sundays or on other days during Lent, in the principal parish churches or places of pilgrimage in the diocese, to celebrate the liturgy with them.
- Toward the end of Lent, the bishop gathers the clergy and the people of the diocese to bless the oils for the Church's ministry to catechumens and the sick and to consecrate the chrism used in the sacraments of Easter initiation and holy orders. Although presbyters may bless oil before anointing catechumens in the initiation of adults and, in case of necessity, before anointing the sick, use of the oil blessed by the bishop expresses more strongly the ministry of the whole local Church. The bishop may take this opportunity to instruct the presbyters about the reverent use and safe custody of the holy oils.<sup>16</sup>

## THE DAYS OF LENT

6 The season of Lent leads to the Easter Triduum, which begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday and ends with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday. The final days of Lent together with the Easter Triduum make up Holy Week. Beginning on Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) with Jesus' messianic entry into Jerusalem, Holy Week recalls the passion and resurrection of Christ.<sup>17</sup>

- The Sundays of Lent, Ash Wednesday, and the weekdays of Holy Week take precedence over all feasts and solemnities; only feasts and solemnities take precedence over the weekdays of Lent.<sup>18</sup>

7 Ash Wednesday, a day of fast and abstinence, sets the tone for Lent through the call to turn away from sin and to be faithful to the gospel.

8 The Sundays of Lent each have a special character drawn from the gospel of the day. On the first Sunday, the Church remembers how the Lord is led into the wilderness for forty days where he is tempted, and on the second, how Christ is transfigured on the mountain. On the next three Sundays, three great Johannine passages of major importance for Christian initiation are read: the Samaritan woman at the well, the man born blind, and the raising of Lazarus. While alternatives are given for years B and C, these gospels from year A may always be used with the

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<sup>14</sup> See RCIA, Introduction, no. 12.

<sup>15</sup> See RCIA, no. 108.

<sup>16</sup> See The Roman Pontifical, *Rite of the Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism*, Introduction, nos. 1, 6-9.

<sup>17</sup> See GNLYC, nos. 19 and 31.

<sup>18</sup> See GNLYC, nos. 5 and 16.

other readings from year A, especially where the elect are preparing for Easter. Finally, on the last Sunday of Lent, the account of the Lord's passion is proclaimed from one of the synoptic gospels.<sup>19</sup>

9 The first readings for the Sundays of Lent present the main elements of the history of salvation from its beginning until the promise of the new covenant. The readings from the letters of the apostles have been selected to complement the gospel and the first readings and, as far as possible, to make a connection between them.<sup>20</sup>

- The opening prayers and prefaces for the Sundays of Lent serve to reinforce the power of the readings for these Sundays. The Scrutinies, which are celebrated on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent, draw from and build upon the gospel reading in particular for each of these Sundays. The penitential rite is particularly appropriate as an opening rite for the celebration of the eucharist in Lent.

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<sup>19</sup> See The Roman Missal, *Lectionary for Mass*, 2nd English edition, 1981, Introduction (hereafter, LM), no. 97.

<sup>20</sup> See LM, no. 97



## OUTLINE OF THE RITE

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Procession

Greeting

Opening Prayer

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel

Homily

Blessing and Giving of Ashes

General Intercessions

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### CONCLUDING RITE

## ASH WEDNESDAY

The ashes used today come from the branches blessed the preceding year for Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday).

When necessary the blessing and the giving of ashes may also be celebrated outside Mass. In this case the introductory rites and the liturgy of the word should be celebrated as indicated below, and the rite concludes with the Lord's Prayer and the blessing and dismissal.

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

### GREETING

After making the sign of the cross, the priest greets the people, using the following greeting or one of the greetings from the Order of Mass.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father,  
and Christ Jesus our Lord  
be with you all.

The people answer:

And also with you.

The priest, deacon, or other suitable minister may very briefly introduce the Mass of the day. The opening rite is omitted and the opening prayer follows immediately.

### OPENING PRAYER

Grant us, Lord, the grace  
to begin this time of Christian service with a holy fast,  
that, as we struggle against the spirit of evil,  
we may be strengthened by the practice of self-discipline.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

### ALTERNATIVE OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and merciful God,  
you look with love upon a sinful people  
and desire only their return to you.

We beg of you the grace to live this holy season,  
to persevere in prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.  
By the discipline of Lent  
purify our hearts of all pretension,  
bring us back to you,  
and make the whole Church ready  
to celebrate the mysteries of Easter.

Grant this through Christ, our liberator from sin,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

BLESSING  
AND  
GIVING  
OF ASHES

INVITATION TO PRAYER

After the homily, the priest, with hands joined, invites the people to pray, using the following invitation or similar words.

Dear friends,  
let us implore God our Father  
to bless and sanctify these ashes,  
which we place on our heads as a sign of repentance.

All pray briefly in silence.

BLESSING OF ASHES

The priest, with hands outstretched, blesses the ashes, using one of the following prayers.

Lord God,  
you are moved by humility  
and grant pardon to those who repent.  
Listen to our prayers  
and pour out + your blessing  
on those who are marked by these ashes,  
that, observing the season of Lent,  
they may come with hearts made clean  
to celebrate the paschal mystery of your Son.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord,  
you do not wish sinners to die  
but to turn to you and live.  
In your goodness hear our prayer:  
bless + these ashes,  
which we place on our heads to remind us  
that we are dust and unto dust we shall return.  
Grant that by our faithful observance of Lent  
we may gain pardon for our sins  
and newness of life  
in the image of your risen Son.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He sprinkles the ashes with holy water in silence.

#### GIVING OF ASHES

After receiving the ashes himself, the priest then places ashes on those who come forward. He may be assisted by the deacon and other ministers.

During the giving of ashes, the choir and people may sing Psalm 51 with one of the antiphons from the Antiphonal, page 984, or another appropriate song.

As the ashes are given to each person, the priest or other minister says one of the following Scripture verses.

Repent, and be faithful to the gospel.

Remember you are dust  
and to dust you will return.

After the giving of ashes, the priest and other ministers wash their hands; the profession of faith is not said. The rite concludes with the general intercessions (prayer of the faithful) and the Mass continues in the usual way.

#### PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Lord God,  
as Lent begins we offer you this solemn sacrifice,  
begging that through our works of charity and penance  
we may turn away from sin and harmful pleasures  
and unite ourselves more closely to the passion of your Son,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Lent III or IV, pages 468-470; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord,  
may the sacrament we have received in faith  
sustain and strengthen us,  
so that our Lenten fast may win favour in your sight  
and help to remedy our human weakness.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 852.

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

OPENING  
PRAYER

Grant us, almighty God,  
that through this yearly observance of Lent  
we may enter more deeply into the mystery of Christ  
and draw upon its power in the conduct of our lives.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE

OPENING      YEAR A  
PRAYER

Lord our God,  
in every age you call a people  
to hear your word  
and to do your will.

Renew us in these Lenten days:  
washed clean of sin,  
sealed with the Spirit,  
and sustained by your living bread,  
may we remain true to our calling  
and, with the elect, serve you alone.

Grant this through Christ, our liberator from sin,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

God of the covenant,  
as the forty days of deluge  
swept away the world's corruption  
and watered new beginnings  
of righteousness and life,  
so in the saving flood of baptism  
your people are washed clean and born again.

Throughout these forty days, we beg you,  
unseal for us the wellspring of your grace,  
cleanse our hearts of all that is not holy,  
and cause your gift of new life to flourish once again.

Grant this through Christ, our liberator from sin,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR C      Lord our God,  
you alone do we worship,  
only your word gives life.

Sustain your Church on its Lenten journey.  
When we walk through the desert of temptation,  
strengthen us to renounce the power of evil.  
When our faith is tested by doubt,  
illumine our hearts with Easter's bright promise.

We ask this through Christ, our deliverance and hope,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

ELECTION OR ENROLLMENT OF NAMES: If the Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names is celebrated today, it follows the homily (see *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*).

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
at the beginning of this holy season refashion our hearts  
and make them one with the sacrifice we are about to offer.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of the First Sunday of Lent, page 472; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord,  
you have renewed us with the heavenly bread  
that enlivens our faith, inspires our hope,  
and strengthens our charity.  
Teach us to hunger for Christ, the true and living bread,  
and to live by every word that proceeds from your mouth.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 852.

## SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

OPENING  
PRAYER

O God,  
who commanded us to listen to your beloved Son,  
nourish us inwardly with your word of life  
and purify the eyes of our spirit,  
that we may rejoice in the sight of your glory.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE

OPENING      YEAR A  
PRAYER

Holy God,  
from the dazzling cloud  
you revealed Jesus in glory  
as your beloved Son.

During these forty days  
enlighten your Church with the bright glory of your presence.  
Inspire us by your word  
and so transform us into the image of the risen Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

Ever-faithful God,  
you were well pleased with Abraham's obedience  
and you accepted the sacrifice of your Son,  
who gave himself up for the sake of us all.

Train us by Christ's teaching  
and school us in his obedience,  
that, as we walk his way of sacrifice,  
we may come to share in your glory.

We ask this through Christ, our deliverance and hope,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR C      God of the covenant,  
your presence fills us with awe,  
your word gives us unshakeable hope.

Fix in our hearts  
the image of your Son in glory,  
that, sustained on the path of discipleship,  
we may pass over with him to newness of life.

Grant this through Christ, our deliverance and hope,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
may this eucharistic sacrifice wash away our sins;  
may it sanctify your people in body and soul  
and prepare us to celebrate the paschal feast.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of the Second Sunday of Lent, page 474; interpolation  
for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

We give you grateful thanks, O Lord,  
for this most glorious sacrament,  
in which you allow us, while pilgrims still on earth,  
a foretaste of the blessings of heaven.

We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 852.

## THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

If the First Scrutiny in preparation for the baptism of adults takes place today, the Ritual Mass of the First Scrutiny is used, page 231.

### MASS OF THE DAY

OPENING  
PRAYER

O God,  
source of all mercy and goodness,  
in almsgiving, fasting, and prayer  
you have shown us a remedy for sin.  
Listen with love as we confess our weakness,  
and, when we are bowed down by the knowledge of our guilt,  
lift up our hearts with the assurance of your mercy.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE

OPENING      YEAR A  
PRAYER

O God, living and true,  
look upon your people,  
whose dry and stony hearts are parched with thirst.

Unseal the living water of your Spirit;  
let it become within us an ever-flowing spring,  
leaping up to eternal life.  
Thus may we worship you in spirit and in truth  
through Christ, our deliverance and hope,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

Holy God,  
the folly of the cross  
mocks our human wisdom,  
and the weakness of the crucified  
puts worldly power to shame.

Banish from our hearts  
every pretence of might and of knowledge,  
that by the power flowing from Christ's resurrection  
your people may be raised up from the death of sin  
and fashioned into a living temple of your glory.

Grant this through Christ, our liberator from sin,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR C      God of salvation,  
we stand before you on holy ground,  
for your name is glorified  
and your mercy revealed  
wherever your mighty deeds are remembered.

Since you are holy and forbearing,  
turn us from every rash and shallow judgement  
to seek the ways of repentance.

We ask this through Christ, our deliverance and hope,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Through this sacrifice of reconciliation  
grant in your mercy, Lord,  
that we who seek pardon for our own sins  
may also learn to forgive one another.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : When the gospel of the Samaritan woman is read (Year A), the Preface of the Third Sunday of Lent, page 476, is used. When that gospel is not read, the Preface of Lent I or II, pages 464-466, is used; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
you feed us in this life with bread from heaven,  
the pledge and foreshadowing of future glory;  
grant that the working of this sacrament within us  
may bear fruit in our daily lives.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 852.



## MASS OF THE FIRST SCRUTINY

OPENING  
PRAYER

Grant, all-provident God,  
that our elect may grow in wisdom and reverence  
as they prepare to confess your name.

Through your grace  
restore them to that first innocence  
which was lost by the sin of Adam and Eve.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

O God,  
let your merciful grace inspire your servants,  
and let it shape their way of life,  
that they may worthily receive these holy mysteries.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of the Third Sunday of Lent, page 476; interpolations for  
Eucharistic Prayer I, pages 590 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, pages 607 and 611.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord God,  
draw near with your redeeming grace.  
Watch over the elect  
and prepare them for the sacrament of eternal life.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 852.

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

If the Second Scrutiny in preparation for the baptism of adults takes place today, the Ritual Mass of the Second Scrutiny is used, page 235.

### MASS OF THE DAY

\OPENING  
PRAYER

In a wonderful manner, Lord God,  
you reconcile humankind to yourself  
through your only Son, the eternal Word.  
Grant that your Christian people  
may press on toward the Easter sacraments  
with lively faith and ready hearts.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING PRAYER  
YEAR A

God our Creator,  
show forth your mighty works  
in the midst of your people.  
Enlighten your Church,  
that we may know your Son  
as the true light of the world  
and through our worship confess him  
as Christ and Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

O God, rich in mercy,  
you so loved the world  
that, when we were dead in our sins,  
you sent your only Son for our deliverance.

Lifted up from the earth,  
he is light and life;  
exalted upon the cross,  
he is truth and salvation.

Raise us up with Christ  
and make us rich in good works,  
that we may walk as children of light  
toward the paschal feast of heaven.

We ask this through Christ, our deliverance and hope,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR C      God of compassion,  
you await the sinner's return  
and spread a feast to welcome home the lost.

Save us from the temptations  
that lead away from you,  
and draw us back by the constancy of your love,  
that we may take our place in your household  
and gladly share our inheritance with others.

Grant this through Christ, our liberator from sin,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

With joy, Lord, we present to you the sacrifice  
that brings us eternal healing.  
Grant in your goodness  
that we may celebrate this mystery with faith  
and offer it worthily for the salvation of the world.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : When the gospel of the man born blind is read (Year A), the Preface of the Fourth Sunday of Lent, page 478, is used. When that gospel is not read, the Preface of Lent I or II, pages 464-466, is used; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

God of majesty,  
you enlighten everyone who comes into this world;  
fill our hearts with the light of your grace,  
that our thoughts may always be pleasing to you  
and our love for you always sincere.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 852.



## MASS OF THE SECOND SCRUTINY

OPENING  
PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God,  
fill your Church with the joy of the Spirit,  
that these elect, born once of earthly parents,  
may be born again to the new life of your kingdom.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

With joy, Lord, we present to you the sacrifice  
that brings us eternal healing.  
Grant in your goodness  
that we may celebrate this mystery with faith  
and offer it worthily for the elect.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of the Fourth Sunday of Lent, page 478; interpolations  
for Eucharistic Prayer I, pages 590 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, pages 607 and  
611.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Sustain your family always, Lord God,  
and guide them along right paths;  
keep them obedient to your will,  
and in your never-failing goodness  
direct them toward eternal salvation.

We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 852.

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

If the Third Scrutiny in preparation for the baptism of adults takes place today, the Ritual Mass of the Third Scrutiny is used, page 239.

### MASS OF THE DAY

OPENING  
PRAYER

Come to our aid, Lord God,  
that we may walk courageously in that love  
of which your Son gave proof  
when he handed himself over to death  
out of love for the world.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING PRAYER  
YEAR A

Merciful God,  
you showed your glory to our fallen race  
by sending your Son  
to confound the powers of death.

Call us forth from sin's dark tomb.  
Break the bonds which hold us,  
that we may believe and proclaim Christ,  
the cause of our freedom  
and the source of life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

In our hearts, O God,  
you have written a covenant of grace,  
sealed by the obedience of Jesus your Son.

Raise us up with Christ,  
the grain fallen to earth  
that yields a harvest of everlasting life.  
Bring us to glorify your name  
by following faithfully where he has led.

We ask this through Christ, our deliverance and hope,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

YEAR C      God of power,  
God of mercy,  
you bring forth springs in the wasteland  
and turn despair into hope.

Look not upon the sins of our past,  
but lift from our hearts  
the failures that weigh us down,  
that we may find refreshment and life  
in Christ, our liberator from sin,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Almighty God,  
listen to our prayers:  
as you have instructed your servants in the Christian faith,  
so purify their hearts by the power of this sacrifice.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : When the gospel of Lazarus is read (Year A), the Preface of the Fifth Sunday of Lent, page 480, is used. When that gospel is not read, the Preface of Lent I or II, pages 464-466, is used; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

We ask, almighty God,  
to be numbered always among the members of Christ,  
whose body and blood we share  
in this sacrament of unity.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 852.



## MASS OF THE THIRD SCRUTINY

OPENING  
PRAYER

O God, source of all life,  
grant that our elect,  
who have been grounded in the mysteries of faith,  
may receive new life at the font of baptism  
and be numbered among the members of your Church.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Almighty God,  
listen to our prayers:  
as you have instructed your servants  
in the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith,  
so purify their hearts by the power of this sacrifice.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of the Fifth Sunday of Lent, page 480; interpolations for  
Eucharistic Prayer I, pages 590 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, pages 607 and 611.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord God,  
keep your people one in spirit  
with hearts devoted to your service,  
so that, secure from every fear,  
they may recapture the joy of their own salvation  
and remember in loving prayer  
those to be reborn in the waters of baptism.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 852.



## PASSION SUNDAY

## H O L Y W E E K

### (PALM SUNDAY)

1 Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) is the last Sunday in Lent. It opens Holy Week, which encompasses the end of Lent and the sacred Easter Triduum. On this day the Church celebrates Christ's entrance into Jerusalem to accomplish his paschal mystery. The memorial of this event is included in every Mass this day with a solemn or simple entrance procession into the church.

2 Passion Sunday therefore begins with acclamations of praise: holding branches of victory, the assembled people sing *Hosanna*. The commemoration of the Lord's entry into Jerusalem is a rite rather than a pageant. The mood becomes more sombre at the liturgy of the word when one of the gospel accounts of the passion of the Lord is proclaimed.

- The procession or solemn entrance begins when the faithful carrying branches have assembled at a place distinct from the church or at the church door. As the ministers arrive, the first two verses and the refrain of the song *Hosanna, Son of David* from the Antiphonal, page 987, or some other suitable song is sung. After a greeting and introduction, the priest offers a prayer of blessing. The gospel account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is then proclaimed. The gospel reading may be followed by a brief homily. Led by the priest and ministers and while singing a suitable song of praise, those in procession enter the church. The liturgy continues with the opening prayer of the Mass.
- A form of simple entrance may be used when this seems pastorally preferable to the solemn entrance procession. While the priest goes to the altar, the entrance antiphon *Six days before the feast* with its psalm from the Antiphonal, page 987, or some other suitable song with the same theme is sung. After the priest venerates the altar, he goes to his chair and greets the people. The Mass continues in the usual way.
- Where the gospel of the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem is not proclaimed, a service of the word on the theme of the Lord's messianic entrance and passion may be celebrated on Saturday evening or at a convenient time on Sunday.
- Introduced by brief texts from the prophet Isaiah and Paul's letter to the Philippians, the reading of the passion is at the heart of the liturgy on this first day of Holy Week. Because of the importance of these texts of Scripture for the spiritual good of the faithful, the passion should be read in its entirety and the readings which precede it should not be omitted unless there is some overriding pastoral reason that compels it. A brief homily helps to unfold their richness.
- The proclamation of the passion needs to be carefully prepared. Traditionally it is read or sung by three persons taking the parts of Christ, the narrator, and others. Conferences of bishops may wish to indicate other forms for the proclamation of the passion. It may be helpful, for example, to divide the narrative into sections, with different readers and some variation in the posture of the assembly for each part. The sections may be separated with periods of silent reflection and acclamations which all can sing. While it has a dramatic quality, the passion is not so much enacted as proclaimed solemnly and simply, without candles, incense, greeting, or signs of the cross.

## OUTLINE OF THE RITE

### COMMEMORATION OF THE LORD'S ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM

Opening Song

Greeting

Introduction

Blessing of the Branches

Gospel Reading

[Homily]

Procession

Opening Prayer

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Gospel Acclamation

Passion of the Lord

Homily

Profession of Faith

General Intercessions

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### CONCLUDING RITE

PASSION SUNDAY  
(PALM SUNDAY)

COMMEMORATION OF THE LORD'S ENTRANCE  
INTO JERUSALEM

The priest and deacon, wearing red Mass vestments, go to the place where the people carrying branches have assembled. The priest may wear a cope instead of a chasuble; in this case he removes the cope after the procession or solemn entrance.

OPENING SONG: Verses one and two and the refrain of the song *Hosanna, Son of David* from the Antiphonal, page 987, are sung, or some other suitable song is sung.

GREETING

After making the sign of the cross, the priest greets the people, using the following greeting or one of the greetings from the Order of Mass.

The grace of God,  
so rich in mercy and boundless in compassion,  
be with you all.

The people answer:

And also with you.

INTRODUCTION

The priest or deacon gives a brief introduction, inviting the faithful to participate fully in the celebration. He may use the following or similar words.

Dear friends in Christ,  
since the beginning of Lent we have been preparing,  
by works of charity and self-sacrifice,  
to celebrate our Lord's paschal mystery.  
Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration  
in union with the whole Church throughout the world.  
Jesus entered in triumph into his own city, Jerusalem,  
to complete his work:  
to suffer, to die, and to rise again.

With lively faith and devotion,  
let us recall this entry, which led to our salvation,  
and follow in his footsteps.  
United with him in his suffering on the cross,  
may we share his resurrection and new life.

BLESSING  
OF THE  
BRANCHES

After **Let us pray** and the pause for silent prayer, the priest, with hands outstretched, blesses the branches, using one of the following prayers.

Almighty and eternal God,  
bless + these branches [palms] and make them holy;  
and grant that we who joyfully accompany Christ the King today  
may by his grace arrive one day  
in the new and eternal Jerusalem,  
where he lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Merciful God,  
increase the faith of those who place their hope in you,  
and listen kindly to our prayers,  
that we who carry these branches [palms] today  
in honour of Christ, the triumphant King,  
may live in him to bear abundant fruit,  
for he lives and reigns for ever and ever.

The priest sprinkles the branches with holy water in silence.

GOSPEL  
READING

Then the account of the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem is proclaimed from one of the four gospels. It is read in the usual way by the deacon or, if there is no deacon, by the priest.

HOMILY

After the gospel, a brief homily may be given.

PROCESSION

Before the procession begins, the deacon or the priest may invite the people to process, using one of the following invitations or similar words.

Acclaiming Jesus,  
like the people of Jerusalem,  
let us go forth in peace.

Let us go forth in peace.

The people respond:

In the name of Christ.

The procession then begins. (The cross may be suitably decorated with branches in accord with local custom.) If incense is used, the thurifer goes first carrying a censer with burning incense, followed by the crossbearer between two ministers holding lighted candles, then the deacon carrying the Book of Gospels, the ministers, the priest, and finally the congregation carrying branches.

During a procession from a place distinct from the church, the choir and people sing verses three to seven and the refrain of the song *Hosanna, Son of David* from the Antiphonal, page 987, or the song *All glory, laud, and honour (Gloria, laus et honour)* from the Antiphonal, page 988, or another hymn in honour of Christ the King, or some other suitable song.

As the procession enters the church or approaches the sanctuary, the choir and people sing verses eight and nine and the refrain of the song *Hosanna, Son of David* from the Antiphonal, page 987, or another song which refers to the Lord's entrance.

When the priest comes to the altar, he venerates it and may also incense it. Then he goes to the chair (and removes the cope and puts on the chasuble). The opening prayer is sung or said and the Mass continues in the usual way.

OPENING  
PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God,  
when you sent our Saviour into the world,  
you gave us all an example to follow:  
in humble obedience he took upon himself a body like ours  
and gave himself up to death on the cross.  
In your mercy, grant us the grace  
to learn from the example of his passion  
and to share in the glory of his resurrection.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

O God of eternal glory,  
you anointed Jesus, your servant,  
to bear our sins,  
to encourage the weary,  
to raise up and restore the fallen.

Keep before our eyes  
the splendour of the paschal mystery of Christ,  
and, by our sharing in the passion and resurrection,  
seal our lives with the victorious sign  
of his obedience and exaltation.

We ask this through Christ, our liberator from sin,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
holy and mighty God for ever and ever.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

**PASSION OF THE LORD:** The Lord's passion is read by the deacon or, if there is no deacon, by the priest. It may also be read by readers, with the part of Christ, if possible, reserved to the priest. It is proclaimed without candles or incense. The greeting and the signs of the cross are omitted. At the end of the passion, **The passion of the Lord**, or **The gospel of the Lord** is said, but the book is not kissed.

Only a deacon asks the blessing before the passion, as he does before the gospel.

**HOMILY:** After the passion, a brief homily is given.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
through the passion of your only-begotten Son  
draw near to us with your forgiveness,  
that we who can merit nothing of ourselves  
may through the unique sacrifice of Christ  
experience the healing power of your mercy.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER :** Preface of Passion Sunday, page 482; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord,  
you have fed us with this holy food  
and, through the death of your Son,  
have inspired us to hope for what our faith promises;  
lead us by his resurrection  
to the haven we so earnestly desire.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**BLESSING:** Solemn Blessing, page 801.

## THE CHRISM MASS

1 The Chrism Mass for the blessing of oils and the consecration of chrism is traditionally celebrated on the morning of the last day of Lent, Holy Thursday, but it may also take place on another day toward the end of Lent. This may enable the people of the diocese to gather more easily around the bishop and may facilitate the distribution of the oils to the churches of the diocese in time for the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil.<sup>1</sup>

2 The chrism consecrated by the bishop is used to anoint and confirm the newly baptised and to anoint the hands of presbyters and the heads of bishops at their ordination. Catechumens are prepared and disposed for baptism with the oil of catechumens. The sick are anointed in their illness with the oil of the sick.<sup>2</sup>

3 Chrism is a sign: by baptism and confirmation, Christians are plunged into the paschal mystery of Christ; they die with him, are buried with him, and rise with him; they are sharers in his royal and prophetic priesthood. By confirmation Christians receive the spiritual anointing of the Spirit who is given to them.<sup>3</sup>

4 By the oil of catechumens the effect of the baptismal exorcisms is extended. Before they go to the font of life to be reborn, the candidates for baptism are strengthened to renounce sin and the devil.<sup>4</sup>

5 By the use of the oil of the sick, to which Saint James is a witness (see James 5:14), the sick receive a remedy for the illness of mind and body, so that they may have strength to bear suffering and resist evil and obtain the forgiveness of sins.<sup>5</sup>

6 The local Church is thus united on this occasion in its ministry of service to catechumens, the newly baptised, and the sick. In particular, the Chrism Mass, which is always concelebrated, is one of the principal expressions of the fullness of the bishop's priesthood. The concelebration with presbyters from various areas of the diocese signifies their communion with him as his witnesses and co-workers in the ministry of the holy chrism.<sup>6</sup>

- Olive oil or other plant oil is used for the ministry of the sacraments. Chrism has balsam or perfumes added and may be prepared privately before the rite or by the bishop during the liturgical service. Containers for the oils and the place in the church where they are to be kept should be worthy.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See The Roman Pontifical, *Rite of the Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism* (hereafter, RBOCC), Introduction, nos. 9 and 10.

<sup>2</sup>See RBOCC, no. 1.

<sup>3</sup>RBOCC, no. 2; see Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963, art. 6.

<sup>4</sup>RBOCC, no. 2.

<sup>5</sup>RBOCC, no. 2.

<sup>6</sup>See RBOCC, nos. 1 and 14.

<sup>7</sup>See RBOCC, nos. 3-5.

- Laypersons who minister to the sick, to catechumens, and to the families of children being baptised or confirmed should be encouraged to take their place around the bishop at the Chrism Mass. They may assist in preparing the oils of the sick and of catechumens and in carrying them to the sanctuary, and should participate in the usual ministries of reading, music, and so on. Where permitted, all present may receive communion under both kinds.
- The preparation of the bishop, concelebrants, deacons, and other ministers, their entrance into the church, and everything until the end of the liturgy of the word take place as indicated in the rite of concelebration.
- According to the long tradition of the Roman rite, the blessing of the oil of the sick takes place before the end of the eucharistic prayer, while the blessing of the oil of catechumens and consecrating the chrism take place after the prayer after communion. When pastoral reasons suggest, however, the entire rite of blessing may be celebrated after the liturgy of the word.<sup>8</sup>
- The rite and texts of the Chrism Mass celebrated on Holy Thursday also give attention to the priesthood. At this Mass the unity of presbyters in the priesthood of Christ is expressed in eucharistic concelebration with the bishop and in their participation in the consecration of the chrism. It is most desirable that, if possible, all the presbyters take part in the Chrism Mass. Presbyters who take part but for some reason do not concelebrate may receive communion under both kinds.
- In the renewal of commitment to priestly service, the bishop may use the words given or similar words. He may wish to invite the people to pray also for those who will benefit from the use of the oils, that is, the elect, the sick, and all those who minister to them.
- Some of the presidential prayers and one of the prefaces for the Chrism Mass focus on the priesthood. Other texts are provided which centre on the Church's ministry of the oils.
- The oils blessed by the bishop can be formally received and welcomed by parish communities in the diocese. This may take place during an appropriate service at the end of Lent or as one of the preparation rites celebrated with the elect on Holy Saturday. Those who were present at the Chrism Mass may carry the oils in the entrance procession, incense may be used, and a few words of reception spoken.

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<sup>8</sup>See RBOCC, no. 12.



## OUTLINE OF THE RITE

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

#### LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading  
Responsorial Psalm  
Second Reading  
Gospel Acclamation  
Gospel  
Homily  
Renewal of Commitment to Priestly Service

#### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Presentation of the Oils and of the Bread and Wine  
*[The entire rite of blessing the oils  
and consecrating chrism may take place at this point.]*

#### PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

#### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Blessing of the Oil of the Sick

#### COMMUNION RITE

Prayer after Communion

#### CHRISM RITE

Blessing of the Oil of Catechumens  
Consecration of the Chrism

#### CONCLUDING RITE

Prayer over the People  
Dismissal  
Procession with the Oils

# THE CHRISM MASS

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

OPENING  
PRAYER

God of mercy,  
who anointed your only Son with the Holy Spirit  
and appointed him Christ and Lord,  
grant that we who share his consecration  
may also bear witness in the world  
to the salvation he has won.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

Lord God of our salvation,  
you anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit  
to proclaim joyful news to the brokenhearted  
and healing for the afflicted.

As we complete this season of conversion,  
anoint our hearts with the oil of gladness,  
that we may rejoice  
in the great feast of our salvation.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

**HOMILY:** In his homily the bishop should explain the readings as well as the importance of the oils and the meaning of their blessing and consecration.

In the course of the homily the bishop should also urge the presbyters to be faithful in fulfilling their office in the Church and should invite them to renew publicly their priestly promises.

RENEWAL OF  
COMMITMENT  
TO PRIESTLY  
SERVICE

After the homily, the bishop speaks to the presbyters in these or similar words.

My dear brothers,  
this is our annual remembrance of the day  
on which Christ the Lord shared his priesthood  
with the apostles and with us.  
In the presence of your bishop and God's holy people,  
are you ready to renew the promises you once made?

The presbyters together answer:

I am.

The bishop says:

On your ordination day, out of love for Christ,  
you joyfully undertook a priest's responsibilities to the Church.  
Are you resolved to be more closely united to the Lord Jesus  
and to imitate him by self-renunciation  
and fidelity to your promises?

The presbyters together answer:

I am.

The bishop says:

Are you resolved to be faithful stewards of God's mysteries  
in celebrating the eucharist and other rites of the liturgy?

The presbyters together answer:

I am.

The bishop says:

And are you resolved to follow Christ, the Head and Shepherd of the Church,  
by carrying out faithfully the sacred office of teaching  
and by seeking not your own advantage  
but the good of those you serve?

The presbyters together answer:

I am.

Then the bishop, facing the people, continues:

My dear people, I ask all of you  
to pray for God's abundant blessings upon your priests,  
so that as faithful ministers of Christ, the High Priest,  
they may lead you to him, who is the source of salvation.

The bishop or other minister says:

Christ, hear us.

The people answer:

Christ, graciously hear us.

The bishop says:

I ask you to pray also for me,  
that I may remain faithful  
to the apostolic office entrusted to me,  
in spite of my unworthiness,  
and may become among you a more perfect image of Christ,  
the High Priest, the Good Shepherd,  
the Teacher, and the Servant of all.

The bishop or other minister says:

Christ, hear us.

The people answer:

Christ, graciously hear us.

The bishop says:

May the Lord keep us in his love  
and lead us all, both shepherds and flock, to eternal life.

The people answer:

Amen.

The profession of faith and general intercessions are omitted.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### PRESENTATION OF THE OILS AND OF THE BREAD AND WINE

After the renewal of commitment to priestly service, the deacons and ministers appointed to carry the oils or, in their absence, some presbyters and ministers, together with the faithful who will carry the bread, wine, and water, go in procession to the sacristy or other place where the oils and other offerings have been prepared. Returning to the altar, they follow this order: first the minister carrying the vessel of balsam, if the bishop wishes to prepare the chrism during the rite, then the minister with the vessel for the oil of the catechumens, the minister with the vessel for the oil of the sick, lastly a deacon or presbyter carrying the oil for the chrism. Those who carry the bread, wine, and water for the celebration of the eucharist follow them.

During the procession through the church, the choir leads the singing of the hymn *O Redeemer (O Redemptor)* from the Antiphonal, page 989, or of some other suitable song, in place of the song for the preparation of the gifts.

When the procession comes to the altar or the chair, the bishop receives the gifts.

The minister who carries the vessel of oil of the catechumens shows it to the bishop, saying in a loud voice:

**The oil of catechumens.**

The bishop takes the vessel and gives it to one of the assisting deacons to place on a table.

The minister who carries the vessel of oil for the sick shows it to the bishop, saying in a loud voice:

**The oil of the sick.**

The bishop takes the vessel and gives it to one of the assisting deacons to place on a table.

The deacon (or presbyter) who carries the vessel of oil for the chrism shows it to the bishop, saying in a loud voice:

**The oil for the holy chrism.**

The bishop takes the vessel and gives it to one of the assisting deacons to place on a table.

The bishop then receives the bread and wine for the eucharist.

Mass continues with the preparation of the gifts, as in the rite of concelebration, unless the entire rite of blessing takes place immediately (see no. 6, pages 247-248). In this case the bishop goes to the table where the oils have been placed. The blessing of the oil of the sick takes place first, then the blessing of the oil of catechumens, and finally the consecration of the chrism.

**PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS**

Merciful Lord,  
by the power of this sacrifice  
remove from us the old ways of sin  
and make us grow in grace and newness of life.

We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Fill your Church with the power of your Spirit, O God,  
that our thanksgiving over this bread and wine  
may become our communion in your love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of the Chrism Mass I-II, pages 484-488.

BLESSING  
OF THE OIL  
OF THE SICK

Before the bishop says **Through Christ our Lord you give us all these gifts** in Eucharistic Prayer I, or the doxology **Through him** in the other eucharistic prayers, the one who carried the vessel for the oil of the sick brings it to the altar and holds it in front of the bishop while he blesses the oil. The bishop sings or says the following prayer.

God and Father of all consolation,  
you sent your Son to heal the sick of their infirmities.  
Listen kindly to our prayer of faith:  
send down your Holy Spirit, the Consoler,  
upon this precious oil, this soothing ointment,  
this rich gift, this fruit of the olive tree.

By your blessing make this oil  
a remedy for all who are anointed with it;  
heal them in body, soul, and spirit,  
and deliver them from pain and every illness.

Bless this oil + and sanctify it for our use  
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If the blessing takes place outside the eucharistic prayer, it concludes:  
who lives and reigns with you for ever and ever.

The people answer:

Amen.

After the eucharistic prayer, the vessel with the oil of the sick is returned to its place, and the Mass continues in the usual way until the communion rite is completed.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

God of power and mercy,  
grant that those whom you refresh with this holy sacrament  
may become the pleasing fragrance of Christ,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

What we have received from this altar, O Lord,  
you have given us through your Holy Spirit.  
By the gift of Christ's body and blood  
strengthen the bond of our communion,  
that, filled with the Spirit,  
your Church may rejoice in the coming Easter mysteries.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

## CHRISM RITE

Following the prayer after communion, the ministers place the oils to be blessed on a table suitably located in the centre of the sanctuary. The concelebrating presbyters stand around the bishop on either side, in a semicircle, and the other ministers stand behind him. The bishop then blesses the oil of catechumens and consecrates the chrism.

### BLESSING OF THE OIL OF CATECHUMENS

When everything is ready, the bishop faces the people, and with his hands extended, sings or says the following prayer.

O God,  
source of strength and defender of your people,  
you have chosen to make this oil,  
created by your hand,  
an effective sign of your power.

Bless + this oil  
and strengthen the catechumens who will be anointed with it.  
Grant them your wisdom to understand the gospel more deeply  
and your strength to accept the challenges of Christian life.

Make them worthy of your adoption,  
bring them to the waters of rebirth,  
and let them share with joy in the life of your Church.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

Amen.

### CONSECRATION OF THE CHRISM

Then the bishop pours the balsam or perfume in the oil and mixes the chrism in silence, unless this was done beforehand.

The bishop sings or says the following invitation.

Let us pray, dear friends,  
that God our almighty Father  
will bless this oil,  
so that all who are anointed with it  
may be inwardly transformed  
and come to share in eternal salvation.

Then the bishop may breathe over the opening of the vessel of chrism. With his hands extended, he sings or says one of the following consecratory prayers.

O God,  
source of all growth  
and author of holiness,  
accept the prayer of thanks and praise  
we offer in the name of a joyful Church.

In the beginning, at your command,  
the earth produced fruit-bearing trees.  
Among these you gave us the olive,  
from whose rich oil we make holy chrism.

Your servant David,  
filled with a spirit of prophecy,  
foresaw the sacraments of your grace  
and sang of this oil  
which makes our faces shine with joy.

Long ago, when the waters of the flood  
had cleansed the world of sin,  
a dove with an olive branch  
announced the return of peace to the earth,  
a sign of greater gifts to come.

In our own days,  
these ancient signs are all fulfilled:  
after the waters of baptism have washed away sin,  
the anointing with oil  
makes our faces radiant and serene.

In the same way, at your command,  
Moses, your servant, first washed his brother Aaron with water,  
and then consecrated him a priest  
by the pouring on of oil.

All this found fulfilment  
when your only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
asked to be baptised by John  
in the waters of the Jordan.  
You sent the Holy Spirit upon him  
in the form of a dove  
and by the witness of your own voice  
declared him to be your beloved Son,  
in whom you are well pleased.  
In this you clearly fulfilled David's prophecy  
that Christ would be anointed with the oil of gladness  
above all his companions.

In silence, all the concelebrants extend their right hands toward the chrism, until the end of the prayer.

And so, Lord God,  
we ask you to bless + and sanctify this oil you have created.  
Fill it with the strength of the Holy Spirit  
and the power that flows from your Christ.  
It is from him that chrism takes its name;  
with chrism you have anointed  
your priests and kings,  
your prophets and holy martyrs.

Let this oil that you have created  
become a sign of life and salvation  
for those to be reborn in the waters of baptism.

Let this oil permeate them and make them holy;  
let it free them from the corruption  
that our flesh is heir to  
and make them temples of your glory,  
filled with the fragrance  
of innocent and spotless lives.

Let this oil, which you have chosen as a sign,  
bestow on them the dignity of prophet, priest, and king,  
that they may be clothed with incorruption.

Let this oil indeed be the chrism of salvation  
for those reborn of water and the Holy Spirit,  
that they may come to share in eternal life  
and partake of the glory of heaven.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

Amen.

Lord God,  
we thank you for your boundless love:  
you are the giver of life,  
you are the author of the sacraments.

In the ancient covenant  
you foreshadowed the power of oil to sanctify,  
and in the fullness of time  
you made this mystery shine forth uniquely  
in your beloved Son.

For our Lord Jesus Christ,  
having saved the human race through his death and resurrection,  
filled your Church with the Holy Spirit,  
and wonderfully enriched it with heavenly gifts,  
that through the Church  
your saving work might be completed on earth.

From that time forward,  
through the holy mystery of chrism  
you dispense the treasures of grace to humanity,  
so that your children, reborn in the waters of baptism  
and strengthened by anointing with the Spirit,  
may be conformed to your Christ  
and share his mission of prophet, priest, and king.

In silence, all the concelebrants extend their right hands toward the chrism, until the end of the prayer.

And so, Lord God, we humbly pray  
that through your sanctifying power  
this mixture of oil and perfume  
may become a sign and source + of your blessing.  
Pour out the rich gifts of the Holy Spirit  
on our brothers and sisters  
who will be anointed with this chrism.

May the splendour of your holiness  
shine on every place and thing  
that is signed with this holy oil.

Above all, through the mystery of this anointing  
grant increase to your Church  
until it reaches that full stature  
when you, resplendent in eternal light,  
will be all in all,  
together with Christ your Son,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
for ever and ever.

The people answer:

Amen.

## CONCLUDING RITE

BLESSING: Prayer over the People, page 853.

### PROCESSION WITH THE OILS

After the final blessing of the Mass, the bishop puts incense in the censer and blesses it.  
After the deacon has said the dismissal, the procession to the sacristy is formed.

The blessed oils are carried by the ministers immediately after the cross, and the choir and people sing some verses of the hymn *O Redeemer* from the Antiphonal, page 989, or some other suitable song. In the sacristy the bishop may instruct the presbyters about the reverent use and safe custody of the holy oils.





# EASTER TRIDUUM

*The Lord Jesus died for our sins  
and rose again for our justification*

SEE ROMANS 4:25

## EASTER TRIDUUM

1 The Easter Triduum of the passion and resurrection of Christ is the culmination of the entire liturgical year. In this festival, Christ's saving work is commemorated by the Church with the utmost solemnity. Through the liturgy of the Triduum, the Church is intimately united with Christ and shares in his passage from death to life.<sup>1</sup>

2 The penitential discipline of the Lenten fast gives way to the paschal fast and feast. It is a time to wait, to keep awake, and to pray. "Let the paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be observed everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, as a way of coming to the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection with uplifted and welcoming heart."<sup>2</sup>

3 The Triduum begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil, and concludes with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday.<sup>3</sup> The Triduum, however, is a single celebration of the paschal mystery presented over three days under different aspects. Christian remembering is more than retracing the Lord's steps during his last days in Jerusalem. At the Holy Thursday eucharist, the Church is already drawn into the whole event of Jesus' death and resurrection. The Good Friday celebration of the Lord's passion is austere but never sad, for the risen Lord already reigns triumphant. On Holy Saturday the Church waits for the celebration of Christ's resurrection and its own at the Easter Vigil, when the Spirit hovers over the waters of the font and the community of faith drinks deeply again of the mystery of Jesus' passage from death to life.

- Since the Easter Triduum is the high point of the whole liturgical year, the liturgy of these days demands careful, thoughtful preparation and sensitive celebration. The liturgical symbols and gestures need to be well made and done if they are to bear the weight of the profound mysteries they express. Sufficient numbers of well-prepared ministers are essential.

4 The good eucharistic practices that are set forth as the normal pattern for every celebration of the eucharist are even more important on these special days.

- In order that communion may stand out clearly through signs as a participation in the sacrifice actually being celebrated, the faithful receive the eucharistic bread and wine consecrated at the same Mass.<sup>4</sup> The tabernacle is entirely empty before the Mass of the Lord's Supper and before the Easter Vigil.

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<sup>1</sup>See Congregation of Rites, General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar, 21 March 1969 (hereafter, GNLYC), no. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter, SC), art. 110; see GNLYC, no. 20.

<sup>3</sup>See GNLYC, no. 19.

<sup>4</sup>See SC, no. 55; see Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, On Worship of the Eucharist, 25 May 1967 (hereafter, EM), no. 31; see General Instruction of the Roman Missal (hereafter, GIRM), no. 56:8.

- Since communion has a more complete form as a sign when it is received under both kinds, communion from the cup, where permitted, should be offered to all during the Triduum.<sup>5</sup> With communion under both kinds, the intention of Christ that the new and everlasting covenant be ratified in his blood is more clearly expressed, as is the relationship of the eucharistic banquet to the heavenly banquet.<sup>6</sup>
- The action of the breaking of the bread, which gave its name to the eucharist in apostolic times, will more clearly show the eucharist as a sign of unity and charity, since the one bread is broken to be distributed among the members of one family. Therefore, as for every eucharist, the nature of the sign demands that the bread for the eucharistic celebration appear as actual food. The eucharistic bread, even though unleavened and traditional in form, should therefore be made in such a way that the priest can break it and distribute the parts to at least some of the faithful.<sup>7</sup>

5 Good music adds solemnity and beauty to the liturgical texts and facilitates the participation of all the people during the Triduum. Among the variety of musical forms used, traditional hymn texts are specified at various points during these holy days. To enable these hymns to be sung well, with full participation, other versions and translations may be used and other musical forms may be employed. Where necessary, texts with similar themes may be chosen instead.

6 So that the unity of the parish community may stand out above all during the celebration of the Easter Triduum, small religious communities, both clerical and lay, and all other lay groups should take part in the common worship of their local parish church. In addition, where the liturgy of the Triduum cannot be carried out with due solemnity because the number of participants and ministers is very small, such groups of the faithful should, as far as possible, assemble with a larger community.<sup>8</sup>

7 For the sake of unity, the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Celebration of the Lord's Passion, and the Easter Vigil are not repeated in a parish. Exceptions may be made, however, in those parishes where it is impossible for all the people to assemble at the same time and place for the Triduum liturgies. This may occur, for example, where there are two large communities or distinct churches in the parish, but should never take place simply for convenience or when it would be possible for all to come together for a single celebration, nor should the quality of the celebration suffer on this account.

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<sup>5</sup> See EM, no. 32.

<sup>6</sup> See GIRM, no. 240.

<sup>7</sup> See GIRM, no. 283.

<sup>8</sup> See EM, nos. 26 and 27; see Congregation for Divine Worship, Circular Letter *Paschalis sollemnitatis* to presidents of the conferences of bishops and presidents of national liturgical committees, on the preparation and celebration of the Easter Triduum, 16 January 1988, nos. 43 and 94.

## HOLY THURSDAY

### EVENING MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

*When we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,  
until you come in glory.*

1 The Mass of the Lord's Supper is fittingly the first liturgical action of the Easter Triduum. It is celebrated in the evening at a time convenient for the full participation of all the people.

At the Last Supper, on the night when he was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of his body and blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the centuries until he should come again and in this way to entrust to his beloved Bride, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet "in which Christ is eaten, the heart is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory given to us."<sup>1</sup>

2 Christ prayed at the Last Supper that all might be one (see John 17:21-23). In a new commandment, he urged his disciples to love one another: there is no greater love, he said, than to lay down one's life for a friend (see John 15:12-13). As a sign of this love, Christ, the servant destined to suffer and so to enter into glory, performed an act of love and service in washing the feet of his disciples. It is this gospel text that is proclaimed at the Mass of the Lord's Supper. It is followed by the ritual washing of feet in the midst of the assembly, unless there are serious pastoral reasons for omitting it.

- Because of the Last Supper themes of unity and love, special efforts are made on Holy Thursday to gather the whole people of God to share in the one parish celebration with all priests concelebrating and with the full participation of the whole local community and its various ministers. According to the Church's most ancient tradition, all Masses in the absence of the people are prohibited and no other Mass is celebrated in the parish on Holy Thursday, except where permitted by the bishop in cases of genuine necessity. When such a Mass is allowed for those in no way able to take part in the common parish eucharist, it must not prejudice the principal Mass or be celebrated for the advantage of private persons, nor should it anticipate the beginning of the Triduum. The priest who, out of necessity, has celebrated such a Mass (or who concelebrated at the Chrism Mass if this took place earlier on Holy Thursday) may still concelebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper.
- The unity of the Lord's table is extended to those who are sick and unable to be present. While communion may be brought to them at any hour of the day, it is more fitting that the eucharist be taken directly from the parish celebration.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963, art. 47.

<sup>2</sup>See The Roman Ritual, *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum*, no. 73; see Congregation for Divine Worship, Circular Letter *Paschalis sollemnitatis* to presidents of the conferences of bishops and presidents of national liturgical committees, on the preparation and celebration of the Easter Triduum, 16 January 1988 (hereafter, PS), no. 53.

- The eucharist itself already draws together the whole Easter mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection. Other liturgical signs reinforce the unity of Holy Thursday with the Triduum as a whole: the solemn reservation of the eucharist for communion the next day and the service of washing feet both look forward to Good Friday. Since the washing of the feet also has links with baptism in significant parts of the Christian tradition, this gesture looks to the initiation rites of Easter night, as does the dismissal of the elect from the Mass of the Lord's Supper. The ringing of the bells during the singing of the *Gloria* anticipates the joy of the Easter Vigil when the same custom may be followed.
- The rite of washing feet is more than a mime in which the washing of the disciples' feet is reenacted. It is a rite in which the presiding priest assisted by other leaders of the community himself performs an act of service, an act which reveals the true nature of Christian love and discipleship. This is not just any act of service but is specifically a gospel sign. Through this gesture, the community is encouraged to follow more closely the one who "came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). The sign may be strengthened if the ministers perform this act of service for a representative group of the faithful. So that the gesture will be seen by all, it may be desirable to place those whose feet are to be washed at various points throughout the church.
- The mutual service typical of Christian love is further expressed by bringing to church gifts for the poor, especially if they are the fruit of Lenten penance. These contributions are set aside for the poor at the preparation of the gifts.
- The Mass of the Lord's Supper is the first ritual moment in the celebration of the Easter Triduum. Its focus is the unity of the baptised in the sacrifice of Jesus' death and resurrection. The rites should be noble in their simplicity and unencumbered by added or secondary elements. Any other rites should be in harmony with the paschal character of the celebration and contribute to the unity of the gathered community.

3 The Mass of the Lord's Supper ends simply with the prayer after communion. The blessing and dismissal are omitted. The Mass is followed by the solemn transfer of the consecrated elements to the blessed sacrament chapel. The time for private adoration afterward can help the faithful to experience the presence of the risen Lord in the three days of the paschal feast. The Triduum of waiting and praying has begun.

- Holy Thursday evening makes particularly clear the meaning of eucharistic reservation. It is derived from the celebration of the sacrifice: thus, previously reserved elements will have been consumed and the tabernacle is empty when the Mass of the Lord's Supper begins. The primary purpose of eucharistic reservation is the reception of communion in special situations outside the eucharistic celebration: usually viaticum for the dying, in this case communion on Good Friday. Its secondary purpose is to allow for the adoration of the Lord present in the sacrament: thus, the faithful are encouraged to continue adora-

tion before the reserved sacrament for a suitable period of time after the Mass of the Lord's Supper until midnight.<sup>3</sup>

- The rites presume that the eucharist is normally reserved in churches in a separate blessed sacrament chapel.<sup>4</sup> The procession with the eucharist therefore leaves from the altar and goes to the reservation chapel, where the liturgy ends. If a church does not have a blessed sacrament chapel, one should be set up for the occasion in the best way possible. Decorations are to be suitable and in due proportion.
- After the transfer of the blessed sacrament is completed, the altar is stripped, crosses are removed from the church or covered, votive lights are extinguished. If it has not already been done, the baptismal font and holy water fonts are emptied.
- Prayer in the blessed sacrament chapel at this time is usually personal in nature and done in silence. If circumstances suggest, a portion of the Gospel of John, for example, chapters thirteen to seventeen, may be read.<sup>5</sup> Evening Prayer is not said by those who participate in the evening Mass.

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<sup>3</sup>See The Roman Ritual, *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass* (hereafter, HCWE), General Introduction, nos. 1-5.

<sup>4</sup>See Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium* On Worship of the Eucharist, 25 May 1967, no. 53; see HCWE, General Introduction, no. 9; see General Instruction of the Roman Missal, no. 276.

<sup>5</sup>See PS, no. 56.

## OUTLINE OF THE RITE

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading  
Responsorial Psalm  
Second Reading  
Gospel Acclamation  
Gospel  
Homily  
Washing of Feet  
General Intercessions

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### CONCLUDING RITE

Transfer of the Blessed Sacrament

## HOLY THURSDAY

### EVENING MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

#### INTRODUCTORY RITES

GLORIA: After the opening song, the sign of the cross, and the greeting, the *Gloria* is sung. During the singing of the *Gloria*, the bells are rung and then remain silent until the Easter Vigil, unless the conference of bishops or the Ordinary decrees otherwise.

OPENING  
PRAYER

Lord God,  
we are gathered to celebrate this most holy Supper,  
at which your only Son, on the eve of his passion,  
bequeathed to the Church  
a new and everlasting sacrifice  
and the rich banquet of his abiding love.  
Grant in your mercy  
that we may draw from this great mystery  
the fullness of charity and life.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

O God,  
in the fullness of time you revealed your love  
in Jesus the Lord.  
On the eve of his death,  
as a sign of your covenant,  
he washed the feet of his disciples  
and gave himself as food and drink.

Give us life at this sacred banquet  
and joy in humble service,  
that, bound to Christ in all things,  
we may pass over from this world to your kingdom,  
where he lives with you now and always in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

#### LITURGY OF THE WORD

HOMILY: The homily should explain the principal mysteries which are commemorated in this Mass: the institution of the eucharist, the institution of the priesthood, and Christ's commandment of mutual love.

WASHING  
OF FEET

After the homily, the washing of feet takes place. Those who have been chosen are led by the ministers to chairs prepared in a suitable place. Then the priest (removing the chasuble if necessary) goes to each person. With the help of the ministers, he pours water over the feet of each one and dries them.

While the washing of the feet is taking place, the song *I give a new commandment* from the Antiphonal, page 990, or some other suitable song is sung.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS: The general intercessions follow the washing of feet, or, if this does not take place, they follow the homily. The profession of faith is not said in this Mass.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS : In addition to the bread and wine for the eucharist, gifts for the poor may also be presented.

During the procession, the song *Where true charity and love (Ubi caritas)* from the Antiphonal, page 991, or some other suitable song is sung.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord God,  
make us worthy to celebrate this holy eucharist,  
for as often as this sacrifice is offered  
in remembrance of your Son,  
the work of our redemption is accomplished.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER: Preface of Holy Eucharist I, page 540.

### EUCHARISTIC PRAYER I WITH INTERPOLATIONS:

After the *Sanctus* has been completed, the priest continues the eucharistic prayer with hands outstretched. The words in brackets may be omitted.

All-merciful Father, P  
we come before you with praise and thanksgiving  
through Jesus Christ your Son.

He joins his hands and, making the sign of the cross once over both bread and cup, says:  
Through him we ask you to accept and bless + these gifts  
we offer you in sacrifice.

With hands outstretched, he continues:

We offer them for your holy catholic Church:  
watch over it, Lord, and guide it,  
grant it peace and unity throughout the world.  
We offer them for N. our Pope,  
for N. our Bishop,  
and for all who hold and teach the catholic faith  
that comes to us from the apostles.

Remember, Lord, your faithful people,  
especially those for whom we now pray [N. and N.].

1C

The priest joins his hands and prays briefly. Then he continues with hands outstretched:

Remember all of us gathered here before you.  
You know that we believe in you  
and dedicate ourselves to you.  
We offer you this sacrifice of praise  
for ourselves and those who are dear to us;  
we pray to you, our living and true God,  
for our well-being and redemption.

As we celebrate that most holy day  
when Jesus Christ our Lord  
was delivered up to death for us,  
we pray in communion with the whole Church,  
with those whose memory we now honour:  
especially with Mary,  
the glorious and ever-virgin mother of Jesus Christ, our Lord and God,  
with Joseph, her husband,  
the apostles and martyrs,  
Peter and Paul, Andrew,  
    [James, John,  
    Thomas, James, Philip,  
    Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude;  
    with Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus,  
    Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus,  
    John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian,]  
and with all the saints.  
By their merits and prayers  
grant us your constant help and protection.

2C

[Through Christ our Lord. Amen.]

With hands outstretched, the priest continues:

Lord, accept this offering from your whole family  
in memory of the day when Jesus Christ our Lord  
entrusted to his disciples  
the mystery of his body and blood,  
which he commanded them to celebrate.  
Grant us your peace in this life,  
save us from final damnation,  
and count us among those you have chosen.

P

He joins his hands.

[Through Christ our Lord. Amen.]

With hands outstretched over the offerings, the priest says:

CC

Bless and approve our offering,  
make it acceptable to you,  
an offering in spirit and in truth:  
let it become for us  
the body and blood of your beloved Son,  
our Lord Jesus Christ.

He joins his hands.

In the text that follows, the words of the Lord should be proclaimed clearly and distinctly, as their meaning demands.

On this day, the day before he suffered  
to redeem us and all the world,

The priest takes the bread and, raising it a little above the altar, continues:  
he took bread in his sacred hands,

He looks upward.

and looking up to heaven  
to you, his almighty Father,  
he gave you thanks and praise;  
he broke the bread,  
gave it to his disciples, and said:

He bows slightly.

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT IT:  
THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.**

He shows the consecrated bread to the people, replaces it on the plate, and genuflects in adoration.

Then he continues:

**When supper was ended, he took the cup;**

He takes the cup and, raising it a little above the altar, continues:  
again he gave you thanks and praise,  
gave the cup to his disciples, and said:

He bows slightly.

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT:  
THIS IS THE CUP OF MY BLOOD,  
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND EVERLASTING COVENANT.  
IT WILL BE SHED FOR YOU AND FOR ALL,  
SO THAT SINS MAY BE FORGIVEN.  
DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.**

He shows the cup to the people, replaces it on the corporal, and genuflects in adoration.

Then the priest or deacon sings or says the invitation to the memorial acclamation, page 594, the people take up the acclamation, and the priest continues the eucharistic prayer, **And so, Lord God, . . .**, page 595.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER III WITH INTERPOLATION:

After the *Sanctus* has been completed, the priest continues the eucharistic prayer with hands outstretched.

Lord, you are holy indeed, P  
and all creation rightly gives you praise.  
All life, all holiness comes from you  
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,  
by the working of the Holy Spirit.  
From age to age you gather a people to yourself,  
so that from the rising of the sun to its setting  
a pure offering may be made  
to the glory of your name.

And so, Lord God, we humbly pray: CC

He joins his hands and, holding them outstretched over the offerings, says:  
by the power of your Spirit sanctify these gifts  
we have brought before you,

He joins his hands and, making the sign of the cross once over both bread and cup, says:  
that they may become the body + and blood  
of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,  
at whose command we celebrate this eucharist.

He joins his hands.

In the text that follows, the words of the Lord should be proclaimed clearly and distinctly, as their meaning demands.

On this night,  
the night he was handed over to death,  
Jesus washed the feet of his disciples  
and gave us a new commandment:  
to love one another as he has loved us.

The priest takes the bread and, raising it a little above the altar, continues:  
He took bread and gave you thanks and praise;  
he broke the bread,  
gave it to his disciples, and said:

He bows slightly.

**TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT IT:  
THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.**

He shows the consecrated bread to the people, replaces it on the plate, and genuflects in adoration.

Then he continues:

When supper was ended, he took the cup;

He takes the cup and, raising it a little above the altar, continues:  
again he gave you thanks and praise,  
gave the cup to his disciples, and said:

He bows slightly.

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT:  
THIS IS THE CUP OF MY BLOOD,  
THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND EVERLASTING COVENANT.  
IT WILL BE SHED FOR YOU AND FOR ALL,  
SO THAT SINS MAY BE FORGIVEN.  
DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

He shows the cup to the people, replaces it on the corporal, and genuflects in adoration.

Then the priest or deacon sings or says the invitation to the memorial acclamation, page 608, the people take up the acclamation, and the priest continues the eucharistic prayer, **Calling to mind, Lord God, . . .**, page 610.

COMMUNION RITE: After the distribution of communion, the vessel with the eucharist for communion on Good Friday is left on the altar.

The Mass concludes with the following prayer.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Almighty God,  
the supper that your Son left us this night  
sustains our life on earth;  
grant that our hunger may be fully satisfied  
in the everlasting banquet of heaven.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## TRANSFER OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Following the prayer after communion, the priest stands before the altar and puts incense into the censer. Kneeling, he incenses the blessed sacrament. Then he receives the humeral veil, goes to the altar, genuflects, and, assisted by the deacon, takes the vessel with the eucharist and covers it with the ends of the veil.

The blessed sacrament is carried through the church in procession, led by a crossbearer and accompanied by candles and incense, to the place of reservation prepared in the chapel suitably decorated for the occasion. During the procession, the hymn *Sing, my tongue, in exaltation (Pange, lingua)*, page 993, exclusive of the last two verses, or some other eucharistic song is sung.

When the procession reaches the place of reservation, the priest, assisted by the deacon, sets the vessel with the eucharist down. Then he puts incense into the censer and, kneeling, incenses the blessed sacrament, while the last two verses of *Sing, my tongue, in exaltation* are sung. The deacon (or the priest himself) places the blessed sacrament in the tabernacle where it is to be reserved and closes the door.

After a period of silent adoration, the priest and ministers genuflect and return to the sacristy.

Then the altar is stripped and, if possible, the crosses are removed from the church. It is desirable to cover any crosses which remain in the church, unless they are already veiled in accord with the prescription of the conference of bishops.

## GOOD FRIDAY

### CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S PASSION

*We glorify your cross  
and praise your resurrection,  
for by this holy wood  
joy came to the world.*

1 On the afternoon of this day, the Christian faithful assemble to recall devoutly the death of Jesus “in the sure hope of rising again.”<sup>1</sup> It is a *celebration* of the Lord’s passion because the resurrection is not separated from Jesus’ death. On this day the community of faith with full heart worships God, who chose to redeem us by the cross, “that Satan, who conquered through a tree, might on a tree be overcome.”<sup>2</sup>

2 The afternoon celebration of the Lord’s passion is the centre of Good Friday’s worship. It may take place around three o’clock unless pastoral reasons suggest a later hour. In addition, it is recommended that the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer be celebrated publicly with the people; Evening Prayer, however, is not said by those who participate in the afternoon liturgical service.<sup>3</sup> Devotions such as the Stations of the Cross may find a place on Good Friday, but the liturgical celebration of the Lord’s passion by its very nature far surpasses them in importance. These devotions should be so fashioned that they accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some way derived from it, and lead the people to it.<sup>4</sup>

3 Since, according to the Church’s most ancient tradition, the eucharist itself is not celebrated, the celebration of other sacraments is normally out of place on Good Friday. Even the sacrament of penance is better celebrated by the end of Lent, that is, before the Easter Triduum, since the penitential season of Lent and the sacrament of penance prepare one to celebrate the Triduum.<sup>5</sup>

4 As the first day of the Easter fast, Good Friday is a day of fast and abstinence. The ancient forms of today’s liturgy are likewise marked by an austere solemnity. Silence plays a significant role: the afternoon liturgy begins and ends in silence. Music is simple and decorations very sparse. The altar should be completely bare, without cross, candles, or cloths. Only the number of ministers necessary to the celebration should be present in the sanctuary. Red Mass vestments are worn by priest and deacon.

- The liturgy begins starkly with a profound act of adoration. Prostrate or kneeling, participants may wish to adopt an ancient posture for prayer by extending their arms in a cruciform gesture.

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<sup>1</sup>Prayer over the people, Good Friday.

<sup>2</sup>Preface of the Holy Cross I.

<sup>3</sup>See General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, nos. 209 and 210.

<sup>4</sup>See Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963, art. 13.

<sup>5</sup>See Congregation for Divine Worship, Circular Letter *Paschalis sollemnitatis* to presidents of the conferences of bishops and presidents of national liturgical committees, on the preparation and celebration of the Easter Triduum, 16 January 1988 (hereafter, PS), nos. 15 and 61.

- The first part of the liturgy is the proclamation of the word. After two readings and a psalm, the narrative of the passion from the Gospel of Saint John is read or sung. It is followed by a homily, silence, and the general intercessions. The solemn proclamation of the passion on Good Friday lies at the heart of the celebration.
- In preaching on the passion, special care should be taken not to show the Jewish people in an unfavourable way. The crimes during the passion of Christ cannot be attributed indiscriminately to all Jews of that time, nor to Jews today. The Jewish people should not be referred to as though rejected or cursed, as if this view followed from Scripture. As the Church has always held, Christ freely suffered his passion and death because of the sins of all, that all might be saved.<sup>6</sup> This is also the way in which the liturgical texts of Good Friday, such as the Reproaches, are understood by the Church.
- In response to its meditation on the passion of Christ, the Church cries out for the needs of the world. The general intercessions, traditionally sung, cover a variety of intentions which signify the universal effect of Christ's triumphant death. In case of serious public need, the bishop may add a special intention. The priest in consultation with the ministers and others who have a function in the celebration choose those prayers most appropriate to local circumstances provided the series follows the usual scope and sequence of the general intercessions.<sup>7</sup> Acclamations sung by the people will enhance their participation in this ancient form of prayer. The conference of bishops may provide such acclamations for the people to replace the invitation to kneel and pray silently. If there is no deacon, the invitation to each prayer may be sung or said by another minister.
- The veneration, which follows the liturgy of the word, focuses not so much on a figure of the crucified as on the cross itself; with lighted candles on each side, it is a symbol of victory and salvation. A large, well-crafted cross solemnly shown to the people provides a moving climax to the liturgy of Good Friday. Each person comes forward after the showing to kiss or touch the cross in an individual gesture of veneration. Only one cross is used.<sup>8</sup> If it is large enough and is set up in the midst of the assembly, processions of the faithful will be able to approach it from several directions at once. This personal act of participation is an important feature of the liturgy. Simultaneous veneration by all should be used only when this individual gesture is impossible. The antiphons, Reproaches, or other songs that are sung during the veneration view the cross within the whole story of salvation and look to the light of the resurrection. They may be sung responsorially with the people.

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<sup>6</sup> See Vatican Council II, Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions *Nostra aetate*, 28 October 1965, no. 4.

<sup>7</sup> See General Instruction of the Roman Missal, nos. 46 and 313.

<sup>8</sup> See PS, no. 69.

- The simple communion rite that concludes the Good Friday liturgy is a proclamation of the Lord's death until he comes (see 1 Corinthians 12:26) and a testimony to the presence of the risen Lord. The elements consecrated and reserved on Holy Thursday are brought from the chapel of reservation and shared among the faithful. Only what is required for communion of the sick should be reserved for the rest of the Triduum. Holy communion is not given to the faithful outside this celebration of the Lord's passion, though it may be brought at any hour of the day to the sick who are unable to participate in the liturgy. After a final prayer over the people, all depart in silence, leaving the cross in the church in order to encourage meditation on the paschal mystery.
- The altar is stripped at a convenient time after the service.

## OUTLINE OF THE RITE

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

Silent Prayer  
Prayer

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading  
Responsorial Psalm  
Second Reading  
Gospel Acclamation  
Passion of the Lord  
Homily  
General Intercessions

### VENERATION OF THE CROSS

Showing of the Cross  
Veneration of the Cross

### COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer  
Communion  
Period of Silence  
Prayer after Communion

### CONCLUDING RITE

Prayer over the People

GOOD FRIDAY  
CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S PASSION

INTRODUCTORY RITES

SILENT  
PRAYER

The priest and deacon go to the altar. There they make a reverence and prostrate themselves, or they may kneel. All pray silently for a while.

Then the priest goes to the chair with the deacon, faces the people, and, with hands outstretched, sings or says one of the following prayers. *Let us pray* is not said.

PRAYER

Remember, Lord, your tender mercies,  
which you showed in ages past;  
watch over and sanctify your servants,  
for whom Christ your Son, by shedding his blood,  
has established the paschal mystery.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

Or: Lord God,  
by the suffering and death of your Son  
you dissolved the legacy of darkness and death  
that had fallen to the lot of every generation.  
We were shaped in the likeness of Adam  
and must bear the image of his earthly nature.  
Reshape us in the likeness of Christ,  
that we may bear the stamp of his heavenly glory  
through the sanctifying power of your grace.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALTERNATIVE  
PRAYER

From the throne of grace, O God of mercy,  
at the hour your Son gave himself to death,  
hear the devout prayer of your people.

As he is lifted high upon the cross,  
draw into his exalted life  
all who are reborn  
in the blood and water flowing from his opened side.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

After the introductory rites, the liturgy of the word is celebrated as indicated in the Lectionary.

### HOMILY

A brief homily follows the readings.

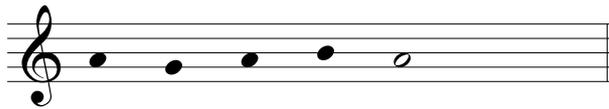
Following the homily, the priest or deacon may invite the assembly to pray in silence for a brief period of time.

### GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

The general intercessions conclude the liturgy of the word. The deacon (or cantor), standing at the ambo or other convenient place, sings or says the invitatory or invitation to prayer in which each intention is stated. All pray silently for some period of time, and then the priest, with hands outstretched, sings or says the prayer. The people may either kneel or stand throughout the entire period of the general intercessions, or they may kneel and stand at the direction of the deacon.

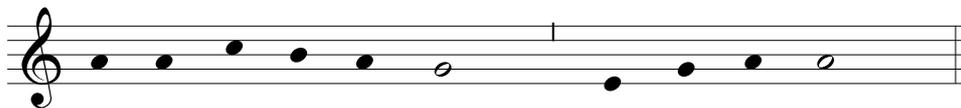
After each invitatory or invitation to prayer, the deacon (or cantor) may sing one of the following:

A Deacon (or cantor):



We pray to the Lord.

The people answer:



For the sake of your Son, have mer-cy, Lord.

All pray in silence.

B Deacon:



Let us kneel.

All pray in silence. Then the deacon sings:



Let us stand.

Deacon:

Let us pray, dear friends, for the holy Church of God through -  
 out the world, that God will guide it and gather it to - gether,  
 so that we may worship the Father in tranquil - i - ty and peace.

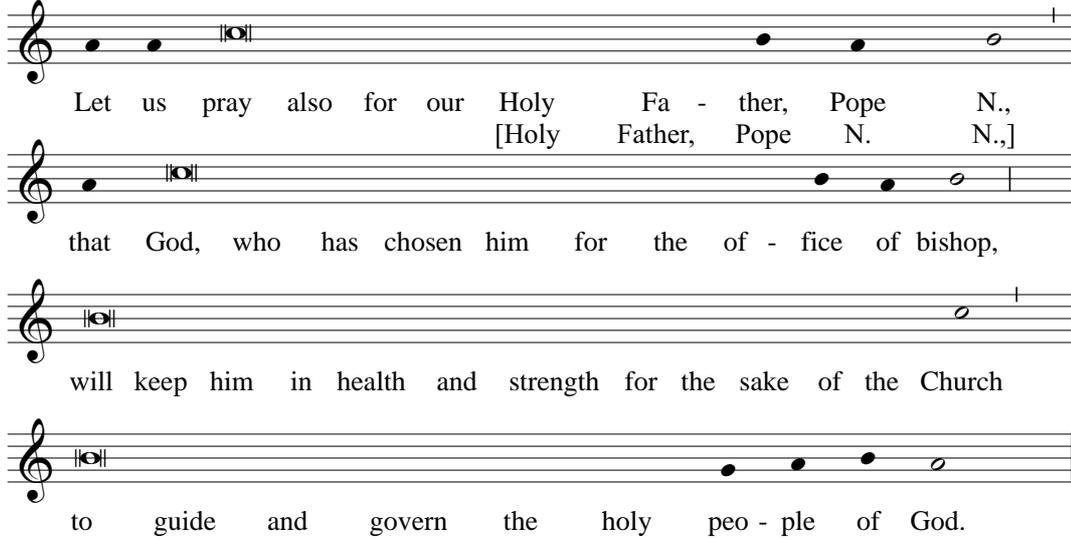
After the period of silence [and **Letus stand**], the priest sings;

Almighty and eternal God, in Christ your Son you revealed  
 your glory to nation upon nation. Safeguard the great work of your mercy,  
 that your Church through - out the world  
 may persevere with unshakeable faith in confessing your ho - ly name.  
 We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

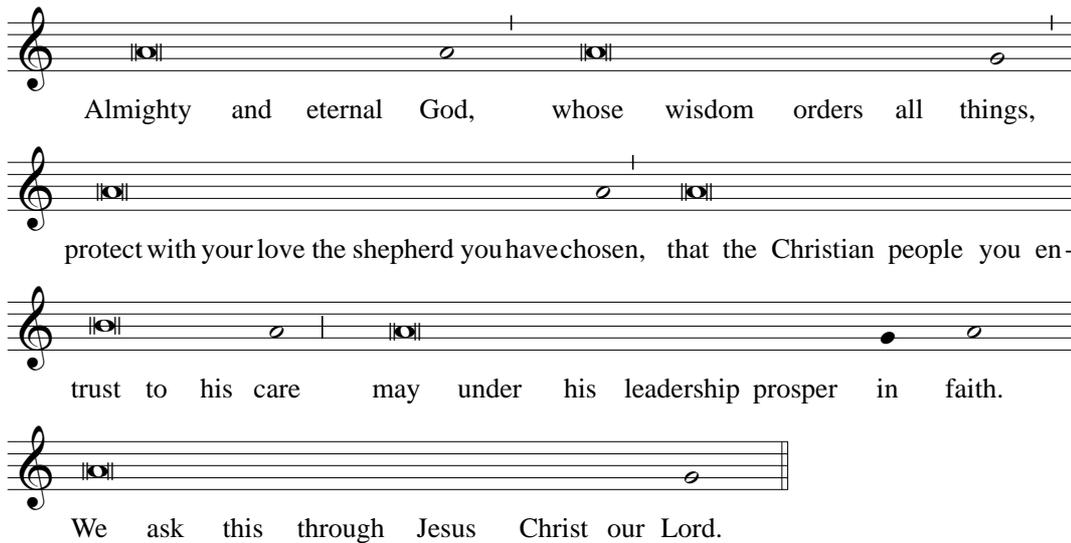
The people answer:

A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

Deacon:

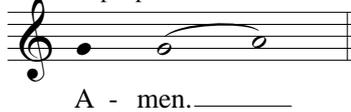


Let us pray also for our Holy Fa - ther, Pope N.,  
 [Holy Father, Pope N. N.,]  
 that God, who has chosen him for the of - fice of bishop,  
 will keep him in health and strength for the sake of the Church  
 to guide and govern the holy peo - ple of God.

After the period of silence [and **Letus stand**], the priest sings;


Almighty and eternal God, whose wisdom orders all things,  
 protect with your love the shepherd you have chosen, that the Christian people you en-  
 trust to his care may under his leadership prosper in faith.  
 We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

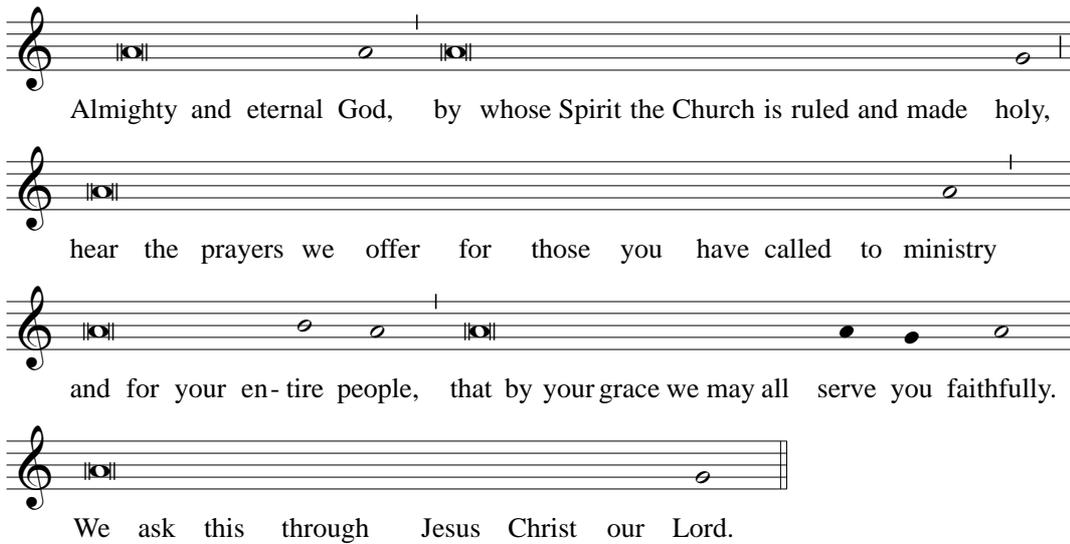


A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

Deacon:

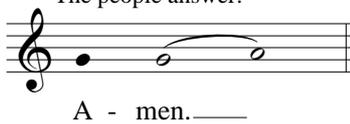


Let us pray also for N. our bishop, for all bishops,  
priests, and deacons, and for all God's ho - ly people.

After the period of silence [and **Letus stand**], the priest sings;


Almighty and eternal God, by whose Spirit the Church is ruled and made holy,  
hear the prayers we offer for those you have called to ministry  
and for your en-tire people, that by your grace we may all serve you faithfully.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

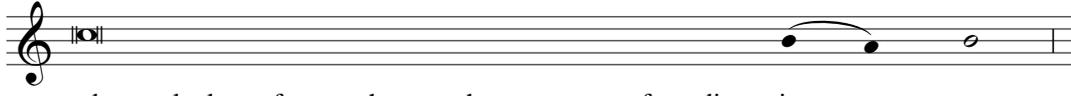


A - men. ———

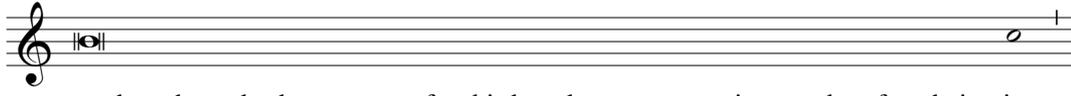
Deacon:



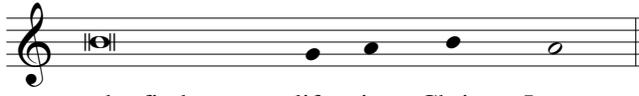
Let us pray also for [our] cat- e- chumens, that God will open their ears and their hearts



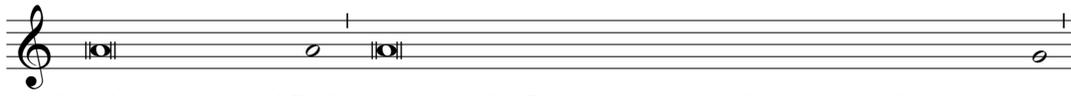
and unlock for them the gates of di - vine — mercy,



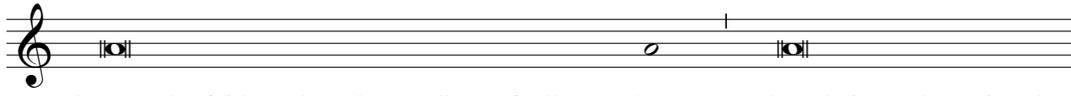
so that through the waters of rebirth they may receive pardon for their sins



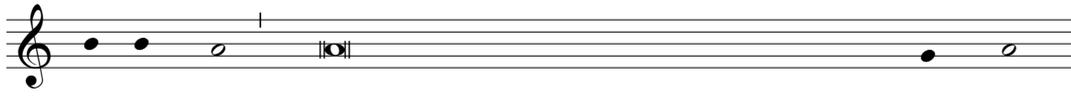
and find new life in Christ Jesus.

After the period of silence [and **Letus stand**], the priest sings;

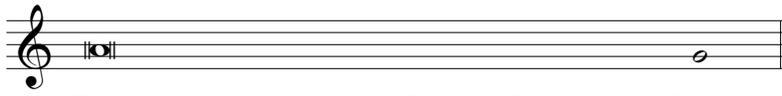
Almighty and eternal God, by whom the Church is continually blessed with new members,



deepen the faith and understanding of all catechumens, that, being reborn in the

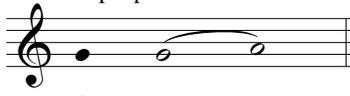


font of baptism, they may take their place among your adopt- ed children.



We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

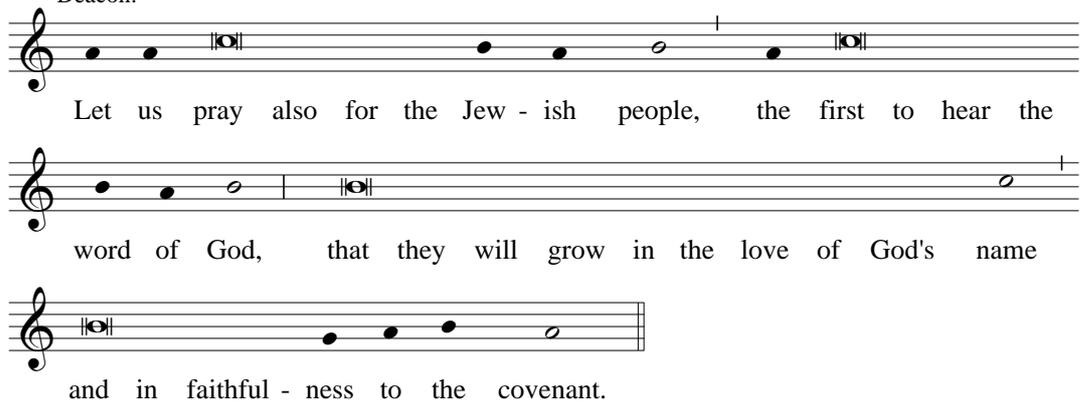
The people answer:



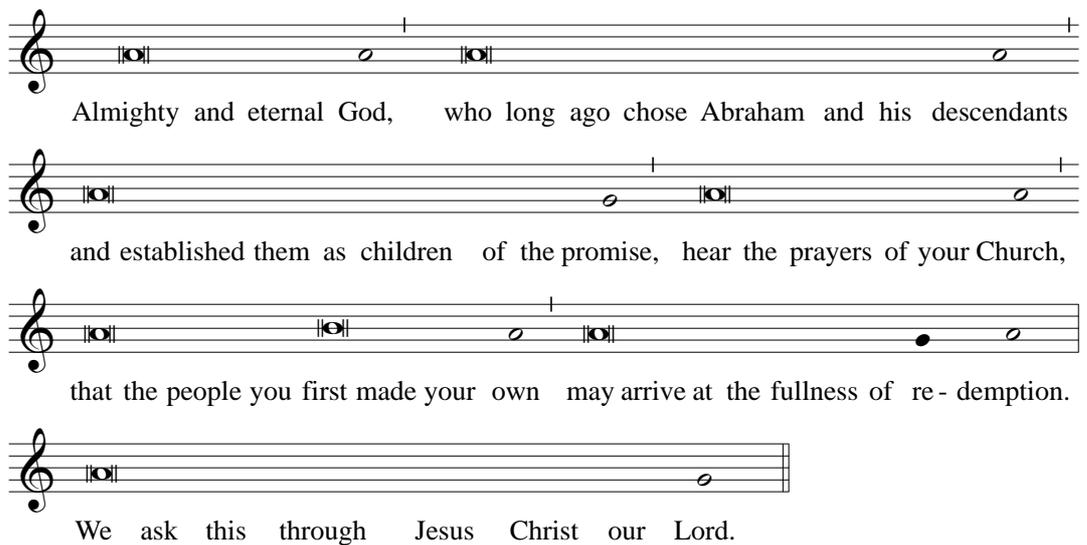
A - men. ———



Deacon:

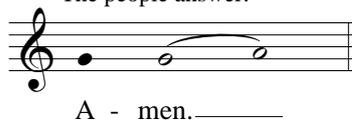


Let us pray also for the Jew - ish people, the first to hear the  
word of God, that they will grow in the love of God's name  
and in faithful - ness to the covenant.

After the period of silence [and **Letus stand**], the priest sings;


Almighty and eternal God, who long ago chose Abraham and his descendants  
and established them as children of the promise, hear the prayers of your Church,  
that the people you first made your own may arrive at the fullness of re - demption.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:



A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

Deacon:

Let us pray also for those who do not share our faith in Je-sus Christ,  
 that the light of the Holy Spir - it will guide them toward the  
 path of sal - vation.

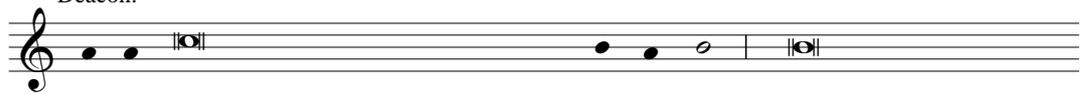
After the period of silence [and **Letus stand**], the priest sings;

Almighty and eternal God, grant that those who do not believe in Christ,  
 but who walk before you in sincerity of heart, may find the truth.  
 Make our love for each other grow  
 and draw us more deeply into the mystery of sal - vation,  
 that we may bear before the world a more perfect witness to your love.  
 We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

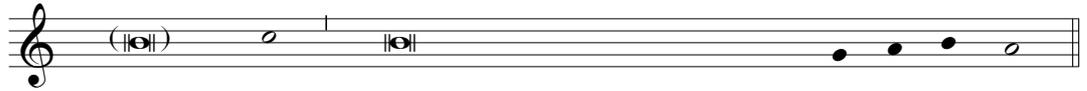
The people answer:

A - men. —

Deacon:



Let us pray also for those who do not be-lieve in God, that they will come to a



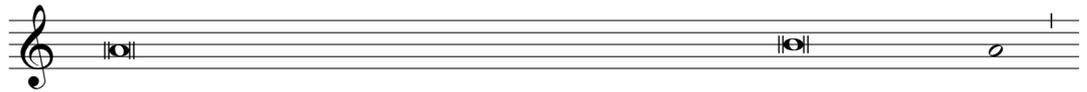
knowledge of God through their wholehearted seeking of all that is right.

After the period of silence [and **Letus stand**], the priest sings;

Almighty and eternal God, you implanted in the human heart such



a deep longing for yourself that only in you can peace be found.



Grant that, despite the obstacles which stand in the way,



all may recognise the signs of your goodness, discern the holiness of your people,

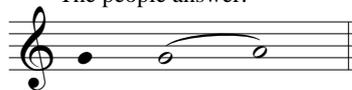


and so gladly acknowledge you as the one true God and Father of us all.



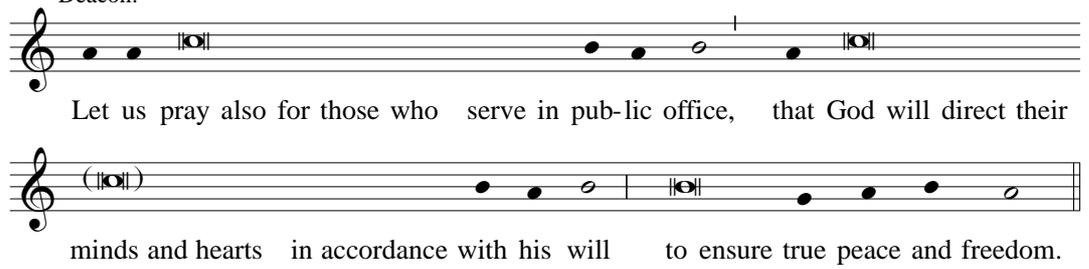
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

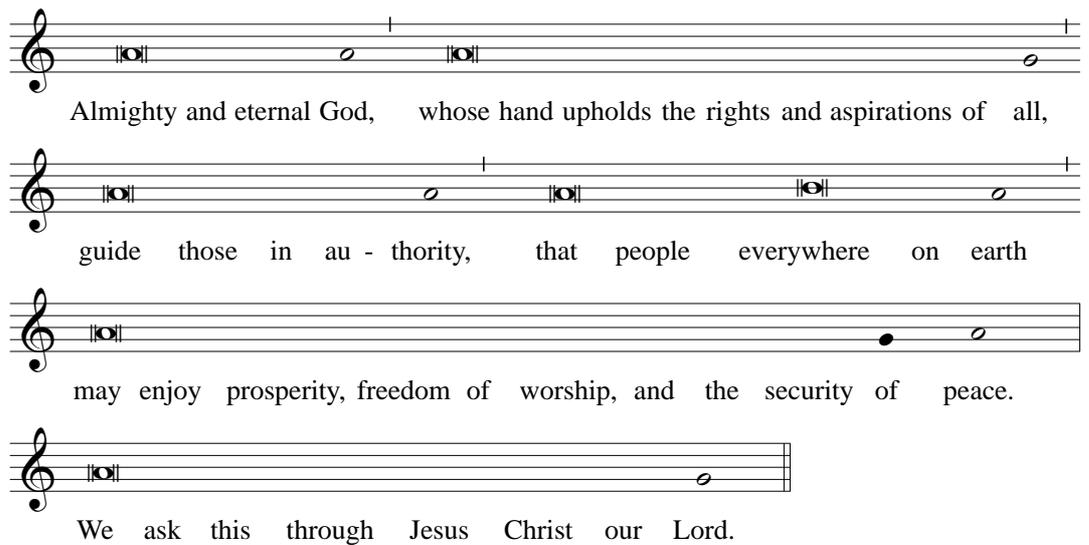


A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

Deacon:

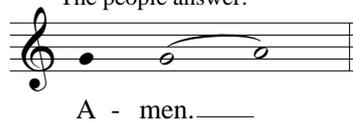


Let us pray also for those who serve in public office, that God will direct their  
minds and hearts in accordance with his will to ensure true peace and freedom.

After the period of silence [and **Letus stand**], the priest sings;


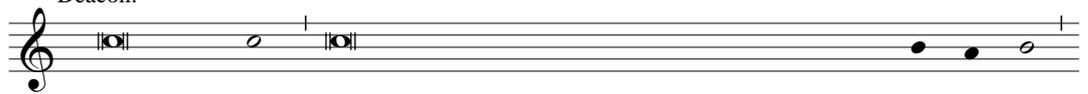
Almighty and eternal God, whose hand upholds the rights and aspirations of all,  
guide those in authority, that people everywhere on earth  
may enjoy prosperity, freedom of worship, and the security of peace.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:



A - men. ———

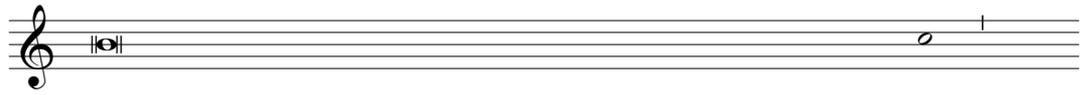
Deacon:



Finally, dear friends, let us pray that God will rid the world of false-hood and error,



dis-pel disease and famine from the face of the earth, break the fetters of captives,



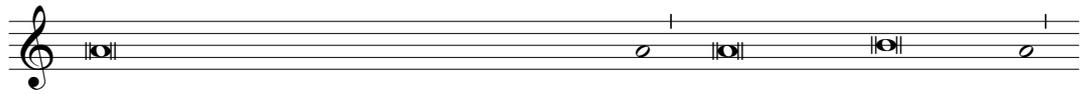
grant safe passage to travellers and those far from home,



restore health to the sick, and give salva - tion to the dying.

After the period of silence [and **Letus stand**], the priest sings;

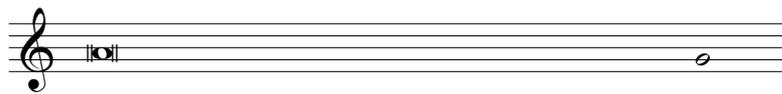
Almighty and eternal God, comfort of the afflicted and strength of the weary,



hear the voices of those who cry to you in dis-tress and grant that all may re-joice,

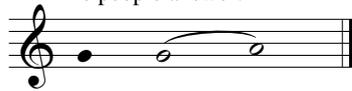


because your mercy attended them in their hour of need.



We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:



A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

1 For the Church throughout the world

The deacon says:

Let us pray, dear friends,  
for the holy Church of God throughout the world,  
that God will guide it and gather it together,  
so that we may worship the Father in tranquillity and peace.  
[Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
in Christ your Son  
you revealed your glory to nation upon nation.  
Safeguard the great work of your mercy,  
that your Church throughout the world  
may persevere with unshakeable faith  
in confessing your holy name.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 For the Pope

The deacon says:

Let us pray also for our Holy Father, Pope N.,  
that God, who has chosen him for the office of bishop,  
will keep him in health and strength for the sake of the Church  
to guide and govern the holy people of God.  
[Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
whose wisdom orders all things,  
protect with your love the shepherd you have chosen,  
that the Christian people you entrust to his care  
may under his leadership prosper in faith.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

3 For the ministers and people of the Church  
The deacon says:

Let us pray also for N. our bishop,  
for all bishops, priests, and deacons,  
and for all God's holy people.  
[Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
by whose Spirit the Church is ruled and made holy,  
hear the prayers we offer  
for those you have called to ministry  
and for your entire people,  
that by your grace we may all serve you faithfully.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

4 For those preparing for baptism

The deacon says:

Let us pray also for [our] catechumens,  
that God will open their ears and their hearts  
and unlock for them the gates of divine mercy,  
so that through the waters of rebirth  
they may receive pardon for their sins  
and find new life in Christ Jesus.  
[Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
by whom the Church is continually blessed with new members,  
deepen the faith and understanding of all catechumens,  
that, being reborn in the font of baptism,  
they may take their place among your adopted children.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The deacon says:

Let us pray also for those who share our faith in Jesus Christ,  
that God will gather together and keep in one Church  
all who seek to live by the truth.

[Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
by whom the dispersed are gathered  
and kept together as one,  
look lovingly on the flock of your Son,  
that all who have been sealed by one baptism  
may be joined together by wholeness of faith  
and preserved in fellowship by the bond of love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The deacon says:

Let us pray also for the Jewish people,  
the first to hear the word of God,  
that they will grow in the love of God's name  
and in faithfulness to the covenant.

[Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
who long ago chose Abraham and his descendants  
and established them as children of the promise,  
hear the prayers of your Church,  
that the people you first made your own  
may arrive at the fullness of redemption.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The deacon says:

Let us pray also for those  
 who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ,  
 that the light of the Holy Spirit  
 will guide them toward the path of salvation.  
 [Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
 grant that those who do not believe in Christ,  
 but who walk before you in sincerity of heart,  
 may find the truth.  
 Make our love for each other grow  
 and draw us more deeply into the mystery of salvation,  
 that we may bear before the world  
 a more perfect witness to your love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The deacon says:

Let us pray also for those who do not believe in God,  
 that they will come to a knowledge of God  
 through their wholehearted seeking of all that is right.  
 [Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
 you implanted in the human heart  
 such a deep longing for yourself  
 that only in you can peace be found.  
 Grant that, despite the obstacles which stand in the way,  
 all may recognise the signs of your goodness,  
 discern the holiness of your people,  
 and so gladly acknowledge you  
 as the one true God and Father of us all.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The deacon says:

Let us pray also for those who serve in public office,  
that God will direct their minds and hearts  
in accordance with his will  
to ensure true peace and freedom.

[Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
whose hand upholds the rights and aspirations of all,  
guide those in authority,  
that people everywhere on earth  
may enjoy prosperity, freedom of worship,  
and the security of peace.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The deacon says:

Finally, dear friends, let us pray that God  
will rid the world of falsehood and error,  
dispel disease and famine from the face of the earth,  
break the fetters of captives,  
grant safe passage to travellers and those far from home,  
restore health to the sick,  
and give salvation to the dying.

[Let us kneel.]

All pray in silence.

[Let us stand.]

Then the priest says:

Almighty and eternal God,  
comfort of the afflicted and strength of the weary,  
hear the voices of those who cry to you in distress  
and grant that all may rejoice,  
because your mercy attended them in their hour of need.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## VENERATION OF THE CROSS

After the general intercessions, the veneration of the cross takes place.

### SHOWING OF THE CROSS

One of the two following forms may be chosen for the showing of the cross, pastoral demands determining which is more effective.

**A** The priest or deacon accompanied by the ministers, or another suitable minister, goes to the church door. There he takes the uncovered cross, and the ministers take lighted candles. They go in procession through the church to the sanctuary. Near the entrance of the church, in the middle of the church, and at the sanctuary, the one carrying the cross stops, lifts it up, and sings the invitation **Behold the wood of the cross**. All answer: **Come, let us worship or Venite, adoremus**. After each response all kneel and venerate the cross briefly in silence. After the third response he sets the cross down or hands it to the ministers to hold. Candles are placed on either side of the cross, and the veneration follows.

**B** The veiled cross is carried to the altar by the deacon or another priest, accompanied by two ministers with lighted candles. Standing at the altar, the priest takes the cross, uncovers the upper part of it, then elevates it and begins the invitation **Behold the wood of the cross**. He may be assisted in the singing by the deacon or, if convenient, by the choir. All answer: **Come, let us worship or Venite, adoremus**. At the end of the singing all kneel and venerate the cross briefly in silence; the priest remains standing and holds the cross high.

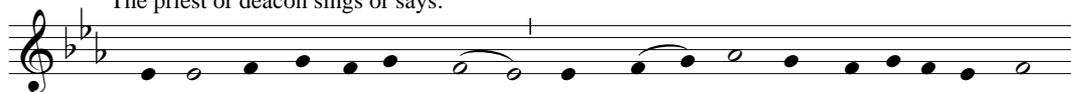
Then the priest uncovers the right arm of the cross, lifts it up, and again begins the invitation **Behold the wood of the cross**, and the rite is repeated as before.

Finally, he uncovers the entire cross, lifts it up, and begins the invitation **Behold the wood of the cross** a third time, and the rite is repeated as before.

Accompanied by two ministers with lighted candles, the deacon or the priest then carries the cross to a suitable place. There he sets the cross down or hands it to the ministers to hold. Candles are placed on either side of the cross, and the veneration follows.

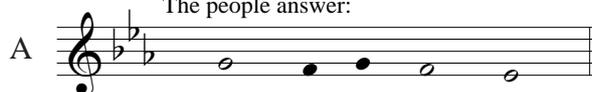
An alternative setting of **Behold the wood of the cross** is found on page 1155.

The priest or deacon sings or says:



Be-hold the wood of the cross,— on which— hung the Saviour of the world.

The people answer:



Come, let us wor - ship.



Ve - ni - te, ad - o - re - mus.

The priest or deacon sings or says:

Be-hold the wood of the cross,— on which— hung the Saviour of the world.

A The people answer:

Come, let us wor - ship.

B

Ve - ni - te, \_\_\_\_\_ ad - o - re - mus. \_\_\_\_\_

The priest or deacon sings or says:

Be-hold the wood of the cross,— on which— hung the Sav-iour of the world.

A The people answer:

Come, let us wor - ship.

B

Ve - ni - te, \_\_\_\_\_ ad - o - re - mus. \_\_\_\_\_

## VENERATION OF THE CROSS

The priest, clergy, and faithful approach to venerate the cross as in a procession. They make a simple genuflection or perform some other appropriate sign of reverence in accord with local custom, for example, kissing the cross. Only one cross should be used for the veneration. All who have venerated the cross return to their places and sit.

If the number of people makes it impossible for everyone to venerate the cross individually, the priest may take the cross, after some of the faithful have venerated it, and stand in the centre in front of the altar. In a few words he invites the people to venerate the cross and then holds it up briefly for them to worship in silence.

The song *We glorify your cross* (*Crucem tuam adoremus*), the Reproaches, or the hymn *Holy cross that saints rely on* (*Crux fidelis*) from the Antiphonal, page 994, or other suitable songs may be sung during the veneration of the cross.

After the veneration, the cross is carried to its place near the altar, and the lighted candles are placed around the altar or near the cross.

## COMMUNION RITE

The altar is covered with a cloth and the corporal and book are placed on it. Then the deacon or, if there is no deacon, the priest brings the vessel with the blessed sacrament from the place of reservation directly to the altar without any procession, while all stand in silence. Two ministers with lighted candles accompany him and they place their candles near the altar or on it.

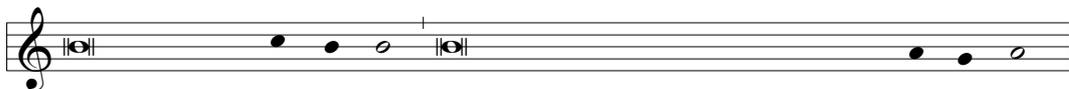
The deacon places the vessel on the altar and uncovers it. Meanwhile the priest comes from the chair, genuflects, and goes to the altar.

THE LORD'S  
PRAYER

INVITATION

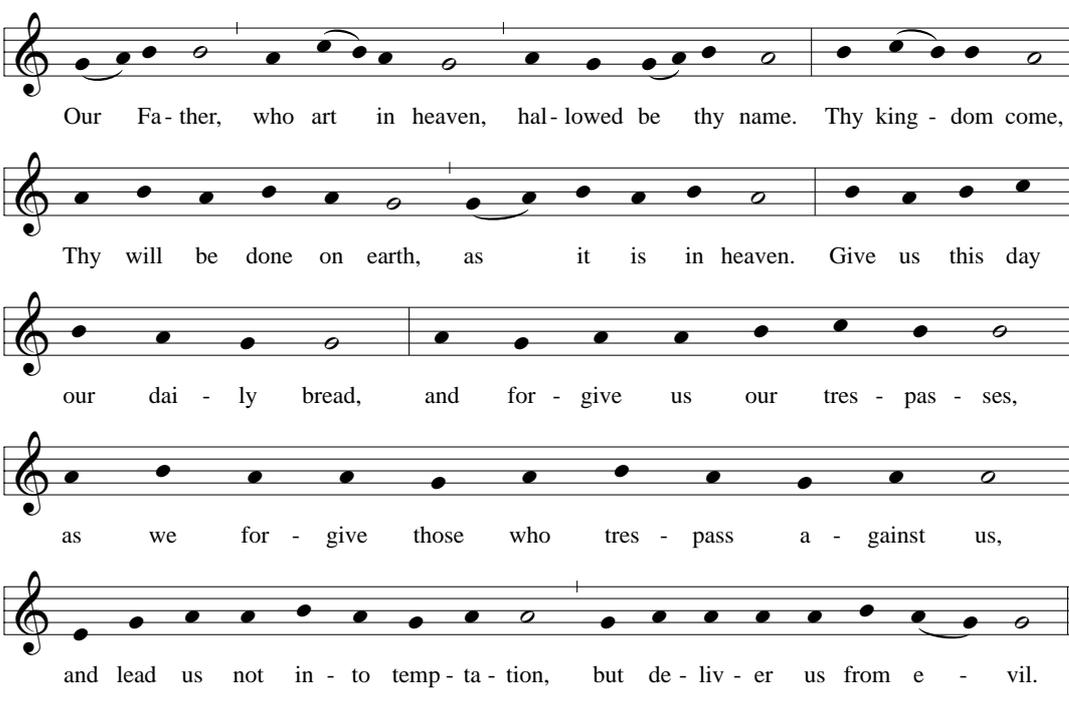
With hands joined, the priest sings or says one of the following invitations to the Lord's Prayer or similar words.

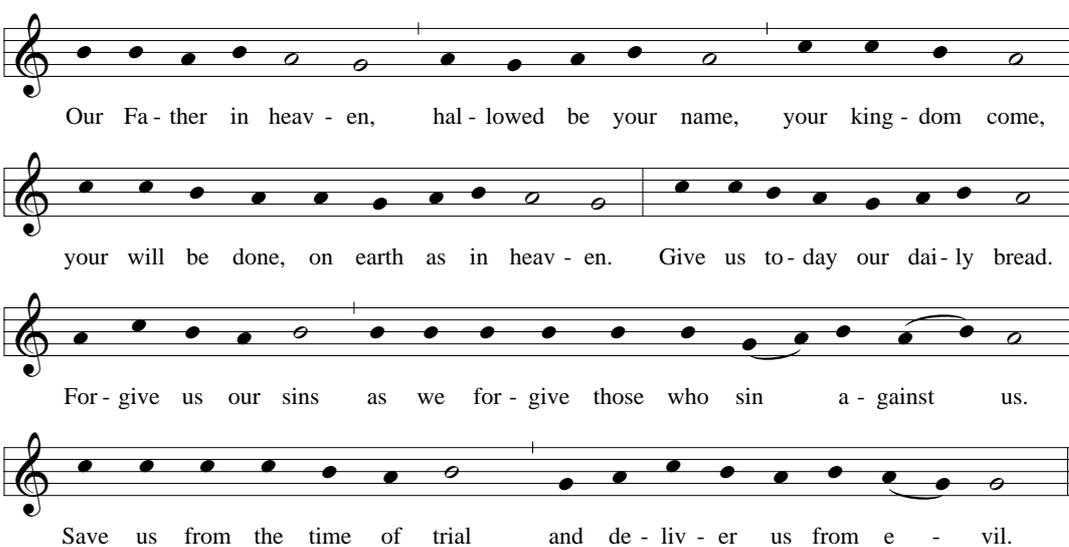
A   
Taught by the Saviour's com - mand and formed by the word of God, we dare to say:

B   
The Father has for-giv - en us; let us forgive our neighbour from the heart, as we say:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

With hands outstretched, the priest sings or says one of the following, together with the people:

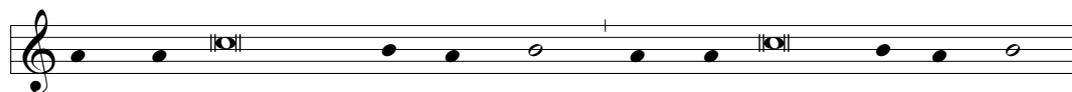
A   
Our Fa-ther, who art in heaven, hal-lowed be thy name. Thy king - dom come,  
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day  
our dai - ly bread, and for - give us our tres - pas - ses,  
as we for - give those who tres - pass a - gainst us,  
and lead us not in - to temp - ta - tion, but de - liv - er us from e - vil.

B   
Our Fa-ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name, your king - dom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heav - en. Give us to-day our dai - ly bread.  
For - give us our sins as we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.  
Save us from the time of trial and de - liv - er us from e - vil.

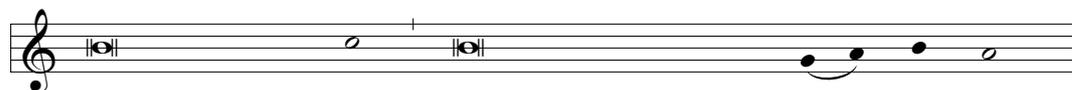
With hands still outstretched, the priest continues alone:



De - liver us, Lord, from ev - ery evil, and grant us peace in our day.



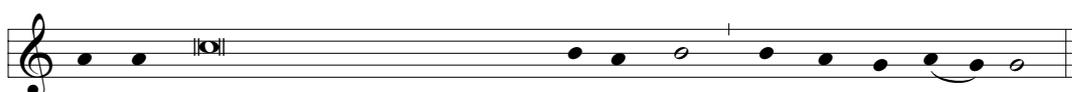
In your mercy keep us free from sin and pro - tect us in time of trial,



as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Je - sus Christ.

He joins his hands.

The people end the prayer with the acclamation:



For the kingdom, the power and the glo - ry are yours now and for ev - er

## COMMUNION

### PRIVATE PREPARATION

Then the priest joins his hands and says inaudibly:

Lord Jesus Christ, with faith in your love and mercy I eat your body. Let it not bring me condemnation, but health of mind and body.

### INVITATION

The priest genuflects and takes some of the consecrated bread and, extending it toward the people, says the following invitation:

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who takes away the sin of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the banquet of the Lamb.

The priest and people say together:

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,  
but only say the word and I shall be healed.

### COMMUNION SONG

While the priest is receiving the body of Christ, the communion song is begun.

The priest says inaudibly:

May the body of Christ bring me to everlasting life.

He reverently consumes the body of Christ.

After the priest has received communion, the deacon receives the consecrated bread and then assists the priest in giving communion to the people.

### COMMUNION PROCESSION

The priest takes the plate or other vessel and goes to the communicants. For each one he takes a piece of the consecrated bread, raises it a little, and shows it, saying:

The body of Christ.

The communicant receives communion after answering:

Amen.

After the completion of communion, the deacon or another minister may take the vessel containing the eucharist to a place prepared outside the church or, if circumstances require, may place it in the tabernacle.

PERIOD OF  
SILENCE

A period of silence may now be observed.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

**Let us pray**, all pray silently for awhile, unless a period of silence has already been observed.

Almighty and ever-living God,  
you have restored us to life  
through the blessed death and resurrection of your Christ.  
Preserve within us the work of your mercy,  
that, being united with his paschal mystery,  
we may never cease to offer you faithful service.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

### CONCLUDING RITE

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
PEOPLE

The priest says the following prayer with hands extended over the people.

Lord,  
send down abundant blessing upon your people,  
who have recalled your Son's death  
in the sure hope of rising again.  
Grant them pardon and renew their strength;  
deepen their faith  
and confirm in them your work of eternal redemption.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Then all depart in silence.

## HOLY SATURDAY

On Holy Saturday the Church waits at the tomb of the Lord, meditating on his suffering and death and looking forward to the holy night of the Easter Vigil. The altar is left bare, and the sacrifice of the Mass is not celebrated. This day is characterised by fasting, waiting, and alertness in prayer. Thus the community assembles for the Vigil to begin the Easter celebrations with a heightened sense of expectation and joy. This spirit of joy overflows into the following period of fifty days.

- On this day holy communion may be given only as viaticum.
- For the elect it is a day of retreat in final preparation for the sacraments of initiation. When it is possible, they come together with some of the faithful for reflection and prayer and to celebrate some or all of the preparation rites: the presentation of the Lord's Prayer, the "return" or recitation of the Creed, which was presented to them solemnly during Lent, the ephphetha rite, the choosing of a baptismal name, and the anointing with the oil of catechumens. If the anointing is celebrated, it may be a suitable occasion to receive in the parish the oils newly blessed by the bishop.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See The Roman Ritual, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Introduction, no. 22; see also no. 172ff.



## THE EASTER VIGIL

*This is the night  
when Jesus Christ broke the chains of death  
and in triumphant glory rose from the grave.*

*Rejoice, O mother Church, with all your children,  
resplendent in your risen Saviour's light!*

1 On this holy night, called the “mother of all vigils,” the Church keeps watch, celebrating the resurrection of Christ in the sacraments and awaiting his return in glory. It is the turning point of the Triduum, the passover of the new covenant which marks Christ’s passage from death to life.<sup>1</sup>

2 This paschal mystery, already celebrated in various ways since the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, is clearly and joyfully announced from the very beginning of the Vigil liturgy. The service of light, culminating in the great Easter proclamation of the resurrection, establishes from the outset the meaning of the celebration. It is in the light of the Easter candle that the Scriptures are read, understood, and received. They unfold the wonderful story of God’s work of creation and recreation. Then, those chosen for Christian initiation are plunged into the waters of Jesus’ death and resurrection and are anointed by the Spirit. The whole assembly of the faithful renew the promises of their baptism, and, finally, gathered at the table of the Lord, all celebrate Christ’s triumphant sacrifice and share the sacrament of his body and blood.

3 In this way, in accord with most ancient tradition, this night is kept as a vigil for the Lord (see Exodus 12:42). The Gospel of Saint Luke (see Luke 12:35ff) reminds the faithful to have their lamps burning, to be like servants awaiting the return of the head of the household who, on arriving, will find them awake and will seat them at the family table.

- The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil takes place at night, beginning sometime after nightfall and ending before daybreak on Sunday. It occupies the main part of the night and it does not correspond to the usual Saturday evening Mass in time or duration; its character is unique in the liturgical cycle.<sup>2</sup>
- The people assemble around a bonfire. Its flames dispel the darkness and light up the night. The beauty of the fire, its warmth and its light, draw the liturgical assembly together as the people arrive. Assistance

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<sup>1</sup>See Congregation of Rites, General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar, 21 March 1969 (hereafter, GNLYC), no. 21.

<sup>2</sup>See GNLYC, no. 21; see Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, On Worship of the Eucharist, 25 May 1967, no. 28; see Congregation for Divine Worship, Circular Letter *Paschalis sollemnitatis* to presidents of the conferences of bishops and presidents of national liturgical committees, on the preparation and celebration of the Easter Triduum, 16 January 1988 (hereafter, PS), no. 78.

should be provided for the infirm. Sound amplification equipment may be necessary to enable all to hear. After a while, the ministers in white Mass vestments come to the fire. It is blessed and the large Easter candle is prepared.

- Circumstances where it is impossible to light a large fire call for careful adaptation of the rite so that the power of this first sign is not destroyed. In this instance, after the people have assembled inside the church, the priest goes with the ministers (carrying the Easter candle) to the door of the church or another place best suited to the participation of the people. If necessary, the people turn to face the priest.
- The various rites provided for the preparation of the candle are optional. The conference of bishops, in keeping with the culture of the people, may determine special rites for this preparation.
- Having taken time to gather around the fire, the community sets off in a solemn procession of light into the church. This procession will have its full effect if the church is in darkness. The large Easter candle, a “pillar of fire” symbolising the risen Christ who conquers sin and death, leads the procession. The best time and method for distributing and lighting the candles of the people will depend on circumstances, but it should not disrupt the procession. Those to be baptised do not yet carry candles. Sung acclamations are provided for the procession and others in honour of Christ may be added.<sup>3</sup>
- On arrival in the church, the Easter proclamation is sung by the deacon, the priest, or a cantor. The participation of the people may be enhanced by inserting approved acclamations. The Easter proclamation is sung standing in the holy light of the Easter candle and the candles held by the people. For good effect, electric lighting may be left off until the service of light is finished. Then it could be used throughout the Easter Vigil, focusing first on the ambo, then on the font, and finally on the altar.
- The character of this night as a vigil is demonstrated most clearly in the liturgy of the word, when the Church meditates on all the wonderful things God has done for us from the beginning. The nine readings trace the outstanding events of the history of salvation understood in the light of the Easter proclamation, which has just been heard. The sung *Gloria* points toward the proclamation of the good news about Jesus; it should not be so elaborate that it overshadows what it is meant to introduce. The gospel of the resurrection, with which the account of salvation history culminates, is greeted with greatest solemnity in the joyful Easter alleluias. The faithful reflect calmly on each reading by singing the responsorial psalm, by silence, and by listening and responding to the prayer proclaimed by the priest. The prayer after each reading helps to place the reading within the context of the paschal mystery. The homily, an integral part of the liturgy, draws these elements together and leads the people into the celebration of the Easter

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<sup>3</sup>See PS, no. 83.

sacraments, which will follow. A variety of ways of proclaiming the lessons and singing the responses will sustain the attention of all. Time is unimportant on this holy night, haste is unseemly, and abbreviation of the liturgy of the word is unnecessary except when pastoral conditions genuinely require it. (At least three readings from the Old Testament should be read, although for very serious reasons the number may be reduced to two. The reading of Exodus 14, however, is never omitted.)<sup>4</sup>

- In the third part of the Vigil, new members of the Church are reborn in the celebration of the sacraments of initiation as the day of resurrection approaches. Baptism recalls and makes present the paschal mystery of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection because in baptism we pass from the death of sin into life (see Romans 6:1-11).<sup>5</sup> Easter, especially the Easter Vigil, is therefore the best time for the celebration of baptism.<sup>6</sup> It is highly desirable that baptism by immersion be used on this night, since it is more suitable as a symbol of participation in the death and resurrection of Christ.<sup>7</sup> Without the celebration of baptism at the Vigil, the blessing of water, the renewal of baptismal promises, and the sprinkling lose some of their significance. In a parish, therefore, it ought to be quite exceptional to celebrate the Vigil without baptism, at least the baptism of infants in those instances where there are no adult candidates. The bishop, in particular, chief steward of the mysteries of God and leader of the entire liturgical life in the Church, should personally celebrate baptism at the Easter Vigil.<sup>8</sup>
- If the blessing of the baptismal water does not take place at the baptistery, the vessel of water is reverently carried to the font after the renewal of baptismal promises. If the blessing of baptismal water does not take place, the water blessed for the renewal of baptismal promises is put in a suitable place after the renewal.
- Adults and children of catechetical age who are baptised at the Vigil are normally also confirmed before sharing in the eucharist. In addition, there may be baptised adults who, after a period of catechesis, are ready for confirmation and first eucharist. In this case, some restructuring of the rites of the Easter Vigil may be necessary, and help can be found in the chapter of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* entitled "Preparation of Uncatechized Adults for Confirmation and Eucharist." The candidates for baptism are presented first, the litany is sung, and the water of the font is blessed. After their profession of faith, they are baptised and presented with a lighted candle. Confirmation is celebrated with the laying on of hands and the anointing with chrism.

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<sup>4</sup>See The Roman Missal, *Lectionary for Mass*, 2nd English edition, 1981, Introduction, no. 99; see PS, nos. 85-87.

<sup>5</sup>See The Roman Ritual, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, English edition, 1986 (hereafter, RCIA), General Introduction to Christian Initiation, no. 6.

<sup>6</sup>See RCIA, Introduction, nos. 17 and 23; see The Roman Ritual, *Rite of Baptism for Children* (hereafter, RBC), Introduction, no. 9.

<sup>7</sup>See RCIA, General Introduction to Christian Initiation, no. 22; see RBC, Introduction, no. 18.

<sup>8</sup>See RCIA, General Introduction to Christian Initiation, no. 12.

Then all the faithful also light their candles and they renew their baptismal promises. They are sprinkled with the baptismal water. The initiation liturgy concludes with the general intercessions, that is, the prayer of the faithful, in which the neophytes take part for the first time.

- If infants are to be baptised during the Easter Vigil, the following is done. First, the rite of reception of the infants is celebrated at a convenient time and place before the Vigil. In this separate celebration the liturgy of the word may be omitted. The prayer of exorcism is said, followed by the anointing with the oil of catechumens. During the Easter Vigil itself, the infants are presented by the parents and godparents after the presentation of the adult candidates. The parents and godparents make the profession of faith with the elect. After all the infants have been baptised, they are anointed with chrism. Following the presentation of the lighted candles, the parents and godparents return to their places with the infants. The celebration then continues with the confirmation of the adults.<sup>9</sup>
- Pastoral considerations may suggest that along with the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation, the Easter Vigil should include the rite of reception of already baptised Christians into the full communion of the Catholic Church. This will necessitate some restructuring of the rites of the Easter Vigil. Provision is made for this in the chapter of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* entitled “Celebration at the Easter Vigil of the Sacraments of Initiation and of the Rite of Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church.”
- The Vigil culminates with the liturgy of the eucharist, when the whole Church is called to the table that the Lord has prepared for his people through his death and resurrection. It is the high point of the night’s liturgy because it is in the fullest sense the Easter sacrament: the commemoration of the sacrifice of the cross, the presence of the risen Christ, the completion of Christian initiation, and the foretaste of the eternal pasch.<sup>10</sup> Therefore it should not appear as an appendix to the Vigil liturgy, nor should it be overshadowed in its solemnity by the eucharist of Holy Thursday evening. Before being welcomed to the supper of the Lord’s body and blood, the newly initiated share for the first time in the faithful’s holy kiss of peace.

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<sup>9</sup>See RBC, Introduction, no. 28:1 and 2.

<sup>10</sup>See PS, no. 90.



## OUTLINE OF THE RITE

### SERVICE OF LIGHT

Greeting  
Introduction  
Blessing of the Fire  
[Preparation of the Easter Candle]  
Lighting of the Easter Candle  
Procession  
Easter Proclamation (*Exsultet*)

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

Invitation  
Readings from the Old Testament  
    Responsorial Psalms  
    Prayers after the Readings  
Gloria  
Prayer  
Reading from the New Testament  
Solemn Alleluia and Psalm  
Gospel  
Homily

### CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

#### CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

Presentation of the Candidates  
Invitation to Prayer  
Litany of the Saints  
Blessing of the Water  
Profession of Faith  
    Renunciation of Sin  
    Profession of Faith  
Baptism  
Acclamation  
Explanatory Rites  
    [Anointing after Baptism]  
    [Clothing with a Baptismal Garment]  
    Presentation of a Lighted Candle

#### CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION

Invitation  
Laying on of Hands and Prayer  
Anointing with Chrism

### RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

[Blessing of the Water  
    Invitation to Prayer  
    Prayer of Blessing]  
Invitation  
Renewal of Baptismal Promises  
    Renunciation of Sin  
    Profession of Faith  
Sprinkling with Blessed Water  
General Intercessions

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

#### CONCLUDING RITE

EASTER SUNDAY  
THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

THE EASTER VIGIL

SERVICE OF LIGHT  
(LUCERNARIUM)

When the people have assembled, the priest and deacon go to them with the ministers, one of whom carries the Easter candle. After making the sign of the cross, the priest greets the people, using the following greeting or one of the other greetings from the Order of Mass.

GREETING      The grace of God,  
so rich in mercy and boundless in compassion,  
be with you all.

The people answer:

And also with you.

The priest or deacon gives a brief introduction, instructing the faithful about the night Vigil. He may use the following or similar words.

INTRODUCTION      Dear friends in Christ,  
on this most holy night  
when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life,  
the Church invites its sons and daughters throughout the world  
to come together in vigil and prayer.  
This is the passover of the Lord:  
if we keep the memory of his death and resurrection  
by hearing his word and celebrating his mysteries,  
then we may be confident  
that we shall share his victory over death  
and live with him for ever in God.

**BLESSING  
OF THE FIRE**

After **Let us pray** and the pause for silent prayer, the priest, with hands outstretched, blesses the fire.

Lord God,  
we share in the brightness of your glory  
through your Son, the light of the world.  
Make this new fire + holy.  
Through this Easter celebration,  
purify our minds and inflame us with new hope,  
that we may come one day to the feast of eternal light.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

Amen.

**PREPARATION  
OF THE  
EASTER CANDLE**

Depending on the nature of the congregation, it may seem appropriate to stress the dignity and significance of the Easter candle. Any or all of the following symbols may be used in preparing the candle. The conferences of bishops may also determine other ways to prepare the candle better adapted to the culture of the people.

After the blessing of the new fire, an acolyte or one of the ministers brings the Easter candle to the priest, who cuts a cross in the wax with a stylus. Then he cuts the Greek letter alpha (Α) above the cross, the letter omega (Ω) below, and the numerals of the current year between the arms of the cross.

As the vertical arm of the cross is cut, the priest says:

Christ yesterday and today,

As the horizontal arm of the cross is cut, the priest says:

the beginning and the end,

As the alpha above the cross is cut, the priest says:

the Alpha

As the omega below the cross is cut, the priest says:

and the Omega.

As the first numeral in the upper left angle of the cross is cut, the priest says:

All time belongs to him

As the second numeral in the upper right angle of the cross is cut, the priest says:

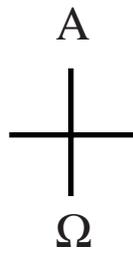
and all the ages.

As the third numeral in the lower left angle of the cross is cut, the priest says:

To him be glory and power

As the last numeral in the lower right angle of the cross is cut, the priest says:

through every age for ever. Amen.



When the cross and other marks have been made, the priest may insert five grains of incense in the candle. He does this in the form of a cross, saying:

- (1) By his holy
- (2) and glorious wounds 1
- (3) may Christ the Lord 4   2   5
- (4) guard us 3
- (5) and keep us. Amen.

**LIGHTING  
OF THE  
EASTER  
CANDLE**

The priest lights the Easter candle from the new fire. This may be done in silence, or the priest may say the following words.

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,  
dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

**PROCESSION**

Then the deacon or, if there is no deacon, the priest takes the Easter candle, lifts it high, and sings alone the following acclamation. Alternative acclamations are found on pages 1156-1158.

Christ—our—light.—

The people answer:

Thanks— be to God.—

Then all enter the church, led by the deacon with the Easter candle. If incense is used, the thurifer carrying the censer with burning incense precedes the deacon.

At the church door the deacon lifts the candle high and sings a second time at a higher pitch the following acclamation:

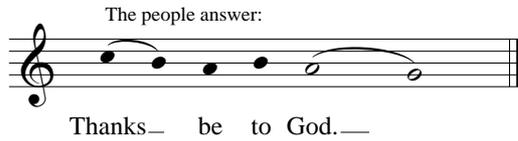
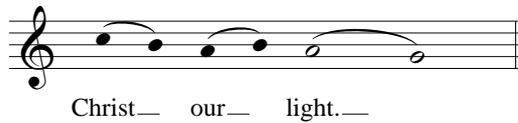
Christ— our— light.—

The people answer:

Thanks— be to God.—

All light their candles from the Easter candle and continue in the procession.

When the deacon arrives before the altar, he faces the people and sings a third time at a still higher pitch the following acclamation:



## EASTER PROCLAMATION (EXSULTET)

When he comes to the altar, the priest goes to his chair. The deacon places the Easter candle on a stand in the middle of the sanctuary or near the ambo. If incense is used, the priest puts some in the censer, as at the gospel of Mass. Then the deacon asks and receives the blessing from the priest. (This blessing is omitted if the Easter proclamation is sung by one who is not a deacon.) The priest says in a low voice:

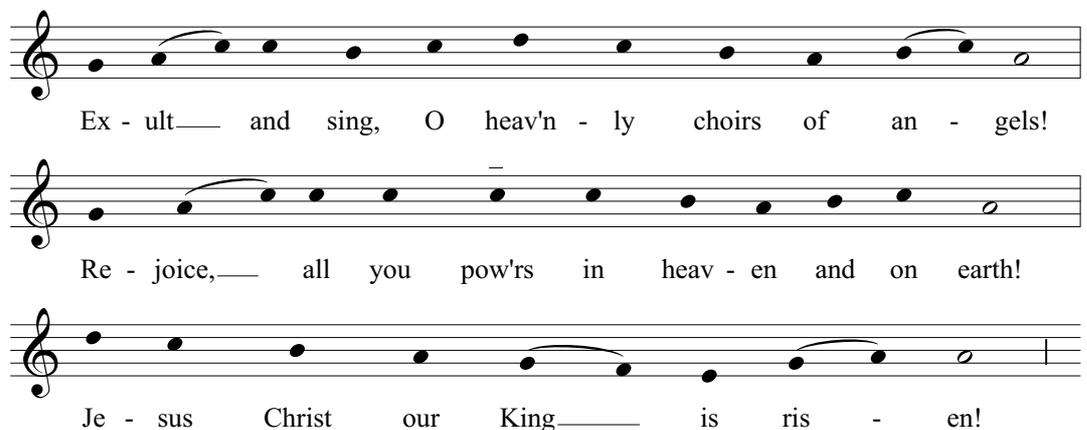
The Lord be in your heart and on your lips  
that you may worthily proclaim his Easter praise:  
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, +  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The deacon or, if there is no deacon, the priest may incense the book and candle. He then sings the Easter proclamation at the ambo. All stand and hold lighted candles.

If necessary, the Easter proclamation may be sung by a priest or cantor.

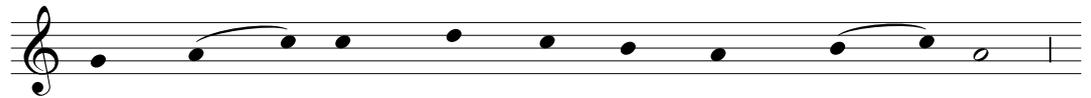
The Easter proclamation may be sung using option A, the complete form, or option B, an abbreviated form. An alternative form of the Easter proclamation is found on page 328. The texts and music that are shaded may be omitted.

### A Complete Form of the Easter Proclamation

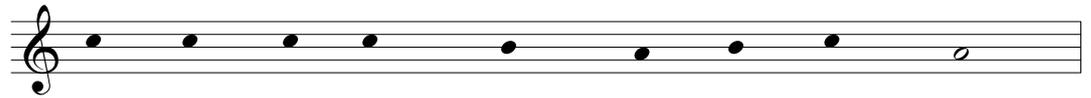




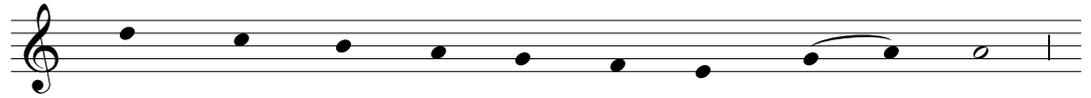
Sound— the trum - pet, sing of our sal - va - tion!



Re - joice,— O earth, in shin - ing splen - dour,



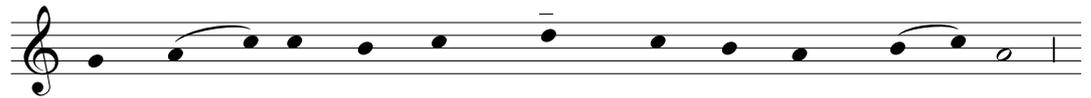
ra - diant in the bright - ness of your king!



Lands that once lay cov - ered by dark - ness,



see— Christ's glo - ry fill - ing all the u - ni - verse!



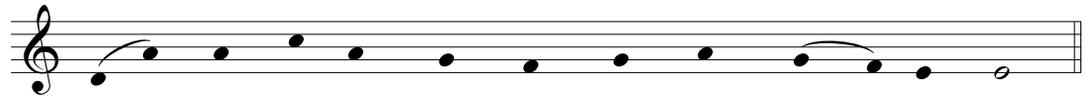
Re - joice,— O moth - er Church, with all your chil - dren,



re - splen - dent in your ris - en Sav - iour's light!



Let our joy - ful voic - es re - sound— this night!

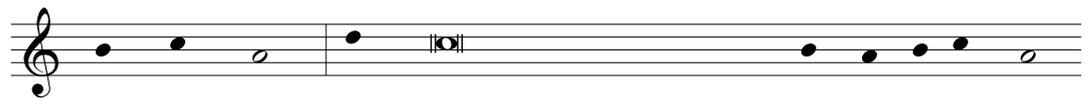


Let— God's peo - ple shake these walls with shouts— of praise!

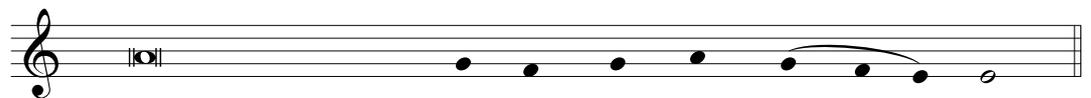
A A Minister who is a deacon sings:



Re-joyce,— be - lov - ed friends—and heirs with Christ, standing with me in this



won - drous light! Pray that God grant to me, a dea - con of the Church,



strength to sing this Eas - ter can - dle's prais - es.



The Lord \_\_\_\_\_ be with you.

The people answer:

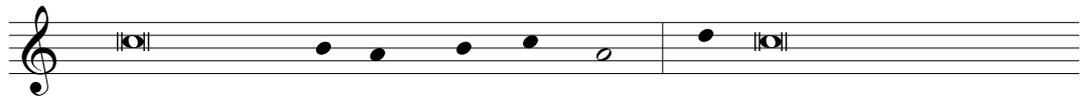


And al - so with you.

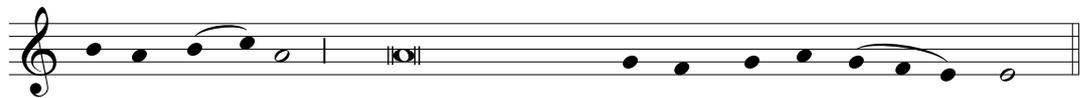
B A minister who is a priest or cantor sings:



Re-joyce, — be - lov - ed friends — and heirs with Christ,

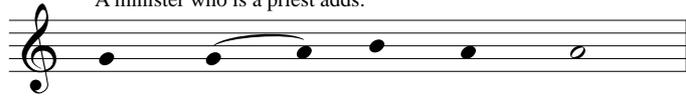


standing with me in this won-drous light! Join me in seeking from God's



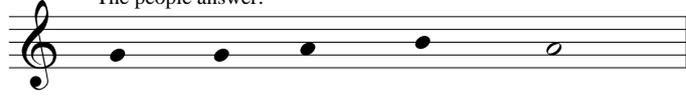
Ho-ly Spir - it grace to sing this Eas-ter proc-la - ma - tion.

A minister who is a priest adds:



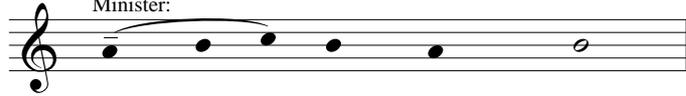
The Lord \_\_\_\_\_ be with you.

The people answer:



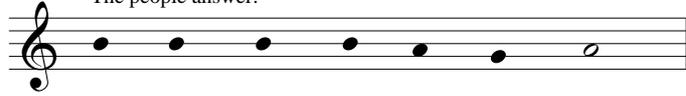
And al - so with you.

Minister:



Lift \_\_\_\_\_ up your hearts.

The people answer:



We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister:



Let us give thanks to the Lord — our God.

The people answer:



It is right to give thanks — and praise. —

Minister:

It is truly right and just that with full hearts and minds— and voic - es,  
 we should praise you, unseen God, al - might - y Fa - ther,  
 and your on - ly Son, our Lord— Je - sus Christ.  
 For Christ ransomed us with his pre - cious blood  
 and, by nailing to the cross the decree that con - demned— us,  
 he paid to you, e - ter - nal Fa - ther, the price of A - dam's sin.  
 This— is— our Pass - o - ver feast, when Christ, the true Lamb, is slain,  
 whose blood con - secrates the homes of all— be - liev - ers.

The cantor sings the following acclamation and the people repeat it:

This is the night. This is our pass - ov - er feast.

Minister:

This \_\_\_\_\_ is the night when first you set the chil - dren of Is - ra - el free:

you saved our ancestors from slaver - y in E - gypt

and led them dry - shod through the sea.

The people take up the acclamation:

This is the night. This is our pass - ov - er feast.

Minister:

This \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ the night when you led your people by a pil - lar of fire:

with your light you showed them the way and destroyed all the dark - ness of sin.

The people take up the acclamation:

This is the night. This is our pass - ov - er feast.

Minister:

This \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ the night when Christians every - where,

washed clean of sin and freed from all de - file - ment,

are re - stored to grace and grow in ho - li - ness.

The people take up the acclamation:

This is the night. This is our pass - ov - er feast.

Minister:

This \_\_\_\_\_ is the night when Jesus Christ broke the chains\_\_\_ of death  
 and in tri-um-phant glo-ry rose from the grave. What good would life have  
 been for us had Christ not come as our— Re - deem - er?  
 O \_\_\_\_\_ God, how wonder - ful your care for us!  
 How boundless your mer-ci-ful love! To ran-som a slave, you gave up a Son!

The cantor sings the following acclamation, and the people repeat it:

Glo - ry and praise to you, O God!

Minister:

O\_\_\_ nec-es-sar-y sin\_\_\_ of A - dam, des-troyed by the death\_\_\_ of Christ!  
 O\_\_\_\_\_ hap-py fault, which gained for us so great a Re-deem - er!

The people take up the acclamation

Glo - ry and praise to you, O God!

Minister:

O\_\_\_\_\_ night tru - ly blest! O\_\_\_ night chosen a - bove all  
 oth - ers to see Christ rise in glo - ry from\_\_\_ the dead!

The people take up the acclamation:

Glo - ry and praise to you, O God!

Minister:

This — is — the night of which the Scrip - ture says:

"Even darkness is not dark for you, and the night will shine as clear as the day!"

The people take up the acclamation:

Glo - ry and praise to you, O God!

Minister:

How ho - ly is this night, which heals — our wounds and wash - es all e - vil a - way!

A night to re - store lost in - no - cence and bring mourn - ers joy!

A night to cast — out ha - tred! A night for seek - ing peace and

hum - bling pride!

The people take up the acclamation:

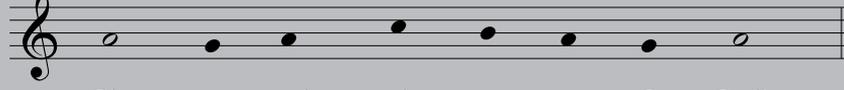
Glo - ry and praise to you, O God!

Minister:

O tru - ly bless - ed night when heaven is wed - ded to earth

and we are re - con - ciled — with God!

The people take up the acclamation:



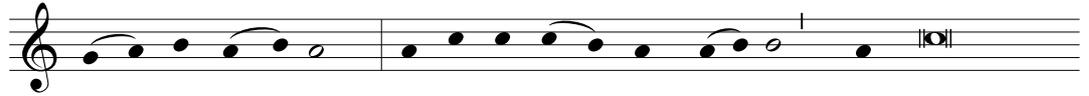
Glo - ry and praise to you, O God!



Therefore, Fa - ther most ho - ly, in the joy of this night,



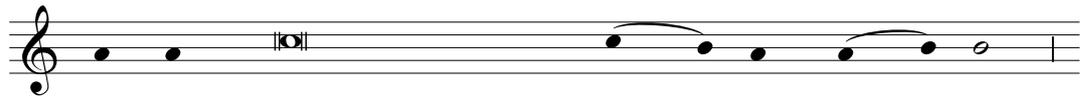
re - ceive our evening sacri - fice of praise, the solemn of - fer - ing of your



ho - ly peo - ple. Ac - cept this Eas - ter can - dle, a flame divided



but un - dimmed, a pil - lar of fire that glows to the hon - our of God.



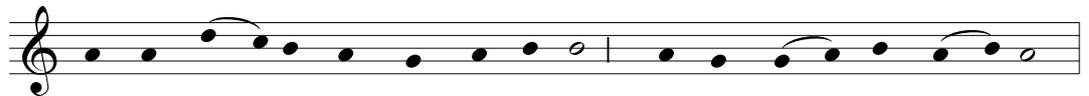
Let it mingle with the lights — of heav - en



and continue brave - ly burn - ing to dis - pel the dark - ness



of this night!



May the Morn - ing Star which nev - er sets find this flame — still burn - ing.



Christ — is that Morn - ing Star, who rose to shed his peace - ful light on all —



cre - a - tion and lives and reigns with you for ev - er and ev - er.

The people answer:



A - men! — A men! — A - men!

The minister begins:

Exult and sing, O heav'nly choirs of angels!  
Rejoice, all you powers in heaven and on earth!  
Jesus Christ our King is risen!  
Sound the trumpet, sing of our salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendour,  
radiant in the brightness of your king!  
Lands that once lay covered by darkness,  
see Christ's glory filling all the universe!

Rejoice, O mother Church, with all your children,  
resplendent in your risen Saviour's light!  
Let our joyful voices resound this night!  
Let God's people shake these walls with shouts of praise!

-----

A deacon says:

Rejoice, beloved friends and heirs with Christ,  
standing with me in this wondrous light!  
Pray that God grant to me, a deacon of the Church,  
strength to sing this Easter candle's praises.

A priest or cantor says:

Rejoice, beloved friends and heirs with Christ,  
standing with me in this wondrous light!  
Join me in seeking from God's Holy Spirit  
grace to sing this Easter proclamation.

If the minister is a deacon or priest, he adds:

The Lord be with you.

The people answer:

And also with you.

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Minister:

Lift up your hearts.

The people answer:

We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister:

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

The people answer:

It is right to give thanks and praise.

The minister continues:

It is truly right and just  
that with full hearts and minds and voices,  
we should praise you, unseen God, almighty Father,  
and your only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

For Christ ransomed us with his precious blood  
and, by nailing to the cross the decree that condemned us,  
he paid to you, eternal Father, the price of Adam's sin.

This is our passover feast,  
when Christ, the true Lamb, is slain,  
whose blood consecrates the homes of all believers.

This is the night  
when first you set the children of Israel free:  
you saved our ancestors from slavery in Egypt  
and led them dry-shod through the sea.

This is the night  
when you led your people by a pillar of fire:  
with your light you showed them the way  
and destroyed all the darkness of sin.

This is the night  
when Christians everywhere,  
washed clean of sin and freed from all defilement,  
are restored to grace and grow in holiness.

This is the night  
when Jesus Christ broke the chains of death  
and in triumphant glory rose from the grave.

What good would life have been for us  
had Christ not come as our Redeemer?

O God, how wonderful your care for us!  
How boundless your merciful love!  
To ransom a slave, you gave up a Son!

O necessary sin of Adam,  
destroyed by the death of Christ!  
O happy fault,  
which gained for us so great a Redeemer!  
O night truly blest! O night chosen above all others  
to see Christ rise in glory from the dead!

This is the night  
of which the Scripture says:  
"Even darkness is not dark for you,  
and the night will shine as clear as the day!"

How holy is this night,  
which heals our wounds and washes all evil away!

A night to restore lost innocence and bring mourners joy!  
A night to cast out hatred!  
A night for seeking peace and humbling pride!

O truly blessed night  
when heaven is wedded to earth  
and we are reconciled with God!

Therefore, Father most holy, in the joy of this night,  
receive our evening sacrifice of praise,  
the solemn offering of your holy people.

Accept this Easter candle,  
a flame divided but undimmed,  
a pillar of fire that glows to the honour of God.

Let it mingle with the lights of heaven  
and continue bravely burning  
to dispel the darkness of this night!

May the Morning Star which never sets  
find this flame still burning.  
Christ is that Morning Star,  
who rose to shed his peaceful light on all creation  
and lives and reigns with you for ever and ever.

The people answer:

Amen.

**B**           Abbreviated Form of the Easter Proclamation

       *Music setting of Abbreviated Form of the Easter Proclamation*  
                  *(Pages 322–327)*

The text of the abbreviated form appears on 323–325



*Music setting of Abbreviated Form of the Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 322–327)*

The minister begins:

Exult and sing, O heav'nly choirs of angels!  
Rejoice, all you powers in heaven and on earth!  
Jesus Christ our King is risen!  
Sound the trumpet, sing of our salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendour,  
radiant in the brightness of your king!  
Lands that once lay covered by darkness,  
see Christ's glory filling all the universe!

Rejoice, O mother Church, with all your children,  
resplendent in your risen Saviour's light!  
Let our joyful voices resound this night!  
Let God's people shake these walls with shouts of praise!

-----

If the minister is a deacon or priest, he adds:

The Lord be with you.

The people answer:

And also with you.

-----

Minister:

Lift up your hearts.

The people answer:

We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister:

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

The people answer:

It is right to give thanks and praise.



*Music setting of Abbreviated Form of the Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 322–327)*

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The minister continues:

It is truly right and just  
that with full hearts and minds and voices,  
we should praise you, unseen God, almighty Father,  
and your only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

For Christ ransomed us with his precious blood  
and, by nailing to the cross the decree that condemned us,  
he paid to you, eternal Father, the price of Adam's sin.

This is our passover feast,  
when Christ, the true Lamb, is slain,  
whose blood consecrates the homes of all believers.

This is the night  
when first you set the children of Israel free:  
you saved our ancestors from slavery in Egypt  
and led them dry-shod through the sea.

This is the night  
when Christians everywhere,  
washed clean of sin and freed from all defilement,  
are restored to grace and grow in holiness.

This is the night  
when Jesus Christ broke the chains of death  
and in triumphant glory rose from the grave.

What good would life have been for us  
had Christ not come as our Redeemer?

O God, how wonderful your care for us!  
How boundless your merciful love!  
To ransom a slave, you gave up a Son!

O necessary sin of Adam,  
destroyed by the death of Christ!  
O happy fault,  
which gained for us so great a Redeemer!

How holy is this night,  
which heals our wounds and washes all evil away!  
A night to restore lost innocence and bring mourners joy!

O truly blessed night  
when heaven is wedded to earth  
and we are reconciled with God!



*Music setting of Abbreviated Form of the Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 322–327)*

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Therefore, Father most holy, in the joy of this night,  
receive our evening sacrifice of praise,  
the solemn offering of your holy people.

Accept this Easter candle.  
Let it dispel the darkness of this night!

May the Morning Star which never sets  
find this flame still burning.  
Christ is that Morning Star,  
who rose to shed his peaceful light on all creation  
and lives and reigns with you for ever and ever.

The people answer:

Amen.



*Music setting of Abbreviated Form of the Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 322–327)*



*Music setting of Abbreviated Form of the Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 322–327)*

ALTERNATIVE  
EASTER  
PROCLAMATION



*Music setting of Alternative Easter Proclamation*  
*(Pages 328–335)*  
*text: 336–338*



*Music setting of Alternative Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 328–335)*



*Music setting of Alternative Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 328–335)*



*Music setting of Alternative Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 328–335)*



*Music setting of Alternative Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 328–335)*



*Music setting of Alternative Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 328–335)*



*Music setting of Alternative Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 328–335)*



*Music setting of Alternative Easter Proclamation  
(Pages 328–335)*

The minister begins:

Exult and sing, O shining angel choirs!  
Exult and dance, bright stars and blazing suns!  
The firstborn of creation, Jesus Christ,  
is ris'n in radiant splendour from the dead!

Rejoice, O awesome night of our rebirth!  
Rejoice, O mother moon, that marks the months!  
For from your fullness comes, at last, the Day  
when sin is robbed of pow'r and death is slain!

Awaken, earth! Awaken, air and fire!  
O children born of clay and water, come!  
The One who made you rises like the sun  
to scatter night and wipe your tears away.

Arise then, sleepers, Christ enlightens you!  
Arise from doubt and sadness, sin and death.  
With joyful hearts and spirits set afire  
draw near to sing this Easter candle's praise!

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A minister who is a deacon or priest says:

The Lord be with you.

The people answer:

And also with you.

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Minister:

Lift up your hearts.

The people answer:

We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister:

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

The people answer:

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Minister:

We praise you, God, for all your works of light!  
We bless you for that burst of fire and flame  
through which you first created all that is:  
a living universe of soaring stars,  
of space and spinning planets, surging seas  
that cradle earth and rock against her breast.

The people take up the acclamation:

We praise you, God of everlasting light!

Minister:

We praise you for light's beauty, motion, speed:  
for eastern light that paints the morning sky;  
for western light that slants upon our doors,  
inviting us to praise you ev'ry night.

The people take up the acclamation:

We praise you, God of everlasting light!

Minister:

We bless you for the light invisible:  
the fire of faith, the Spirit's grace and truth,  
the light that bonds the atom, stirs the heart,  
and shines for ever on the face of Christ!

The people take up the acclamation:

We praise you, God of everlasting light!

Minister:

Creator, in the joy of Easter eve,  
accept our off'ring of this candle's light:  
may all who see its glow and feel its warmth  
be led to know your nature and your Name.

The people take up the acclamation:

We praise you, God of everlasting light!

Minister:

For, Father, it was your own light and love  
that led your people Israel dry-shod  
through foaming seas and brought them safe at last  
to lands of milk and honey. In your love  
you led them as a shining cloud by day  
and as a flaming shaft of fire by night.

This is the night, most blessed of all nights,  
when first you rescued people from the sea:  
a sign of that new birth which was to come  
in blood and water flowing from Christ's side!

The people take up the acclamation:

Now is Christ risen! We are raised with him!

Minister:

This is the night, most blessed of all nights,  
when your creating Spirit stirred again  
to turn back chaos and renew the world,  
redeeming it from hatred, sin, and strife!

The people take up the acclamation:

Now is Christ risen! We are raised with him!

Minister:

This is the night, most blessed of all nights,  
when all the powers of heaven and earth were wed  
and every hungry human heart was fed  
by Christ our Lamb's own precious flesh and blood!

The people take up the acclamation:

Now is Christ risen! We are raised with him!

Minister:

O night, more holy than all other nights,  
your watchful eyes beheld, in wondrous awe,  
the triumph of our Saviour over sin,  
the rising of the Deathless One from death!

The people take up the acclamation:

Now is Christ risen! We are raised with him!

Minister:

O night that gave us back what we had lost!  
O night that made our sin a happy fault!  
Beyond our deepest dreams this night, O God,  
your hand reached out to raise us up in Christ.

The people take up the acclamation:

Now is Christ risen! We are raised with him!

Minister:

O night of endless wonder, night of bliss,  
when every living creature held its breath  
as Christ robbed death and harrowed hopeless hell,  
restoring life to all those in the tomb!

The people take up the acclamation:

Now is Christ risen! We are raised with him!

Minister:

And so, our God, Creator of all life,  
with open hearts and hands we come to you:  
anointed with the Spirit's pow'r, we bear  
these precious, glowing gifts of fire and flame.

We pray that when our night of watching ends,  
the Morning Star who dawns and never sets,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ, may find us all  
united in one faith, one hope, one Lord.

For you, O Lord, are God, living and true:  
all glory, praise and pow'r belong to you  
with Jesus Christ, the One who conquered death,  
and with the Spirit blest for evermore.

The people answer:

Amen!

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

### INVITATION

After the Easter proclamation, the candles are put aside and all sit down. Before the readings begin, the priest or deacon speaks to the people in these or similar words.

Dear friends in Christ,  
we have begun our solemn vigil.  
Let us now listen attentively to the Scriptures.  
They tell how God saved a chosen people in the course of history  
and, in the fullness of time,  
sent his only-begotten Son as our Redeemer.

Let us pray that our God will bring to completion  
the saving work of the paschal mystery.

**READINGS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT AND RESPONSORIAL PSALMS:** The readings follow as indicated in the Lectionary. The same structure is followed for each reading. A reader goes to the ambo and proclaims the reading. Then the psalmist or cantor leads the psalm and the people answer or, instead of the responsorial psalm, a period of silence may be observed.

### PRAYERS AFTER THE READINGS

After each responsorial psalm, all rise and the priest sings or says **Let us pray**. The priest and people pray in silence for a while, unless a period of silence has already been observed. Then the priest, with hands outstretched, sings or says the prayer after the reading. All sit and the next reader comes forward to the ambo.

#### READING 1 *Creation* (Genesis 1:1—2:2 or Genesis 1:1, 26-31a)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

#### *Creation*

Almighty and eternal God,  
how wonderful is the work of your creation,  
how wisely you establish all things in order!  
Enlighten the people you have saved,  
that we may perceive  
the greater wonder of your new creation,  
brought forth in the fullness of time,  
when Christ our Passover was sacrificed,  
he who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

*The creation of man and woman*

O God,  
who wonderfully created the human race  
and still more wonderfully redeemed it,  
grant us the strength of mind  
to resist the enticements of sin,  
and so attain to everlasting joy.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

READING 2 *The sacrifice of Abraham* (Genesis 22:1-18; or 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

God and Father of all the faithful,  
by the grace of adoption  
you increase throughout the world the children of your promise;  
in this paschal mystery you fulfil the pledge  
made long ago to Abraham, your servant,  
that he would be father to many nations.  
Grant that your people everywhere  
may respond with faith to the grace of your calling.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

READING 3 *The passage through the Red Sea* (Exodus 14:15—15:1)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

God of our ancestors,  
even in these present days  
the wonders of your ancient deeds shine forth:  
your right hand parted the waters  
and delivered a single people from the slavery of Pharaoh;  
now through the waters of rebirth  
you extend to every nation  
deliverance from the bondage of sin.  
Grant that all the peoples of the world  
may become children of Abraham  
and enter the inheritance promised to Israel.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

OR: God of ages,  
through the light of the new covenant,  
you unlock for us the meaning of those marvels  
you worked in ancient times:  
the waters of the Red Sea  
prefigure the waters of baptism,  
and the Israelites you once freed from slavery  
become a sign of your Christian people.  
Grant that every nation by virtue of its faith  
may inherit the same privilege you bestowed on Israel  
and receive new birth through the gift of your Spirit.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

READING 4 *The new Jerusalem* (Isaiah 54:5-14)

The following prayer may be used after Reading 4 or, if readings 5, 6, and 7 are omitted, one of the prayers given for use after those readings may be said in place of this prayer.

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

Almighty and eternal God,  
for the glory of your name  
fulfil the promise you made long ago  
to men and women of faith,  
to bless them with descendants for ever.  
Increase your adopted children throughout the world,  
that your Church may see accomplished  
the salvation which those saints of old so firmly expected.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

READING 5 *The salvation freely offered to all* (Isaiah 55:1-11)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

Almighty and eternal God,  
only true hope of the world,  
through the voices of your prophets  
you announced the mysteries we celebrate tonight.  
Stir up the longings of your faithful people,  
because we grow in holiness  
only through the prompting of your grace.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

READING 6 *The fountain of wisdom* (Baruch 3:9-15, 32—4:4)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

God of life,  
by calling all nations to be saved  
you cause your Church to grow.  
In your mercy hear our prayers  
and keep for ever safe  
those whom you cleanse in the waters of baptism.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

READING 7 *A new heart and a new spirit* (Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

God of power and unwavering light,  
look with mercy on your great sacrament, the Church,  
and bring to fulfilment  
your eternal plan of redemption.  
Then may the whole world see and know  
that the fallen has been raised again,  
that the old has been shaped anew,  
and that all has been restored to wholeness  
through Christ himself,  
the beginning and end of all things,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

OR: Lord God,  
in both Testaments of Holy Scripture  
you teach us to celebrate the paschal mystery.  
Grant that we may understand the workings of your mercy,  
so that the gifts we receive today  
may confirm our hope of blessings to come.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

GLORIA: After the last reading from the Old Testament with its responsorial psalm and prayer, the altar candles may be lighted, and the *Gloria* is sung by all present. The church bells may be rung, in accord with local custom.

PRAYER

After **Let us pray** and the pause for silent prayer, one of the following prayers is said.

O God,  
you brighten this most holy night  
with the radiance of the risen Christ.  
Quicken within your Church the spirit of adoption,  
so that, renewed in mind and body,  
we may dedicate our lives wholeheartedly to your service.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
PRAYER

O God,  
your saving plan has brought us  
to the glory of this night.  
Slaves, we become your sons and daughters,  
poor, your mercy makes us rich,  
sinners, you count us among your saints.

Bring us to know the place that is ours  
in the unfolding story of your purpose,  
and instil in our hearts  
the wonder of your salvation.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, our passover and our peace,  
who lives with you now and always in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

READING FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT: A reader proclaims the reading from the Apostle Paul.

SOLEMN  
ALLELUIA  
AND PSALM

After the reading, all rise, and the priest, or, if necessary, the psalmist or cantor, solemnly intones the *Alleluia*, which is repeated by all present.

Al-le - lu - ia.

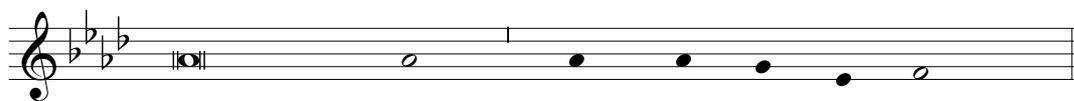
The people answer:

Al-le - lu - ia.

The psalmist or cantor then sings Psalm 118:1-2.



Give— thanks, the Lord is good, God's love is for ev - er!



Now let Israel say: God's love is for ever.

The *Alleluia* is intoned a second time, at a higher pitch.



Al-le - lu - ia.

The people answer:

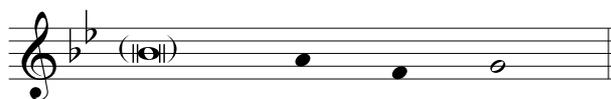


Al-le - lu - ia.

The psalmist or cantor then sings Psalm 118:16-17.

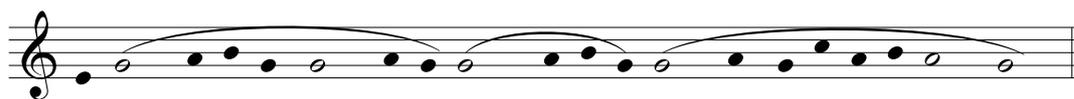


With— right hand raised high, the Lord strikes with force. I shall not die but live to



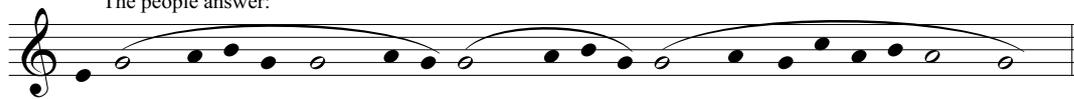
tell the Lord's great deeds.

The *Alleluia* is intoned a third time, at a still higher pitch.



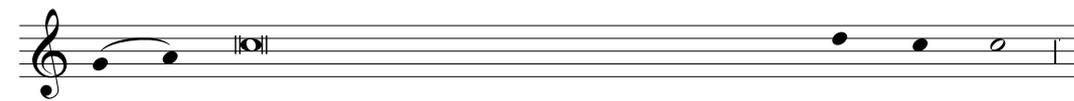
Al-le - lu - ia.

The people answer:

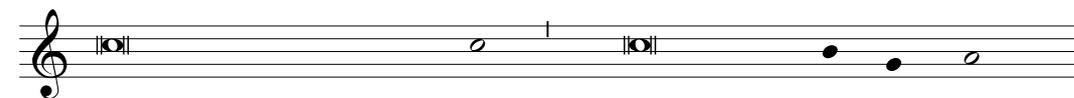


Al-le - lu - ia.

The psalmist or cantor then sings Psalm 118:22-23.

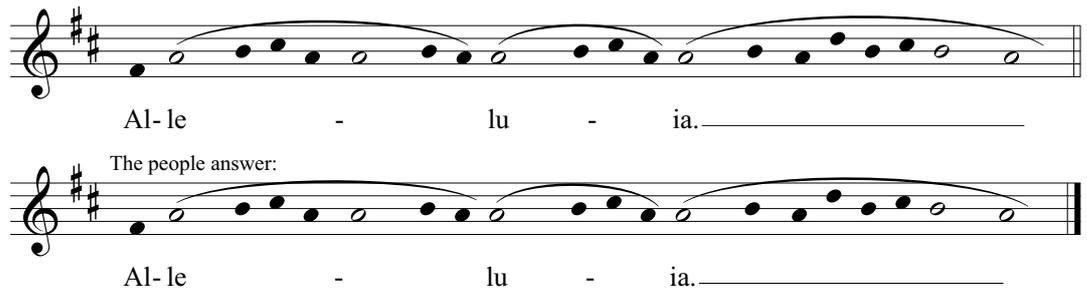


The— stone the builders rejected has become the cor - ner - stone.



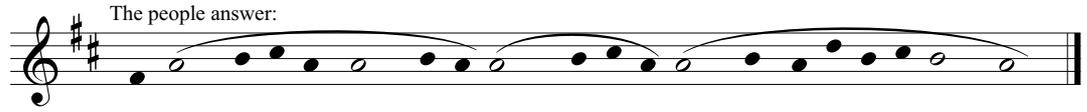
This is the work of the Lord, how wonderful in our eyes.

The *Alleluia* is intoned a fourth time and repeated by all present, at a still higher pitch.



Al- le - lu - ia. \_\_\_\_\_

The people answer:



Al- le - lu - ia. \_\_\_\_\_

GOSPEL: Incense may be used at the gospel, but candles are not carried.

HOMILY: The homily follows the gospel, and then the liturgy of baptism begins.

## CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

### CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

The celebration of baptism begins after the homily. It takes place at the baptismal font, if this is in view of the faithful; otherwise in the sanctuary, where the font has been prepared.

If, in addition to the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, there are candidates to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church, the combined rite for “Celebration at the Easter Vigil of the Sacraments of Initiation and of the Rite of Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church,” contained in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, is used instead of the rites that follow.

If there are no baptisms, but candidates are to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church, this takes place after the renewal of baptismal promises by the congregation and the sprinkling with blessed water, page 364. In this case, the celebration of reception and confirmation from the combined rite for “Celebration at the Easter Vigil of the Sacraments of Initiation and of the Rite of Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church,” contained in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, is used.

If there is no one to be baptised and the font is not to be blessed the litany is omitted, and the blessing of water, page 361, takes place at once.

PRESENTATION  
OF THE  
CANDIDATES

Accordingly, one of the following procedures, options A, B, or C, is chosen for the presentation of the candidates.

A *When Baptism Is Celebrated after a Procession to the Font*

There may be a full procession to the baptismal font. In this case an assisting deacon or other minister calls the candidates forward and their godparents present them.

(If there are a great many candidates, they and their godparents simply take their place in the procession.)

The procession is formed in this order: the deacon or other minister carries the Easter candle at the head of the procession, the candidates with their godparents come next, then the priest with the assisting ministers. The Litany of the Saints is sung during the procession. When the procession has reached the font, the candidates and their godparents take their place around the font in such a way as not to block the view of the congregation. The invitation to prayer precedes the blessing of the water.

B *When Baptism Is Celebrated Immediately at the Baptismal Font*

The priest accompanied by the assisting ministers goes directly to the font. An assisting deacon or other minister calls the candidates forward and their godparents present them. Then the candidates and the godparents take their place around the font in such a way as not to block the view of the congregation. The invitation to prayer and the Litany of the Saints follow.

(If there are a great many candidates, they and their godparents simply take their place around the font during the singing of the Litany of the Saints.)

C *When Baptism Is Celebrated in the Sanctuary*

An assisting deacon or other minister calls the candidates forward and their godparents present them. The candidates and their godparents take their place before the priest in the sanctuary in such a way as not to block the view of the congregation. The invitation to prayer and the Litany of the Saints follow.

(If there are a great many candidates, they and their godparents simply take their place in the sanctuary during the singing of the Litany of the Saints.)

INVITATION  
TO PRAYER

The priest invites the people to join in prayer, using one of the following formularies or similar words.

If there are candidates to be baptised:

Dear friends in Christ,  
as our brothers and sisters approach the waters of rebirth,  
let us support them by our prayers  
and ask God, our almighty Father,  
to sustain them with mercy and love.

OR: If the font is to be blessed, but there is no one to be baptised:

Dear friends in Christ,  
 let us ask God, the almighty Father,  
 to bless this font,  
 that those reborn in its waters  
 may become in Christ the adopted children of God.

LITANY  
 OF THE  
 SAINTS

The singing of the Litany of the Saints is led by cantors and may include, at the proper place, names of other saints (for example, the titular of the church, the patron saints of the place or of those to be baptised) or petitions suitable to the occasion. All stand (as is customary during the Easter season) and answer.

Cantor					All				
Lord,	have	mer	-	cy.	Lord,	have	mer	-	cy.
Christ,	have	mer	-	cy.	Christ,	have	mer	-	cy.
Lord,	have	mer	-	cy.	Lord,	have	mer	-	cy.
Cantor					All				
Holy	Mary,	Mother	of	God	Mi	-	chael	pray	—for us.
Holy	angels	of		God					
Saint	John	the			Bap	-	tist		
Saint	Peter	and	Saint	Paul	Jo	-	seph		
Saint				John	An	-	drew		
Saint	Mary				Mag	-	dalene		
Saint	Ig				Ste	-	phen		
Saint					na	-	tius		
Saint	Perpetua	and	Saint	Fe	Law	-	rence		
Saint					li	-	city		
Saint					Ag	-	nes		
Saint	Au				Gre	-	gory		
Saint	Athan				gus	-	tine		
Saint					a	-	sius		
Saint					Ba	-	sil		
Saint					Mar	-	tin		
Saint					Ben	-	edict		
Saint	Francis	and	Saint		Dom	-	inic		
Saint	Francis				Xav	-	ier		
Saint	John	Vi			an	-	ney		
Saint					Cath	-	erine		
Saint	Te				re	-	sa		
All	holy	men	and		wo	-	men		

Cantor All

Lord, — be mer - ci - ful. Lord, — save your peo - ple.

Cantor All

From all — e - vil, Lord, — save your peo - ple.

Cantor All

From eve - ry sin, — Lord, — save your peo - ple.

Cantor All

From ev - er - last - ing death, Lord, — save your peo - ple.

Cantor All

By your in - car - na - tion, Lord, — save your peo - ple.

Cantor All

By your death and res - ur - rec - tion, Lord, — save your peo - ple.

Cantor All

By your gift of the Ho - ly Spir - it, Lord, — save your peo - ple.

Cantor All

Be merciful to us sin - ners. Lord, hear our prayer.

If there are candidates to be baptised:

Cantor All

By the grace of baptism give new life to these cho - sen ones. Lord, hear our prayer.

If there is no one to be baptised:

Cantor All

By your grace bless this font where your children will be re - born. — Lord, hear our prayer.

Cantor All

Jesus, Son of the liv - ing God. — Lord, hear our prayer.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff is for the Cantor and the second for the All. The lyrics are: Cantor: Christ, hear us. All: Christ, hear us. Cantor: Lord Je - sus, hear our prayer. All: Lord Je - sus, hear our prayer.

If there are candidates to be baptised, the priest, with outstretched hands, says the following prayer; otherwise the prayer is omitted.

Almighty and ever-living God,  
 draw near to us in the sacraments of your great love  
 and send forth the spirit of adoption  
 to create a new people,  
 born to you in the waters of baptism.  
 Grant that our humble actions  
 may achieve their effect through your mighty power.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**BLESSING OF  
 THE WATER**

After the Litany of the Saints, the priest blesses the water. Facing the font containing the water, the priest, with outstretched hands, sings the following blessing (text only, page 352). The words and music that are shaded may be omitted.

 *Music setting of Blessing of the Water*  
*(Pages 349–352)*  
*text page 352*



*Music setting of Blessing of the Water*  
*(Pages 349–352)*



*Music setting of Blessing of the Water*  
*(Pages 349–352)*



*Music setting of Blessing of the Water*  
*(Pages 349–352)*

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Your unseen power, O God,  
accomplishes the wonders of salvation  
through sacramental signs.

Throughout the ages,  
you made the water you created  
a sign of the abundant grace  
which in baptism you bestow on your people.

At the dawn of creation,  
your Spirit hovered over the waters  
making them the fertile spring of all holiness.  
In the waters of the great flood,  
you prefigured the mystery of rebirth,  
so that the same element of water might drown the evil of sin  
as it brings forth a life of grace.

Through the waters of the Red Sea,  
you led Abraham's children dry-shod,  
that, delivered from Pharaoh's slavery,  
they might be an image of your people,  
baptised and set free.

In the fullness of time,  
your Son was baptised by John  
in the waters of the Jordan  
and anointed with the Holy Spirit.  
As he hung upon the cross,  
he brought forth water and blood from his side.  
After his resurrection,  
he commanded his disciples:  
Go, teach all nations,  
baptising them in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

O God,  
look upon the face of your Church  
and unseal for it the living springs of baptism.  
Let this water receive from the Holy Spirit  
the grace of your only-begotten Son,  
that humankind, created in your image,  
may be cleansed from its ancient corruption  
by the sacrament of baptism  
and rise to new birth  
through water and the Holy Spirit.

If this can be done conveniently, here, during the words **Through your Son ... of this font**,  
the priest lowers the Easter candle into the water once or three times, then, beginning with the  
words **that all who**, holds it in the water until the **Amen** is sung.

Through your Son,  
let the power of the Holy Spirit  
descend upon the waters of this font,  
that all who are buried with Christ by baptism into death  
may rise with him to undying life.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

Amen.

The candle is taken out of the water as the acclamation is sung,.



Spirits of wa - ter, bless the Lord, give glo-ry and praise— for ev - er.

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

After the blessing of the water, the priest continues with the profession of faith, which includes the renunciation of sin and the profession itself.

### RENUNCIATION OF SIN

Using one of the following formularies, the priest questions all the elect together; or, after being informed of each candidate's name by the godparents, he may use the same formularies to question the candidates individually.

If infants are to be baptised, the priest also invites the parents and godparents to make their profession of faith with the elect.

At the discretion of the conference of bishops, the formularies for the renunciation of sin may be made more specific and detailed as circumstances might require.

A Priest:  
Do you reject sin,  
so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

Candidates:

I do.

Priest:  
Do you reject the glamour of evil,  
and refuse to be mastered by sin?

Candidates:

I do.

Priest:  
Do you reject Satan,  
the author and prince of sin?

Candidates:

I do.

B Priest:  
Do you reject Satan?

Candidates:

I do.

Priest:  
And all his works?

Candidates:

I do.

Priest:  
And all his empty promises?

Candidates:

I do.

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

Then the priest, informed again of each candidate's name by the godparents, questions the candidates individually. Each candidate is baptised immediately after his or her profession of faith.

If there are a great many to be baptised, the profession of faith may be made simultaneously either by all together or group by group, then the baptism of each candidate follows.

Priest:

Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth?

Candidate:

I do.

Priest:

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was born of the Virgin Mary,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
who rose again  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

Candidate:

I do.

Priest:

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting?

Candidate:

I do.

## BAPTISM

The priest baptises each candidate either by immersion (A), or by the pouring of water (B). Each baptism may be followed by a short acclamation sung or said by the people.

If there are a great number to be baptised, they may be divided into groups and baptised by assisting priests or deacons. In baptising, either by immersion (A), or by the pouring of water (B), these ministers say the sacramental formulary for each candidate. During the baptisms, singing by the people or readings from Scripture or simply silent prayer is desirable.

If baptism is done by immersion of the whole body (or of the head only), decency and decorum should be preserved. Either or both godparents place their hand on the candidate. The priest, immersing the candidate's whole body or head three times, baptises the candidate in the name of the Trinity.

N., I baptise you in the name of the Father,

He immerses the candidate the first time.

and of the Son,

He immerses the candidate the second time.

and of the Holy Spirit.

He immerses the candidate the third time.

If baptism is by the pouring of water, either or both godparents place the right hand on the shoulder of the candidate, and the priest, taking baptismal water and pouring it three times on the candidate's bowed head, baptises the candidate in the name of the Trinity.

N., I baptise you in the name of the Father,

He pours water the first time.

and of the Son,

He pours water the second time.

and of the Holy Spirit.

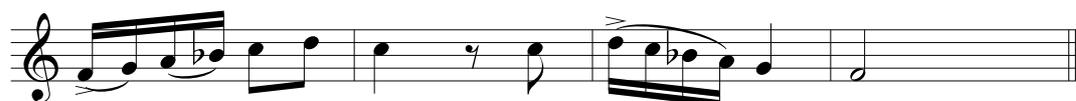
He pours water the third time.

#### ACCLAMATION

After each baptism, all may sing one of the following or another suitable acclamation.



You have put on Christ, in him you have been baptized.



Alleluia, alleluia.



Blessed be God, who chose you in Christ.

EXPLANATORY  
RITES

The celebration of baptism continues with the explanatory rites, after which the celebration of confirmation normally follows.

ANOINTING AFTER BAPTISM

If infants are baptised or for some grave reason the confirmation of those baptised is separated from their baptism, the priest anoints them with chrism immediately after baptism.

When a great number have been baptised, assisting priests or deacons may help with the anointing.

The priest first says the following words over all the newly baptised before the anointing.

The God of power and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ  
has freed you from sin  
and brought you to new life  
through water and the Holy Spirit.

He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation,  
so that, united with his people,  
you may remain for ever a member of Christ  
who is Priest, Prophet, and King.

Newly baptised:

Amen.

In silence each of the newly baptised is anointed with chrism on the crown of the head.

CLOTHING WITH A BAPTISMAL GARMENT

The garment used in this rite may be white or of a colour that conforms to local custom. If circumstances suggest, this rite may be omitted.

The priest says the following formula, and at the words “Receive this baptismal garment” the godparents place the garment on the newly baptised.

N. and N., you have become a new creation  
and have clothed yourselves in Christ.  
Receive this baptismal garment  
and bring it unstained to the judgement seat  
of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
so that you may have everlasting life.

Newly baptised:

Amen.

## PRESENTATION OF A LIGHTED CANDLE

The priest takes the Easter candle in his hands or touches it, saying to the godparents:

Godparents, please come forward  
to give to the newly baptised  
the light of Christ.

A godparent of each of the newly baptised goes to the priest, lights a candle from the Easter candle, then presents it to the newly baptised.

Then the priest says to the newly baptised:

You have been enlightened by Christ.  
Walk always as children of the light  
and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts.  
When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet him  
with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

Newly baptised:

Amen.

## CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION

Between the celebration of baptism and confirmation, the congregation may sing a suitable song.

The place for the celebration of confirmation is either at the baptismal font or in the sanctuary, depending on the place where, according to local conditions, baptism has been celebrated.

If the bishop has conferred baptism, he should now also confer confirmation. If the bishop is not present, the priest who conferred baptism is authorised to confirm adults or children of catechetical age.

When there are a great many persons to be confirmed, the minister of confirmation may associate priests with himself as ministers of the sacrament.

### INVITATION

The priest first speaks briefly to the newly baptised in these or similar words.

My dear newly baptised,  
born again in Christ by baptism,  
you have become members of Christ and of his priestly people.  
Now you are to share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us,  
the Spirit sent by the Lord upon his apostles at Pentecost  
and given by them and their successors to the baptised.

The promised strength of the Holy Spirit,  
which you are to receive,  
will make you more like Christ  
and help you to be witnesses to his suffering, death, and resurrection.  
It will strengthen you to be active members of the Church  
and to build up the body of Christ in faith and love.

The priests who will be associated with the minister of the sacrament now stand next to him.

With hands joined, the priest next addresses the people:

My dear friends,  
let us pray to God our Father,  
that he will pour out the Holy Spirit  
on these newly baptised  
to strengthen them with his gifts  
and anoint them to be more like Christ,  
the Son of God.

All pray briefly in silence.

LAYING ON  
OF HANDS  
AND PRAYER

The priest holds his hands outstretched over the entire group of those to be confirmed and says the following prayer.

In silence the priests associated as ministers of the sacrament also hold their hands outstretched over the candidates.

All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
by water and the Holy Spirit  
you freed your sons and daughters from sin  
and gave them new life.

Send your Holy Spirit upon them  
to be their helper and guide.

Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of right judgement and courage,  
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.  
Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ANOINTING WITH  
CHRISM

A minister brings the chrism to the priest.

When the minister of the sacrament is the bishop, he gives the chrism to the priests who are associated with him.

Each candidate, with godparent or godparents, goes to the priest (or to an associated minister of the sacrament); or, if circumstances require, the priest (associated ministers) may go to the candidates.

Either or both godparents place the right hand on the shoulder of the candidate and either a godparent or the candidate gives the candidate's name to the minister of the sacrament. During the conferral of the sacrament, a suitable song may be sung.

The minister of the sacrament dips his right thumb in the chrism and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed as he says:

N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Newly confirmed:

Amen.

The minister of the sacrament adds:

Peace be with you.

Newly confirmed:

And also with you.

The renewal of baptismal promises by the congregation follows the celebration of confirmation. The neophytes are led to their places among the faithful after this renewal.

## RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

### BLESSING OF THE WATER

### INVITATION TO PRAYER

If no one is to be baptised and the font has not been blessed, the priest blesses water. He first invites the people to pray.

Let us pray, dear friends,  
that the Lord our God may bless this gift of water,  
which will be sprinkled upon us  
to remind us of our baptism.

May God help us to remain faithful  
to the Holy Spirit we have received.

All pray silently for a brief period.

### PRAYER OF BLESSING

With hands outstretched, the priest sings or says the prayer of blessing.

Lord our God,  
be present to your people  
who keep vigil on this most holy night.  
Send your blessing + upon this water,  
as we recall the wonder of our creation  
and the still greater work of our redemption.

You created water to make the fields fruitful  
and to refresh and cleanse our bodies.

You made water the channel of your loving-kindness:  
through water you delivered your people from bondage  
and quenched their thirst in the desert.  
The prophets used water to symbolise  
the new covenant you would make with humankind.  
Through water, which Christ made holy in the Jordan,  
you have restored our sinful nature in the sacrament of rebirth.

May this water remind us of our own baptism,  
and may we rejoice with our brothers and sisters  
who have been baptised in this Easter season.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## INVITATION

After the celebration of confirmation, all stand and hold lighted candles. The priest addresses the community, in order to invite those present to the renewal of their baptismal promises. He may use the following or similar words.

Dear friends,  
through the paschal mystery  
we have been buried with Christ in baptism,  
so that we may rise with him to a new life.  
Now that we have completed our Lenten observance,  
let us renew the promises we made in baptism  
when we renounced Satan and all the works of evil,  
and promised to serve God faithfully  
in the holy Catholic Church.

And so:

## RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

### RENUNCIATION OF SIN

The priest continues with one of the following formularies of renunciation.

At the discretion of the conference of bishops, the formularies for the renunciation of sin may be made more specific and detailed as circumstances might require.

A Priest:  
Do you renounce sin,  
so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

All:

I do.

Priest:

Do you renounce the glamour of evil,  
and refuse to be mastered by sin?

All:

I do.

Priest:

Do you renounce Satan,  
the author and prince of sin?

All:

I do.

B Priest:  
Do you renounce Satan?

All:

I do.

Priest:  
And all his works?

All:  
I do.

Priest:  
And all his empty promises?

All:  
I do.

#### PROFESSION OF FAITH

Then the priest continues with the profession of faith.

Priest:  
Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth?

All:  
I do.

Priest:  
Do you believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was born of the Virgin Mary,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
who rose again  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

All:  
I do.

Priest:  
Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting?

All:  
I do.

SPRINKLING  
WITH  
BLESSED WATER

The priest sprinkles all the people with the blessed water, while all sing the song *I saw a stream flowing* from the Antiphonal, page 1014, or another song that is baptismal in character.

The priest then concludes with the following prayer.

God the all-powerful, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
has freed us from sin  
and brought us to new life  
through water and the Holy Spirit.  
May the grace of God preserve us for eternal life  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All:

Amen.

GENERAL  
INTERCESSIONS

Since the profession of faith is not said, the general intercessions begin immediately and for the first time the neophytes take part in them.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The priest goes to the altar and begins the liturgy of the eucharist in the usual way.

It is fitting that the bread and wine be brought forward by the neophytes.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Receive, O Lord, the prayers and offerings of your people,  
and grant that the healing work  
which you have begun in the paschal mystery  
may bring us to eternal salvation.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER** : Preface of Easter I, page 492; interpolations for Eucharistic Prayer I, pages 591 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607. If there are baptisms and Eucharistic Prayer I, II or III is used, the interpolation for baptism is said, page 590, 603, or 610.

**COMMUNION** : Before saying the invitation to communion, the priest may briefly remind the neophytes of the preeminence of the eucharist, which is the climax of their initiation and the centre of the whole Christian life. The neophytes, together with their godparents, parents, spouses, and catechists, receive communion under both kinds, followed by the other members of the assembly.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

God of mercy,  
pour forth upon us the spirit of your love,  
to make one in mind and heart  
those you have nourished by these Easter sacraments.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

## CONCLUDING RITE

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 803.

DISMISSAL

The deacon, or, if there is no deacon, the priest, with hands joined, sings or says one of the following dismissals.

A  Musical notation for dismissal A, consisting of a single staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. The melody begins with a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes, and ends with a whole note.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

B  Musical notation for dismissal B, consisting of a single staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. The melody begins with a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes, and ends with a whole note.

Go in the peace of Christ, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

C  Musical notation for dismissal C, consisting of a single staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. The melody begins with a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes, and ends with a whole note.

The Mass is ended, go in peace, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The people answer:  Musical notation for the people's answer, consisting of a single staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. The melody begins with a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes, and ends with a whole note.

Thanks be to God, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



## EASTER SUNDAY THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

### THE EASTER VIGIL

*Christ, my hope, has risen:  
he goes before you into Galilee.  
That Christ is truly risen from the dead we know.  
Victorious king, your mercy show! Amen. Alleluia.*

The joy of the resurrection, proclaimed and celebrated during the Easter Vigil, overflows into the Masses of Easter day. The Easter candle is alight in the sanctuary, alleluias are sung. It is important to sustain the celebration of the resurrection during this festival day, so that its place as the last day of the Triduum is evident.

- While elements proper to the Easter Vigil should not be repeated, it is appropriate for the faithful to renew their baptismal promises at Masses on Easter day. If done, this renewal replaces the profession of faith and is accompanied by the sprinkling of the people with water from the baptismal font. A song having a baptismal character is sung.
- If the sprinkling with water takes place as part of the renewal of baptismal promises after the homily, it is not used during the introductory rites. In the opening rite, it is preferable on this day to sing a joyful litany of praise or the *Gloria* rather than have a penitential rite.
- The Easter sequence and *Alleluia* are sung before the gospel reading. The proper preface, special interpolations in the eucharistic prayer, and the solemn blessing and dismissal all add to the solemnity of the liturgy of Easter day.
- If there are some infants who could not be baptised during the night Vigil, the Easter Sunday eucharist is a suitable time to celebrate these baptisms.
- Those who received communion at the Vigil Mass during the night may receive communion again at a Mass during Easter day. Priests who celebrate or concelebrate the Vigil Mass may also celebrate or concelebrate the Mass during the day on Easter Sunday.
- To conclude the sacred Triduum, Evening Prayer, in which the psalms are sung during a procession to the baptismal font, may be celebrated solemnly together with the newly baptised.

## OUTLINE OF THE RITE

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Sequence

Alleluia

Gospel

Homily

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

    Sprinkling with Blessed Water

General Intercessions

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### CONCLUDING RITE

EASTER SUNDAY  
THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

EASTER DAY

OPENING  
PRAYER

On this most holy day, Lord God,  
through the triumph of your only-begotten Son  
you have shattered the gates of death  
and opened the way to everlasting life.  
Grant, we beseech you,  
that we who celebrate the festival of the Lord's resurrection  
may rise to a new and glorious life  
through the quickening power of your Spirit.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE

OPENING  
PRAYER

God of undying life,  
by your mighty hand  
you raised up Jesus from the grave  
and appointed him judge of the living and the dead.

Bestow upon those baptised into his death  
the power flowing from his resurrection,  
that we may proclaim near and far  
the pardon and peace you give us.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, firstborn from the dead,  
who lives with you now and always in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

OR: For an afternoon Mass, when the gospel from Luke 24:13-35 is read.

O God, worker of wonders,  
you made this day for joy and gladness.

Let the risen Lord abide with us this evening,  
opening the Scriptures to us  
and breaking bread in our midst.

Set our hearts aflame and open our eyes,  
that we may see in his sufferings  
all that the prophets spoke  
and recognise him at this table,  
the Christ now entered into glory, firstborn from the dead,  
who lives with you now and always in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

### RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

In Easter Sunday Masses which are celebrated with a congregation, the rite of the renewal of baptismal promises may take place after the homily. In that case, the profession of faith is omitted.

#### INVITATION

The priest addresses the community, in order to invite those present to the renewal of their baptismal promises. He may use the following or similar words.

Dear friends,  
through the paschal mystery  
we have been buried with Christ in baptism,  
so that we may rise with him to a new life.  
Now that we have completed our Lenten observance,  
let us renew the promises we made in baptism  
when we renounced Satan and all the works of evil,  
and promised to serve God faithfully  
in the holy Catholic Church.

And so:

#### RENUNCIATION OF SIN

The priest continues with one of the following formularies of renunciation.

Priest:

Do you renounce sin,  
so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

All:

I do.

Priest:

Do you renounce the glamour of evil,  
and refuse to be mastered by sin?

All:

I do.

Priest:

Do you renounce Satan,  
the author and prince of sin?

All:

I do.

Priest:

Do you renounce Satan?

All:

I do.

Priest:

And all his works?

All:

I do.

Priest:

And all his empty promises?

All:

I do.

#### PROFESSION OF FAITH

Then the priest continues with the profession of faith.

Priest:

Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth?

All:

I do.

Priest:

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was born of the Virgin Mary,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
who rose again  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

All:

I do.

Priest:

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting?

All:

I do.

## SPRINKLING WITH BLESSED WATER

The priest sprinkles all the people with the blessed water, while all sing the song *I saw a stream flowing* from the Antiphonal, page 1014, or another song that is baptismal in character.

The priest then concludes with the following prayer.

God the all-powerful, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
has freed us from sin  
and brought us to new life  
through water and the Holy Spirit.  
May the grace of God preserve us for eternal life  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All:

Amen.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Filled with Easter joy, O Lord,  
we offer you the sacrifice  
by which your Church is wonderfully reborn  
and is nourished with the food of life.

We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I, page 492; interpolations for Eucharistic Prayer I, pages 591 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607. If there are baptisms and Eucharistic Prayer I, II, or III is used, the interpolation for baptism is said, page 590, 603, or 610.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Eternal God,  
watch over your Church with unfailing care,  
that we who have received new life  
through the paschal mystery of Christ  
may come to the glory of the resurrection.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## CONCLUDING RITE

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 803.

### DISMISSAL

The deacon, or, if there is no deacon, the priest, with hands joined, sings or says one of the following dismissals. This dismissal is used during the entire octave.

A 

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

B 

Go in the peace of Christ, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

C 

The Mass is ended, go in peace, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The people answer: 

Thanks be to God, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.





## SEASON OF EASTER

*The company of disciples said:  
It is true – the Lord has risen*

SEE LUKE 24:34



## SEASON OF EASTER

1 Easter Sunday is both the third day of the Triduum and the first day of the season of Easter. The first eight days of the season, the octave of Easter, are celebrated as solemnities of the Lord. The Sundays of Easter take precedence over all other solemnities and feasts. The Ascension is celebrated on the fortieth day after Easter, or, if the conference of bishops so decides, it is observed on the Seventh Sunday of Easter. The fiftieth and last day is the feast of Pentecost. These fifty days are an unbroken celebration of the victory of the risen Lord; they are celebrated as one feast day, sometimes called “the great Sunday.”<sup>1</sup>

2 Throughout this festive season, alleluias are sung and the Easter candle stands in the midst of the assembly. Christ is risen, reigns glorious with the Father, and is present through the gift of the Spirit. This is the Easter mystery that is celebrated in the symbolic period of fifty days.

- The Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel of John are at the heart of the liturgy of the word throughout the fifty days of Easter. The Gospel of John offers the community of faith an opportunity to deepen its understanding of the central place that Christ’s dying and rising, the paschal mystery, occupies in its life. The Acts of the Apostles shows how the Church derives its entire life from this mystery and its ultimate fruit, the gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> The special prefaces and the solemn blessings for the season of Easter serve to reinforce the paschal character of the Scripture readings for the season. The solemn Easter dismissal with its *alleluias* is used during the octave of Easter and on Pentecost Sunday.
- Special attention is given to the mystagogical catechesis of those initiated at the Easter Vigil. This is a time for the community and the neophytes together to deepen their grasp of the paschal mystery and to make it part of their lives. For the neophytes in particular, a fuller and more effective understanding of the mysteries comes through meditation on the gospel message they have learned and above all through their new and personal experience of the sacraments they have received. The community of faith helps them and prays for them and, in turn, is inspired by their fervour. The neophytes, their godparents, and those who have assisted them in their preparation for baptism have a special place reserved for them in the Sunday assemblies during the season of Easter.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Congregation of Rites, General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar, 21 March 1969, nos. 5, 22-25.

<sup>2</sup>See The Roman Missal, *Lectionary for Mass*, 2nd English edition, 1981, Introduction, no. 74.

<sup>3</sup>See The Roman Ritual, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 234-241.

- The whole season is a suitable time for Christian initiation. Special attention may be given to the celebration of infant baptism. In particular, it is the best time to celebrate the confirmation of children baptised as infants and their first communion.
- During the fifty days of this season, the Easter candle, suitably decorated and lighted, has a prominent place in the sanctuary. The baptismal font remains an important symbol during the fifty days. The sprinkling with water from the font is a most suitable opening rite. At the end of the season of Easter, the Easter candle is kept with honour in

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<sup>4</sup>See General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, no. 71; see Congregation for Divine Worship, Circular Letter *Paschalis sollemnitatis* to presidents of the conferences of bishops and presidents of national liturgical committees, on the preparation and celebration of the Easter Triduum, 16 January 1988, no. 107.



## OCTAVE OF EASTER

### EASTER MONDAY

OPENING  
PRAYER

Lord God,  
you constantly add new children  
to the family of your Church.  
Grant that all your people may express in their lives  
the richness of the sacrament they have received in faith.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: The profession of faith is not said.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Accept, O Lord,  
the gifts your people offer,  
that, having received new life  
through baptism and the confession of your name,  
they may reach the joy of life everlasting.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I, page 492; interpolations for Eucharistic Prayer I,  
pages 591 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord,  
you have set our feet on the way of salvation;  
may the grace of the paschal mystery  
abound in our hearts,  
so that at your prompting  
we may respond worthily to your generous gifts.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE: Solemn Blessing, page 803; Dismissal, page 373.

## EASTER TUESDAY

### OPENING PRAYER

Lord God,  
through this Easter mystery  
you have touched our lives  
with the healing power of your grace.  
Continue to bless your people,  
so that, possessed of perfect freedom,  
we may experience in heaven  
the joy we now taste on earth.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: The profession of faith is not said.

### PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Merciful Lord,  
accept these offerings from your household, the Church,  
that under your protection  
we may hold fast to the blessings of Easter  
and come to possess the gifts of heaven.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I, page 492; interpolations for Eucharistic Prayer I,  
pages 591 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

All-powerful God,  
you have given to your children  
the incomparable grace of baptism.  
Listen to our prayers  
and prepare us for the rewards of eternal happiness.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE: Solemn Blessing, page 803; Dismissal, page 373.

## EASTER WEDNESDAY

### OPENING PRAYER

God of hope,  
each year you gladden our hearts  
as we celebrate the mystery of Christ's resurrection.  
Grant in your mercy  
that through the joy of this present feast  
we may possess one day  
the eternal joys of heaven.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: The profession of faith is not said.

### PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Lord,  
receive the sacrifice which has redeemed the human race,  
and in your mercy grant us salvation of body and spirit.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I, page 492; interpolations for Eucharistic Prayer I, pages 591 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord,  
let this sharing in the mystery of your Son  
cleanse us from the old ways of sin  
and fashion us into your new creation.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE: Solemn Blessing, page 803; Dismissal, page 373.

## EASTER THURSDAY

### OPENING PRAYER

Lord God,  
who gathered together from the ends of the earth  
a diversity of nations  
to profess your holy name,  
grant that all who have been reborn in the waters of baptism  
may be united in faith and in holiness of life.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: The profession of faith is not said.

### PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Lord,  
accept the sacrifice we offer with joy  
for those who have received new life in baptism,  
and quicken within us the work of your grace.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I, page 492; interpolations for Eucharistic Prayer I, pages 591 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Hear our prayer, O Lord,  
that this holy exchange of gifts  
by which we are saved  
may secure us your help in this present life  
and obtain for us the joys of life eternal.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE: Solemn Blessing, page 803; Dismissal, page 373.

## EASTER FRIDAY

### OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God,  
in the paschal mystery of Christ your Son  
you have established with all peoples  
a new covenant of reconciliation and peace.  
Grant that we may show forth in our lives  
the mystery of faith we so joyfully proclaim.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: The profession of faith is not said.

### PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Loving Lord,  
by this Easter sacrament  
accomplish within us the change we seek:  
turn our desire for earthly things  
to a longing for those of heaven.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I, page 492; interpolations for Eucharistic Prayer I,  
pages 591 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord,  
in your faithful love  
watch over those you have saved,  
that all who have been ransomed by the passion of your Son  
may come to the joy of his resurrection.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE: Solemn Blessing, page 803; Dismissal, page 373.

## EASTER SATURDAY

### OPENING PRAYER

Ever-faithful God,  
by the outpouring of your grace  
you increase the number of those who believe in you.  
Keep your chosen ones for ever safe,  
so that, having been reborn in the waters of baptism,  
they may be clothed in the robes of immortal glory.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: The profession of faith is not said.

### PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Lord God,  
make the paschal mystery our constant joy:  
may it continue within us the work of redemption  
and be the cause of our unending delight.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I, page 492; interpolations for Eucharistic Prayer I, pages 591 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Protect with loving-kindness, Lord,  
the people you have renewed  
through the paschal mystery of Christ,  
and grant them this reward:  
the resurrection of the body to glory everlasting.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE: Solemn Blessing, page 803; Dismissal, page 373.

## SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

### OPENING PRAYER

God of everlasting mercy,  
each year when the feast of Easter returns  
you enliven the faith of your holy people.  
Increase in us the grace you have already bestowed,  
that we may understand more fully  
in whose font we have been washed,  
in whose Spirit we have been reborn,  
and in whose blood we have found redemption.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

### ALTERNATIVE OPENING PRAYER

God of life,  
source of all faith,  
through the waters of baptism  
you have raised us up in Jesus  
and given us life that endures.

Day by day refine our faith,  
that we who have not seen the Christ  
may truly confess him as our Lord and God  
and share the blessedness of those who believe.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Receive, Lord, the gifts of your people  
(and of those newly born in Christ),  
that, having confessed your name  
and been cleansed in the waters of baptism,  
we may come to eternal happiness.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I, page 492; interpolations for Eucharistic Prayer I,  
pages 591 and 592, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Grant, all-powerful God,  
that the paschal mystery we have shared  
may never cease to touch our hearts  
with the force of its saving grace.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CONCLUDING RITE: Solemn Blessing, page 803; Dismissal, page 373.

## THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

OPENING  
PRAYER

Let your people for ever exult, O God,  
let the joy of their youth be renewed,  
that we who now rejoice to be your adopted children  
may look forward with certain hope  
to the day of resurrection.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING PRAYER

YEAR A

O God of mystery,  
out of death you delivered Christ Jesus,  
and he walked in hidden glory with his disciples.  
Stir up our faith,  
that our hearts may burn within us  
at the sound of his word  
and our eyes be opened to recognise him  
in the breaking of the bread.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

God of all the prophets,  
you fulfilled your promise of old  
that your Christ would suffer  
and so rise to glory.

Open our minds to understand the Scriptures  
and fill us with joyful wonder in the presence of the risen Christ,  
that we may be his witnesses  
to the farthest reaches of the earth.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C God of life,  
in your risen Son  
you reveal your abiding presence among us  
and summon those reborn in baptism  
to lives of worship and service.

Fill this assembly with reverence  
as we come before you in prayer.  
Grant us courage and zeal  
in bearing witness before the world  
to your Son, Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
receive the gifts of your joyous Church.  
You have given us cause for great happiness on earth;  
grant us the consummation of that joy in heaven.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I-V, pages 492-500.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Protect with loving-kindness, Lord,  
the people you have renewed  
through the paschal mystery of Christ,  
and grant them this reward:  
the resurrection of the body to glory everlasting.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 803.

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

OPENING  
PRAYER

God of everlasting power,  
guide us toward the joyful company of heaven,  
so that your lowly flock may follow  
where Christ, the great Shepherd, has gone before  
and lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING PRAYER

YEAR A

O God,  
you never cease to call even those far away,  
for it is your will  
that all be drawn into one fold.

Attune our ears to the voice of the Good Shepherd,  
who leads us always to you,  
that we may find under your tender protection  
life in all its fullness.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

God of lasting love,  
fulfil your plan of salvation  
to gather into one fold  
the peoples of the whole world.  
Let everyone on earth  
recognise your Christ as the Good Shepherd,  
who freely lays down his life for all  
to take it up again in power.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C Safe in your hand, O God,  
is the flock you shepherd  
through Jesus your Son.

Lead us always to the living waters  
where you promise respite and refreshment,  
that we may be counted among those  
who know and follow you.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord God,  
make the paschal mystery our constant joy:  
may it continue within us the work of redemption  
and be the cause of our unending delight.

Grant this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I-V, pages 492-500.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Like a good shepherd, O God,  
keep watch over those  
you have redeemed by the blood of your Son,  
and lead them as your flock into heavenly pastures.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 803.

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

OPENING  
PRAYER

God of unfailing mercy,  
who redeemed us and adopted us as your children,  
look upon us with tender love,  
that we who believe in Christ  
may enjoy true freedom  
and enter our promised inheritance.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING YEAR A  
PRAYER

We have beheld your glory, O God,  
in the face of Christ Jesus, your Son.

Enliven our faith,  
that through Christ we may put our trust in you.  
Deepen our faith,  
that in Christ we may serve you.  
Complete our faith,  
that one day we may live with you  
in that place which Christ prepares for us,  
where he lives with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B O God,  
you graft us onto Christ, the true vine,  
and, with tireless care,  
you nurture our growth in knowledge and reverence.

Tend the vineyard of your Church,  
that in Christ each branch may bring forth  
to the glory of your name  
abundant fruits of faith and love.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C We behold your glory, O God,  
in the love shown by your Son,  
lifted up on the cross  
and exalted on high.

Increase our love for one another,  
that both in name and in truth  
we may be disciples of the risen Lord Jesus  
and so reflect by our lives  
the glory that is yours.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

O God,  
through the wonderful exchange of this sacrifice  
you have made us sharers in your own divine nature;  
grant that our daily lives  
may faithfully reflect the knowledge of your truth.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I-V, pages 492-500.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord,  
remain close to the people  
you have enriched with these heavenly mysteries,  
and grant that we may pass from our former ways  
to new life in the risen Christ.

We make our prayer in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 803.

## SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

OPENING  
PRAYER

Almighty God,  
enable us to celebrate with fitting joy  
these days of happiness,  
that as we accompany the risen Lord in faith  
we may express in our daily lives the joyful memory of Easter.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING PRAYER

YEAR A

Faithful God,  
who love us in Christ Jesus,  
send your Spirit of truth to dwell within us,  
that we may always reject what is false,  
live by the commands of Christ,  
and be true to the love you have shown us.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

God of all nations,  
in the gift of your Son  
you have embraced the world  
with a love that takes away our sin  
and bestows perfect joy.

Grant to all who have been reborn in baptism  
fidelity in serving you  
and generosity in loving one another.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C Great and loving Father,  
your will for us in Jesus  
is the peace the world cannot give;  
your abiding gift  
is the Advocate he promised.

Calm all troubled hearts,  
dispel every fear.  
Keep us steadfast in love  
and faithful to your word,  
that we may always be your dwelling place.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
let our prayers and offerings rise before you,  
that we whom you have cleansed in baptism  
may respond worthily to the mystery of your great love.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I-V, pages 492-500.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

All-powerful and ever-living God,  
in the resurrection of Christ you restore us to eternal life.  
Increase within us the effects of this Easter mystery  
and pour out in our hearts the strength of this saving food.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 803.

## THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

The Ascension has always been a part of the joyful celebration of the fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost but was singled out for commemoration on the fortieth day (see Acts 1:3) toward the end of the 4th century. The feast develops the glory of the resurrection by acclaiming the exaltation of Christ as Lord of heaven and earth. It serves to prepare the Church, toward the end of the season of Easter, for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

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Where the solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord is not observed as a holyday of obligation, it is celebrated on the Seventh Sunday of Easter, which is then considered its proper day in the calendar.

OPENING  
PRAYER

Almighty God,  
make our hearts dance with joy and thanksgiving;  
for in the ascension of Christ, your Son,  
our human nature is raised above the heavens,  
and where Christ, the head, has gone before in glory  
we, his body, are called in hope.

We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING    YEAR A  
PRAYER

God of majesty,  
yours is the power that raised Christ from death,  
yours the glory that exalted him to your right hand.

By the mystery of the ascension,  
sustain our hope  
as we bear witness to our baptism.  
By the perpetual outpouring of your Spirit,  
confirm your Church  
in its mission of salvation.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

God of power and might,  
in the mystery of the ascension  
you have raised up and glorified your Son  
and exalted our humanity at your right hand.

Confirm the good news your Church proclaims,  
so that when Christ returns in glory  
all nations may be gathered into the kingdom,  
where he lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C God of majesty,  
you led the Messiah  
through suffering into risen life  
and took him up to the glory of heaven.

Clothe us with the power  
promised from on high,  
and send us forth to the ends of the earth  
as heralds of repentance  
and witnesses of Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

We offer you this sacrifice, Lord,  
on the feast of your Son's ascension,  
begging that through this holy exchange of gifts  
we may rise with him to the joys of heaven.

We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Ascension I-III, pages 502-506; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Almighty and eternal God,  
you have entrusted to us here on earth  
the mysteries that foreshadow heaven.  
Draw our gaze upward  
where Christ, who shares our human nature,  
sits in glory at your right hand  
and lives and reigns with you for ever and ever.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 804.

## SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### OPENING PRAYER

Lord God,  
we firmly believe that Christ our Saviour  
now reigns with you in majesty.  
Open your ears to our prayer,  
that we may also experience the truth of his promise  
to remain with us always, even to the end of time.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

### ALTERNATIVE OPENING PRAYER

YEAR A

God our Father,  
glorify your Son  
in the lives of the people called by his name.  
Through no merit of ours, you have made us your own,  
to be your witnesses on earth.  
Keep us true to the name we bear,  
that people everywhere may know  
that you are the God and lover of us all.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR B

Father most holy,  
look upon this people  
whom you have sanctified by the dying and rising of your Son.  
Keep us one in love  
and consecrate us in your truth,  
that the new life you have given us  
may bring us to the fullness of joy.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

YEAR C Father, righteous one,  
your beloved Son prayed  
that his disciples in every generation  
might be one as you and he are one.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Look upon this assembly  
gathered in his name.  
Fulfil in us the prayer of Jesus  
and crown our celebration of this paschal season  
with your Spirit's gift of unity and love.  
Grant this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
who lives and reigns with you now and always  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

Lord,  
accept the prayers of your faithful people  
together with the gifts we offer,  
that through these holy rites, performed with reverent hearts,  
we may rise to the glory of heaven.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Easter I-V, pages 492-500, or Preface of Ascension I-III,  
pages 502-506.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Listen to our prayers, God our Saviour,  
and through this most holy sacrament confirm our hope  
that you will glorify the whole body of the Church  
as you have glorified its head, Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 803.

## PENTECOST SUNDAY

This, the “fiftieth day,” concludes the season of Easter, the continuous single festival of the risen Christ. Pentecost, the Jewish feast of harvest, which also commemorates the giving of the Law of Moses, was the day when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles (see Acts 2:1ff.); the event has been celebrated on this day at least since the third century. The joy of Pentecost is that the risen Christ breathes upon the Church and says, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22).

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### VIGIL MASS

This Mass is celebrated on Saturday evening before or after Evening Prayer I of Pentecost.

#### OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and ever-living God,  
whose will it was  
to encompass the paschal mystery within a season of fifty days,  
grant that the people once scattered over the face of the earth  
and divided by many tongues  
may be gathered together by your heavenly Spirit  
to confess your name with a single voice.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

Or: God of power,  
let the splendour of your glory come upon us,  
and through the radiance of the Holy Spirit  
let the brightness of Christ,  
who is light from light,  
shine in the hearts of those born again by grace.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

#### ALTERNATIVE

#### OPENING PRAYER

God of majesty and glory,  
you bring us to the day  
that crowns our joyful Easter feast.

Open for us the fountain of living waters  
promised to the faithful,  
that the outpouring of the Spirit  
may reveal Christ’s glory  
and enlighten all who wait in hope  
for the glorious day of redemption.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
pour forth the blessing of your Spirit upon these gifts,  
and through them fill your Church with love,  
so that the mystery of salvation  
may shine out for all the world to see.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Pentecost, page 508; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord God,  
increase within us the gifts we have received,  
that we may burn with the fire of that Spirit  
whom you poured forth on the apostles at Pentecost.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 805.

DISMISSAL

The deacon, or, if there is no deacon, the priest, with hands joined, sings or says one of the following dismissals.



Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Go in the peace of Christ, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



The Mass is ended, go in peace, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



The people answer:  
Thanks be to God, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## OUTLINE OF THE RITE

### INTRODUCTORY RITE

Entrance Procession

Greeting

[Psalmody]

Opening Prayer

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

Invitation

Readings from the Old Testament

    Responsorial Psalms

    Prayers after the Readings

Gloria

Prayer

Reading from the New Testament

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel

Homily

Profession of Faith

General Intercessions

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

### CONCLUDING RITE

In churches where the Mass of the vigil is celebrated in a prolonged form, this Mass may be celebrated in one the following ways.

When Evening Prayer, whether said in common or in choir, immediately precedes the Mass, the Mass may begin, along with the entrance procession and the greeting of the priest, either with the introductory verse and the hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, or with the singing of the opening antiphon (see Antiphonal, page 998). In either case the penitential rite is omitted (see GILH, nos. 94 and 96).

The psalmody for Evening Prayer follows, up to but excluding the short reading.

After the psalmody, the priest says the opening prayer.

When Evening Prayer does not take place, the Mass begins in the usual manner. After the greeting, the priest says the opening prayer.

OPENING  
PRAYER

God of power,  
let the splendour of your glory come upon us,  
and through the radiance of the Holy Spirit  
let the brightness of Christ,  
who is light from light,  
shine in the hearts of those born again by grace.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The priest may then address the people in the following or similar words.

INVITATION

We have begun the vigil of Pentecost,  
my dear friends,  
after the example of the apostles and disciples,  
who, with Mary, the Mother of Jesus,  
devoted themselves to prayer  
as they awaited the Spirit promised by the Lord.

Let us now listen with quiet hearts  
to the word of God.

Let us reflect on the great deeds  
that God has done for his people  
and pray that the Holy Spirit,  
whom the Father sent  
as the firstfruits to those who believe,  
may complete God's work in the world.

READINGS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT AND RESPONSORIAL PSALMS: The readings follow as indicated in the Lectionary. The same structure is followed for each reading. A reader goes to the ambo and proclaims the reading. Then the psalmist or cantor leads the psalm and the people answer or, instead of the responsorial psalm, a period of silence may be observed.

## PRAYERS AFTER THE READINGS

After each responsorial psalm, all rise and the priest sings or says **Let us pray**. The priest and people pray in silence for a while, unless a period of silence has already been observed. Then the priest, with hands outstretched, sings or says the prayer after the reading. All sit and the next reader comes forward to the ambo.

READING 1 *It was named Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of the whole earth.* (Genesis 11:1-9)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

Almighty God,  
preserve the Church as your holy people  
united by the oneness of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;  
let it reveal to the world the mystery of your holiness and unity  
and lead all peoples to the perfection of your love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

READING 2 *The Lord God appeared before all the people on Mount Sinai.* (Exodus 19:3-8, 16-20)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

O God,  
you once gave the ancient law to Moses  
amid fire and lightning on Mount Sinai;  
on this day you revealed a new covenant  
in the fire of the Holy Spirit.  
Let the Spirit you poured out on your apostles  
burn within us always,  
and let the new Israel, gathered from every people,  
welcome with joy your eternal commandment of love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

READING 3 *Dry bones of Israel, I shall put my Spirit in you, and you will live.* (Ezekiel 37:1-14)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed. One of the following prayers is then said.

Lord God of hosts,  
you restore the fallen  
and preserve what you have restored.  
Increase the number of people  
to be renewed and made holy in your name,  
that all who are cleansed by baptism  
may be guided always by your inspiration.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

OR: O God,  
you have given us new birth by the word of life.  
Pour forth your Holy Spirit upon us,  
that, walking in oneness of faith,  
we may attain the glorious resurrection of the body  
and life everlasting.

We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.

OR: Let your people for ever exult, O God;  
let the joy of their youth be renewed by your Holy Spirit,  
that we who now rejoice to be your adopted children  
may look forward with certain hope  
to the day of resurrection.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

READING 4 *I will pour out my Spirit on all humankind.* (Joel 3:1-5)

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not already been observed.

Fulfil your promise, God of kindness,  
and send the Holy Spirit upon us  
to make us witnesses before the world  
of the gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

GLORIA: After the last reading from the Old Testament with its responsorial psalm and prayer,  
the *Gloria* is sung by all present.

PRAYER

After **Let us pray** and the pause for silent prayer, one of the following prayers is said.

Almighty and ever-living God,  
whose will it was  
to encompass the paschal mystery within a season of fifty days,  
grant that the people once scattered over the face of the earth  
and divided by many tongues  
may be gathered together by your heavenly Spirit  
to confess your name with a single voice.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
PRAYER

God of majesty and glory,  
you bring us to the day  
that crowns our joyful Easter feast.

Open for us the fountain of living waters  
promised to the faithful,  
that the outpouring of the Spirit  
may reveal Christ's glory  
and enlighten all who wait in hope  
for the glorious day of redemption.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

READING FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT: A reader then proclaims the reading from the Apostle Paul (Roman 8:22-27), and the Mass continues in the usual way.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Lord,  
pour forth the blessing of your Spirit upon these gifts,  
and through them fill your Church with love,  
so that the mystery of salvation  
may shine out for all the world to see.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Pentecost, page 508; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer I, page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

When Evening Prayer is combined with Mass, after communion and the antiphon *On the last day of the festival* the Canticle of Mary is sung with its antiphon for Evening Prayer *Come Holy Spirit*; then the prayer after communion and the rest of the concluding rites follow in the usual way.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

Lord God,  
increase within us the gifts we have received,  
that we may burn with the fire of that Spirit  
whom you poured forth on the apostles at Pentecost.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## CONCLUDING RITE

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 805.

DISMISSAL

The deacon, or, if there is no deacon, the priest, with hands joined, sings or says one of the following dismissals.

A  Musical notation for dismissal A, consisting of a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a single measure of music with a repeat sign. The melody is: G4 (quarter), A4-B4 (eighths), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (eighths), G4 (quarter), F4-G4 (eighths), E4-F4 (eighths), D4-E4 (eighths), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter).

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

B  Musical notation for dismissal B, identical to A.

Go in the peace of Christ, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

C  Musical notation for dismissal C, identical to A.

The Mass is ended, go in peace, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The people answer:  
 Musical notation for the people's answer, identical to A.

Thanks be to God, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## MASS DURING THE DAY

OPENING  
PRAYER

Lord God,  
through the mystery of this holy feast  
you sanctify your Church in every nation and people.  
Pour out the gifts of your Spirit  
across the face of the earth,  
and in your merciful kindness  
touch the hearts of all believers  
as you touched those who first heard  
the preaching of the gospel.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE  
OPENING  
PRAYER

Send down, O God, upon your people  
the flame of your Holy Spirit,  
and fill with the abundance of your sevenfold gift  
the Church you brought forth  
from your Son's pierced side.

May your life-giving Spirit  
lend fire to our words  
and strength to our witness.  
Send us forth to the nations of the world  
to proclaim with boldness your wondrous work  
of raising Christ to your right hand.

We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

PRAYER  
OVER THE  
GIFTS

Remember, O God,  
the promise of Christ your Son:  
in your mercy send the Holy Spirit  
to reveal more completely the mystery of this sacrifice  
and to disclose to our hearts the full light of truth.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER : Preface of Pentecost, page 508; interpolation for Eucharistic Prayer I,  
page 591, for Eucharistic Prayer III, page 607.

PRAYER  
AFTER  
COMMUNION

O God,  
you bestow on your Church gifts from heaven.  
Preserve the grace you have given us,  
that the breath of Pentecost may quicken our hearts  
and that this meal, made holy by your Spirit,  
may advance the great work of redemption.

Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

BLESSING: Solemn Blessing, page 805.

DISMISSAL

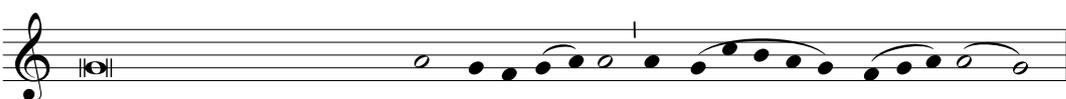
The deacon, or, if there is no deacon, the priest, with hands joined, sings or says one of the following dismissals.

A 

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

B 

Go in the peace of Christ, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

C 

The Mass is ended, go in peace, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The people answer:  


Thanks be to God, al-le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.





# THE ORDER OF MASS

*True worshippers must worship God  
in spirit and in truth*

SEE JOHN 4:24

# OUTLINE OF THE ORDER OF MASS

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Procession

Greeting

Opening Rite

Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Water

*or*

Penitential Rite

*or*

Litany of Praise

*or*

Kyrie

*or*

Gloria

*or*

Other Opening Rite

Opening Prayer

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel

Homily

Profession of Faith

General Intercessions

# LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

## PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

Prayer over the Gifts

## EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

## COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

Sign of Peace

Breaking of the Bread

Communion

Period of Silence or Song of Praise

Prayer after Communion

## CONCLUDING RITE

[Announcements]

Greeting

Blessing

Dismissal

## INTRODUCTORY RITES

### ENTRANCE PROCESSION

After the people have assembled, the opening song is sung while the priest, deacon, and other ministers go to the altar.

When the priest and deacon come to the altar, they make the proper reverence with the ministers and kiss the altar. If incense is used, the priest incenses the altar while circling it. Then, with the deacon and ministers, the priest goes to the chair.

### GREETING

After the opening song, the priest and the faithful remain standing; the priest faces the people. All make the sign of the cross, while the priest says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The people answer:

Amen.

Then the priest, extending his hands, greets all present with one of the following greetings. (A bishop may say either **Peace be with you** or one of the following greetings.)

- A The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.
- B The Lord be with you.
- C The grace and peace of God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ  
be with you.

- D Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father  
and Christ Jesus our Lord  
be with you all.
- E The grace of God,  
so rich in mercy and boundless in compassion,  
be with you all.
- F Citizens with the saints and members of God's household,  
grace and peace be with you.
- G The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
whose table we share,  
be with you all.

The people answer:

And also with you.

The priest, deacon, or other suitable minister may very briefly introduce the Mass of the day.

## OPENING RITE

The opening rite may take one of the following forms.

- I. Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Water (page 416)
  - II. Penitential Rite (page 420)
  - III. Litany of Praise (page 422)
  - IV. Kyrie (page 426)
  - V. Gloria (page 428)
  - VI. Other Opening Rite (see page 430)
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## I. RITE OF BLESSING AND SPRINKLING OF WATER

At Sunday Masses or on other suitable occasions the rite of blessing and sprinkling of water may be celebrated. After greeting the people, the priest remains standing at the chair, with a vessel of water in front of him.

### INVITATION TO PRAYER

Facing the people, the priest invites them to pray, using one of the following invitations or similar words.

A Let us pray, dear friends,  
that the Lord our God may bless this gift of water,  
which will be sprinkled upon us  
to remind us of our baptism.

May God help us to remain faithful  
to the Holy Spirit we have received.

B Brothers and sisters,  
let us invoke and bless the name of God the all-holy,  
that this water may be for us  
a sign of the new life in Christ,  
which in baptism we have all received.

### BLESSING OF WATER

After a brief period of silence, the priest, with hands outstretched, sings or says one of the following prayers.

A On Sunday only

All-powerful and ever-living God,  
your gift of water brings life and freshness to the earth;  
by water we are cleansed from sin  
and receive the gift of eternal life.  
On this day which you have made your own  
we ask you, Lord, to bless + this water:  
may it be our safeguard and protection.

Renew in us the living fountain of your grace  
and defend us, soul and body, from evil,  
that we may approach you with pure hearts  
and worthily receive your gift of salvation.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

Amen.

**B** Lord God almighty,  
fountain and wellspring of all life,  
we ask you to bless + this water.  
With trust in you  
we use it to beg forgiveness of our sins  
and to seek the protection of your grace  
against illness and the snares of the enemy.  
In your mercy, O Lord, give us the living water  
that wells up as a spring of salvation,  
that we may avoid all dangers to body and soul  
and enter your presence with hearts made clean.

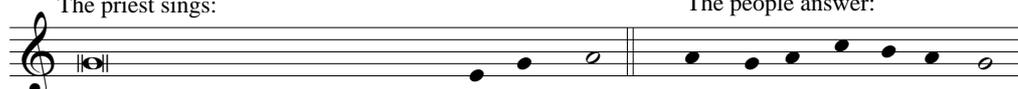
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

Amen.

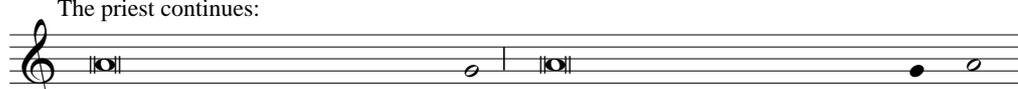
**C**

The priest sings: The people answer:



Praised be the Lord, the Cre - ator. Praised be the name of the Lord.  
Praised be the Lord, the Resurrection and the Life. Praised be the name of the Lord.  
Praised be the Lord, the Spir - it of holiness. Praised be the name of the Lord.

The priest continues:



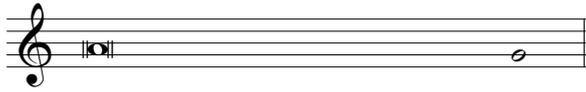
Lord God, Creator and giver of life, bless this water which we use in faith.



Wash away the sin that di - vides us, make new life spring up with - in us,

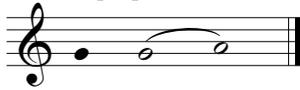


and lead us, whole and complete, into your presence to bless your glori-ous name.



We ask this through Christ our Lord.

The people answer:



A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

D                      During the season of Easter

Lord God almighty,  
hear the prayers of your people.  
Send your blessing + upon this water,  
as we recall the wonder of our creation  
and the still greater work of our redemption.

You created water to make the fields fruitful  
and to refresh and cleanse our bodies.

You made water the channel of your loving-kindness:  
through water you delivered your people from bondage  
and quenched their thirst in the desert.

The prophets used water to symbolise  
the new covenant you would make with humankind.

Through water, which Christ made holy in the Jordan,  
you have restored our sinful nature in the sacrament of rebirth.

May this water remind us of our own baptism,  
and may we rejoice with our brothers and sisters  
who have been baptised in this Easter season.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

Amen.

## BLESSING OF SALT

Where the local situation or popular tradition suggests that the mixing of salt and holy water be maintained, the priest blesses salt, saying:

God of power and might,  
at your command the prophet Elisha  
threw salt into a spring of water  
to make it wholesome again.  
We ask you, Lord, to bless + this salt  
created by your hand.

Grant in your mercy  
that wherever this salt and water is sprinkled,  
the attacks of the Evil One may be repelled  
and the presence of your Holy Spirit may keep us from harm.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people answer:

Amen.

Then he pours the salt into the water in silence.

## SPRINKLING

Taking the sprinkler, the priest sprinkles himself, the ministers of the Mass, and then other deacons and priests present and the people. He may move through the church for the sprinkling of the people.

Meanwhile an antiphon, page 1014, or hymn, or some other appropriate song is sung.

The opening prayer then follows.

## II. PENITENTIAL RITE

### INVITATION TO REPENTANCE

After the greeting, the priest invites the people to acknowledge their sins in silence and to repent of them, using one of the following invitations or similar words.

- A As we prepare to celebrate the mystery of Christ's love,  
we confess that we are sinners  
and ask the Lord for pardon and strength.
- B Gathered together in Christ,  
let us ask forgiveness with confidence,  
for God is full of gentleness and compassion.
- C My brothers and sisters,  
let us acknowledge our sins,  
that we may worthily celebrate these sacred mysteries.

A pause for silent reflection follows.

### CONFESSION OF SIN

After the period of silence, one of the following forms for the confession of sin is used.

- A All say:  
I confess to almighty God,  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have sinned through my own fault  
All strike their breast.  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done,  
and in what I have failed to do;  
and I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin,  
all the angels and saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

B           The priest or other suitable minister says:  
Have mercy on us, Lord.  
          The people answer:  
For we have sinned against you.  
          The priest or minister says:  
Show us your steadfast love, O God.  
          The people answer:  
And grant us your salvation.

#### ABSOLUTION

          The priest says one of the following forms of absolution.

A    May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

          The people answer:  
Amen.

B    May almighty God cleanse us of our sins  
and through the celebration of this eucharist  
make us worthy to sit at the table of the kingdom for ever.

          The people answer:  
Amen.

          The opening prayer then follows.

### III. LITANY OF PRAISE

#### INVITATION

After the greeting, the priest invites the people to praise Christ, using one of the following invitations or similar words.

A Before listening to the word  
and celebrating the eucharist,  
let us praise the Lord Jesus Christ.

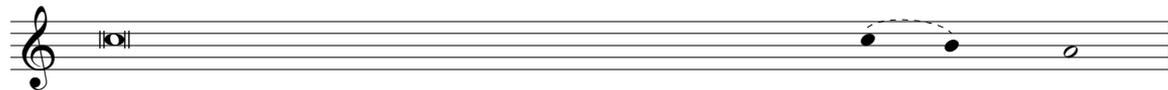
B Praise the risen Saviour;  
call out for Christ's mercy.

C Rich in mercy is our Saviour  
and great in kindness.  
Praise the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### INVOCATIONS TO CHRIST

The deacon, another suitable minister, or, if there is no other minister, the priest sings or says one of the following forms of invocation or other similar invocations to Christ.

A



1. You were sent to heal the contrite:  
2. You came to call sinners:  
3. You plead for us at the right hand of the Father:

The people answer:



Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.  
Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.  
Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

B Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations into the peace of God's kingdom:

Lord, have mercy.

The people answer:

Lord, have mercy.

You come in word and sacrament to strengthen us in holiness:

Christ, have mercy.

The people answer:

Christ, have mercy.

You will come in glory with salvation for your people:

Lord, have mercy.

The people answer:

Lord, have mercy.

C Lord Jesus, you are mighty God and Prince of peace:

Lord, have mercy.

The people answer:

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are Son of God and Son of Mary:

Christ, have mercy.

The people answer:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are Word made flesh and splendour of the Father:

Lord, have mercy.

The people answer:

Lord, have mercy.

- D Lord Jesus, you came to reconcile us to one another and to the Father:  
Lord, have mercy.  
The people answer:  
Lord, have mercy.  
Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of sin and division:  
Christ, have mercy.  
The people answer:  
Christ, have mercy
- Lord Jesus, you intercede for us at the throne of grace:  
Lord, have mercy.  
The people answer:  
Lord, have mercy.
- E You raise the dead to life in the Spirit:  
Lord, have mercy.  
The people answer:  
Lord, have mercy.
- You bring pardon and peace to the sinner:  
Christ, have mercy.  
The people answer:  
Christ, have mercy.
- You bring light to those in darkness:  
Lord, have mercy.  
The people answer:  
Lord, have mercy.
- F Lord Jesus, you raise us to new life:  
Lord, have mercy.  
The people answer:  
Lord, have mercy.
- Lord Jesus, you forgive us our sins:  
Christ, have mercy.  
The people answer:  
Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you feed us with your body and blood:

Lord, have mercy.

The people answer:

Lord, have mercy.

G Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to the Father:

Lord, have mercy.

The people answer:

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you have given us the consolation of the truth:

Christ, have mercy.

The people answer:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, leading us into everlasting life:

Lord, have mercy.

The people answer:

Lord, have mercy.

H Lord Jesus, you healed the sick:

Lord, have mercy.

The people answer:

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you forgave sinners:

Christ, have mercy.

The people answer:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you gave your life for us all:

Lord, have mercy.

The people answer:

Lord, have mercy.

The opening prayer then follows.

## IV. KYRIE

### INVITATION

After the greeting, the priest invites the people to acclaim Christ, using one of the following invitations or similar words.

- A You are called by God to rejoice in the embrace of mercy.  
Acclaim Christ our Saviour.
- B God is making all things new.  
Acclaim Christ, the firstfruits of the new creation.
- C You are called by God out of darkness  
into the dawn of radiant light.  
Acclaim Christ, the sun of justice.

### INVOCATIONS TO CHRIST

One of the following forms of invocation of praise and petition to Christ the Lord is sung. Other settings of the *Kyrie* are found on pages 1031-1032.

A

Choir or cantor:                      The people answer:

Lord, have mer - cy.      Lord, have mer - cy.

Choir or cantor:                      The people answer:

Christ, have mer - cy.      Christ, have mer - cy.

Choir or cantor:                      The people answer:

Lord, have mer - cy.      Lord, have mer - cy.



## V. GLORIA

The *Gloria* is not used on the Sundays or weekdays of Advent and Lent.

### INVITATION

After the greeting, the priest invites the people to praise God, using one of the following invitations or similar words.

- A Let us sing the praises of the Lord,  
the God who made us,  
whose glory is from age to age.
  
- B With peoples everywhere,  
let us glorify our God in joyful song.
  
- C With all the voices of heaven,  
let us sing praise and honour and glory to God.

### GLORIA

The *Gloria* is then sung or said. Other settings of the *Gloria* are found on pages 1033-1035.

The following refrain may be sung by the cantor and repeated by all at the beginning and conclusion of the **Gloria**.



Glo-ry to God in the high-est,— and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



## VI. OTHER OPENING RITE

Other opening rites are used on particular occasions and follow the prescriptions of the respective liturgical books. These rites occur on certain special feasts, or when the liturgy of the hours is combined with the Mass, or when special rites are celebrated during the Mass, for example, baptism or funeral rites. Sometimes the general structure of the introductory rites is modified, for example, on Passion Sunday or on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, when an entrance procession forms part of this opening rite.

The opening prayer then follows.

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### OPENING PRAYER

The priest, with hands joined, invites the people to pray, singing or saying:

Let us pray.

All pray silently for a while.

Then the priest, with hands outstretched, sings or says the opening prayer.

At the end of the prayer, the people give their assent by the acclamation:

Amen.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

All are seated for the liturgy of the word. During the liturgy of the word there are proper times for silence, for example, at the beginning, after the first and the second reading, after the homily. The priest may briefly introduce the liturgy of the word.

### FIRST READING

The reader goes to the ambo for the first reading.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader adds:

The word of the Lord.

All respond with the acclamation:

Thanks be to God.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The psalmist or cantor sings (or recites) the psalm from the ambo and the people make the response.

### SECOND READING

If there is a second reading before the gospel, it is read at the ambo as before, if possible by a second reader.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader adds:

The word of the Lord.

All respond with the acclamation:

Thanks be to God.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

All stand, and the *Alleluia* or other chant before the gospel is sung by the whole congregation, not only by the cantor who intones it or by the choir alone. If it is not to be sung, it is omitted.

Meanwhile, if incense is used, the priest puts some in the censer.

Then the deacon who is to proclaim the gospel makes a profound bow before the priest and in a low voice asks the blessing:

Father, give me your blessing.

The priest says in a low voice:

The Lord be in your heart and on your lips that you may worthily proclaim his holy gospel: in the name of the Father, and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit.

The deacon answers:

Amen.

If, however, there is no deacon, another priest who is to proclaim the gospel, or in his absence, the presiding priest himself, bows toward the altar, with hands joined, and says inaudibly:

Almighty God, cleanse my heart and my lips that I may worthily proclaim your holy gospel.

The deacon or, if there is no deacon, the priest goes to the ambo. He may be accompanied by ministers with incense and candles.

## GOSPEL

The deacon or, if there is no deacon, the priest sings or says:

The Lord be with you.

The people answer:

And also with you.

The deacon (or priest) makes the sign of the cross on the book, and then on his forehead, lips, and breast, as he sings or says:

A reading from the holy gospel according to N.

All respond with the acclamation:

Glory to you, Lord.

Then, if incense is used, the deacon (or priest) incenses the book and proclaims the gospel.

After the gospel, the deacon (or priest) sings or says:  
The gospel of the Lord.

All respond with the following or another suitable acclamation.  
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Then the deacon (or priest) kisses the book, saying inaudibly:  
Through the words of the gospel may our sins be washed away.

## HOMILY

All sit for the homily. It should ordinarily be given by the presiding priest, either at the chair, standing or sitting, or at the ambo. It should develop some point of the readings or of another text from the Ordinary or from the Proper of the Mass of the day and take into account the mystery being celebrated and the needs proper to the listeners.

There must be a homily on Sundays and holydays of obligation at all Masses that are celebrated with a congregation; it may not be omitted without a serious reason. It is recommended on other days, especially on the weekdays of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and the Easter season, as well as on feasts and occasions when the people come to church in large numbers.

Following the homily, if it was given at the ambo, the priest returns to the chair. A period of silence may be observed.

If catechumens are present, they may be kindly dismissed before the profession of faith.

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

On Sundays and solemnities all stand and make the profession of faith together. It may be used also at special, more solemn celebrations. In celebrations of Masses with children and on other occasions when permitted, the Apostles' Creed (option B or C) may be used as the profession of faith.

Whenever there is a renewal of baptismal promises, the profession of faith is omitted.

If the profession of faith is sung, all are to sing it together or in alternation.

### A NICENE CREED

All make a profound bow during the words **was incarnate . . . made man**.

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**B**                    APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

C

APOSTLES' CREED IN QUESTION FORM

The priest says:

Do you believe in God?

The people answer:

We believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

The priest says:

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

The people answer:

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

The priest says:

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

The people answer:

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

The general intercessions (prayer of the faithful) then follow. The priest stands at the chair (or at the ambo) and presides, and the people take their own part. It is appropriate that this prayer be included in all Masses celebrated with a congregation, so that petitions will be offered for the Church, for civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all people, and for the salvation of the world. Sample texts are given on pages 1016-1028.

## INVITATION

The priest briefly invites the congregation to pray.

## INTENTIONS

The deacon, cantor, reader, another minister, or some of the faithful then announce the intentions from the ambo or other convenient place. The whole assembly expresses its supplication either by a response sung or said together after each intention or by brief periods of silent prayer.

## CONCLUDING PRAYER

After the intentions, the priest, with hands outstretched, says the concluding prayer, to which the people respond:

Amen.

# LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

## PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

The people sit, and the song for the preparation of the gifts is begun.

### PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR

The deacon and other ministers place on the altar the corporal, purificator, cup (if the cup is not prepared at the side table), and Sacramentary.

### PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

The gifts are then brought forward. It is desirable that the faithful express their participation by bringing up the bread and wine for the celebration of the eucharist and other gifts for the poor and the needs of the Church. The gifts are received by the priest at a convenient place, with the deacon assisting. Money or other gifts are to be put in a suitable place but not on the altar.

The deacon may prepare the cup at the side table. He pours wine and a little water into the cup, saying inaudibly:

By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity.

At the altar, the deacon hands the priest the plate or other vessel with the bread to be consecrated or the priest takes the plate or other vessel with the bread and, holding it slightly raised above the altar, says inaudibly:

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. †  
Through your goodness we have this bread to present to you,  
which earth has given and human hands have made.  
It will become for us the bread of life.

Then he places the plate with the bread on the corporal.

If no song for the preparation of the gifts is sung, the priest may say the preceding words in an audible voice. In this case the people may respond:

Blessed be God for ever.

If the cup has not been prepared at the side table, the deacon or, if there is no deacon, the priest pours wine and a little water into the cup, saying inaudibly the prayer **By the mystery**.

Then the deacon hands the priest the cup or the priest takes the cup and, holding it slightly raised above the altar, says inaudibly:

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. ††  
Through your goodness we have this wine to present to you,  
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.  
It will become our spiritual drink.

---

*In England and Wales only:*

† Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.  
Through your goodness we have this bread to offer,  
which earth has given and human hands have made.  
It will become for us the bread of life.

†† Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.  
Through your goodness we have this wine to offer,  
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.  
It will become our spiritual drink.

He places the cup on the corporal.

If no song for the preparation of the gifts is sung, the priest may say the preceding words in an audible voice. In this case, the people may respond:

**Blessed be God for ever.**

The priest then bows profoundly and says inaudibly:

**With humble and contrite hearts, Lord God, we ask you to receive us  
and to be pleased with our sacrifice this day.**

The priest may now incense the gifts on the altar and the altar itself. Afterward, the deacon or another minister incenses the priest and the people.

Next, the priest stands at the side of the altar and washes his hands, saying inaudibly:

**Lord, wash away my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin.**

### **PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS**

All stand. The priest, standing at the centre of the altar, extends his hands and invites the people to pray, using one of the following invitations. At the conclusion of the invitation, he joins his hands.

**A Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that our sacrifice may be acceptable  
to God, the almighty Father.**

The people respond:

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands  
for the praise and glory of God's name,  
for our good, and the good of all the Church.**

**B Let us pray.**

All pray silently for a while.

Then the priest, with hands outstretched, sings or says the prayer over the gifts.

At the end of the prayer, the people give their assent by the acclamation:

**Amen.**

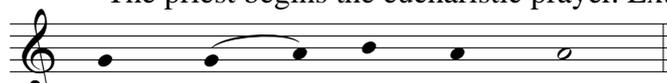
## E U C H A R I S T I C P R A Y E R

The priest leads the assembly in the eucharistic prayer. The people take part reverently and attentively and make the acclamations. The eucharistic prayer may be sung (see pages 707-767).

### P R E F A C E

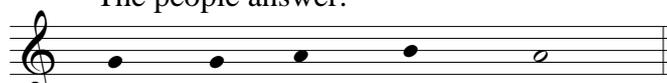
#### D I A L O G U E

The priest begins the eucharistic prayer. Extending his hands, he sings or says:



The Lord— be with you.

The people answer:



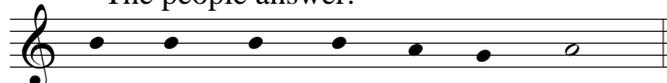
And al - so with you.

He lifts up his hands and continues:



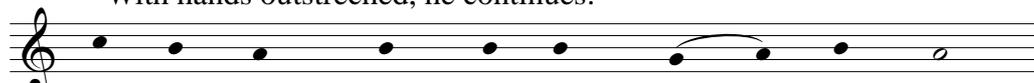
Lift— up your hearts.

The people answer:



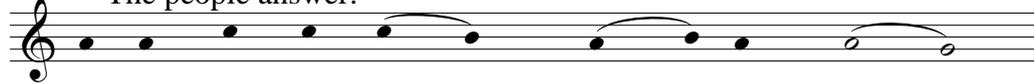
We lift them up to the Lord.

With hands outstretched, he continues:



Let us give thanks to the Lord— our God.

The people answer:

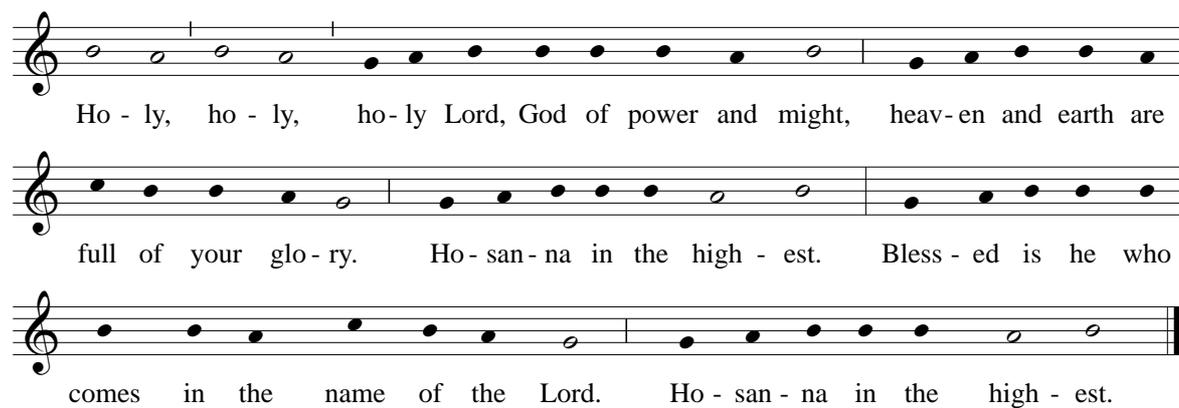


It is right to give thanks— and praise.—

The priest continues the preface with hands outstretched. Alternative openings for the prefaces may be found on pages 442-443.

## SANCTUS

At the end of the preface, the priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might, heav - en and earth are  
full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## PREFACE OPENINGS

One of the following preface openings may be used in place of the opening that is given with each preface. Musical settings of these preface openings are found on pages 444-448.

- 1 It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise,  
Father most holy,  
[through Jesus Christ our Lord].
  
- 2 It is truly right to give you thanks,  
it is fitting to give you glory,  
Father most holy,  
[through Jesus Christ our Lord].
  
- 3 It is truly right and just  
that we should give you thanks and praise and glory,  
almighty and everlasting God,  
[through Jesus Christ our Lord].
  
- 4 It is truly right and just  
that in all things we should give you thanks, eternal God,  
and in every season proclaim your mighty deeds,  
[through Jesus Christ our Lord].
  
- 5 It is truly right and just,  
almighty Father,  
that in every season we should offer you  
our hymn of thanks, our canticle of praise,  
[through Jesus Christ our Lord].

6 It is truly right and just,  
truly fitting for our salvation,  
to offer you thanks and praise,  
Lord, heavenly Father, almighty and merciful God  
[through Jesus Christ our Lord].

7 It is truly right and just,  
Lord God,  
that earth unite with heaven in praising you,  
[through Jesus Christ our Lord].

8 It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
to praise your loving-kindness,  
merciful Father, almighty God,  
king of endless glory,  
[through Jesus Christ our Lord].

9 Almighty and eternal God,  
it is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
to praise you without ceasing  
and in all things to offer you our thanks,  
[through Jesus Christ our Lord].

## MUSICAL SETTINGS OF PREFACE OPENINGS

One of the following preface openings may be used in place of the opening that is given with each preface. The alternative opening in each case contains the additional phrase **through our Lord Jesus Christ** and is used when the preface opening it replaces employs this phrase.



*Musical setting of Preface Openings*  
*(Pages 444–448)*



*Musical setting of Preface Openings*  
*(Pages 444–448)*



*Musical setting of Preface Openings*  
*(Pages 444–448)*



*Musical setting of Preface Openings*  
*(Pages 444–448)*



## PREFACE OF ADVENT I

### *The two comings of Christ*

This preface is used in Masses of the season of Advent from the First Sunday of Advent to 16 December.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When first he came among us  
in the lowliness of human flesh,  
he fulfilled the plan you formed long ago  
and opened for us the way to salvation.  
Now, hoping that the salvation promised us will be ours,  
we watch for the day  
when Christ will come again in majesty and glory.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our sal - vation,  
 always and everywhere to give you thanks, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
 through our Lord Je - sus Christ. When first he came a - mong us  
 in the lowliness of hu - man flesh, he ful - filed the plan you formed long a - go  
 and opened for us the way to sal - vation. Now, hoping that the salvation promised us  
 will be ours, we watch for the day when Christ will come a - gain in maj - es -  
 ty and glory. And so, with angels and archangels, with all the heav - en - ly host,  
 we proclaim your glo - ry and join their unending cho - rus of praise:

## PREFACE OF ADVENT II

*Christ foretold, Christ awaited*

This preface is used in Masses of the season of Advent from 17 December to 24 December.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He is the one foretold by all the prophets,  
whom the Virgin Mother awaited with love beyond all telling,  
the one whose coming John the Baptist heralded,  
and whose presence he proclaimed.

This same Lord invites us to prepare with joy  
for the mystery of his birth,  
so that when he comes  
he may find us watchful in prayer,  
our hearts filled with wonder and praise.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF CHRISTMAS I

### *Christ the light*

This preface is used in Masses on the Birth of the Lord, on the feast of the Holy Family, and on the Second Sunday after Christmas.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

In the mystery of the Word made flesh  
your glory fills the eyes of our mind  
with a new and radiant vision,  
so that, seeing God made visible in Christ,  
we are caught up in the love of things we cannot see.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF CHRISTMAS II

*The incarnation makes creation whole again*

This preface is used in Masses on the Birth of the Lord, on the feast of the Holy Family, and on the Second Sunday after Christmas.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the great mystery of his birth,  
the God we cannot see  
has now appeared in human form.  
The one begotten before all ages  
begins to live in time.  
He has come to raise the fallen world,  
to make creation whole again,  
and to lead humanity from exile  
back to your heavenly kingdom.

And so, with all the angels and saints,  
we sing the joyful hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

### PREFACE OF CHRISTMAS III

*Divine and human exchange in the incarnation of the Word*

This preface is used in Masses on the Birth of the Lord, on the feast of the Holy Family, and on the Second Sunday after Christmas.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him the marvellous exchange that brings our redemption  
is revealed this day in all its splendour.

When your eternal Word assumes human frailty,  
our mortal nature takes on immortal value.

More wonderfully still,  
this union between God and ourselves  
makes us sharers in eternal life.

And so we join the multitude of angels  
in their joyful chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

*Christ, the light of the nations*

This preface is used in Masses on the Epiphany of the Lord.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You have revealed this day  
the mystery of our salvation in Christ,  
the light to enlighten all nations.  
Now that he has appeared in our mortal flesh,  
you have refashioned us in the image of his immortal glory.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

*The revelation of Christ's mission*

This preface is used in Masses on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

In the waters of the Jordan  
you revealed a new baptism  
through signs and wonders:  
a voice came down from heaven  
to waken our faith in your Word dwelling among us;  
your Spirit descended as a dove  
to make it known that Christ, your servant,  
was anointed with the oil of gladness  
and was sent to preach the good news to the poor.

With joyful hearts we echo on earth  
the song of the angels in heaven  
as they praise your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF LENT I

### *The spiritual meaning of Lent*

This preface is used in Masses on the Sundays of Lent which have no preface of their own.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Each year you bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts  
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast.

By more faithful prayer and works of charity  
and by celebrating the mysteries of our rebirth,  
we are led to the fullness of grace as your sons and daughters.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF LENT II

### *Renewal through penance*

This preface is used in Masses on the Sundays of Lent which have no preface of their own.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You set aside this season of grace for your people  
to renew and purify their hearts,  
so that, freed from all harmful desires,  
they may live in this passing world  
with hearts set on the world that will never end.

Now, with all the angels and saints,  
we praise your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

### PREFACE OF LENT III

#### *The fruits of self-denial*

This preface is used in Masses on Ash Wednesday.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You bid us show our thanks  
through the practice of self-denial,  
that we may curb our sinful pride  
and, by sharing our bread with the hungry,  
may imitate your generous love.

Now, with all the angels and saints,  
we praise and magnify your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF LENT IV

### *The reward of fasting*

This preface is used in Masses on Ash Wednesday.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

Through bodily fasting you control our sinful desires  
and raise our minds to you;  
you give us strength  
and grant us the reward of eternal life  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him the choirs of angels and all the powers of heaven  
worship in awe before your presence.

May our voices blend with theirs  
as they sing with joy the hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

*The temptation of the Lord*

This preface is used in Masses on the First Sunday of Lent.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

His fast of forty days established this season of self-denial.  
By rejecting all the devil's temptations  
he has taught us  
to rid ourselves of the leaven of malice,  
and so to celebrate the paschal mystery in sincerity and truth,  
until we come at last to the eternal feast of heaven.

And so we join the throng of saints and angels  
as they sing the unending hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

*The transfiguration of the Lord*

This preface is used in Masses on the Second Sunday of Lent.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Having told the disciples of his coming death,  
Jesus made his glory known to them on the holy mountain.  
With Moses and Elijah as witnesses,  
he revealed that the Christ had first to suffer  
and so come to the glory of the resurrection.

With joyful hearts we echo on earth  
the song of the angels in heaven  
as they praise your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

*The faith of the woman of Samaria*

This preface is used in Masses on the Third Sunday of Lent when the gospel of the Samaritan woman is read.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When he asked the woman of Samaria for water to drink,  
Jesus had already bestowed on her the gift of faith.  
He thirsted for her faith,  
that he might inflame her heart with the fire of divine love.

Together with the angels  
we glorify your mighty deeds  
and join in their chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

*The man born blind*

This preface is used in Masses on the Fourth Sunday of Lent when the gospel of the man born blind is read.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

By the mystery of his incarnation  
he has led the human race out of darkness  
into the clear light of faith.  
Through the fall of Adam we were born the slaves of sin,  
but through the waters of baptism  
Christ has raised us to new life as your adopted children.

And, therefore, earth unites with heaven  
to sing a new song of praise;  
we too join with the hosts of angels  
as they proclaim your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

*The raising of Lazarus*

This preface is used in Masses on the Fifth Sunday of Lent when the gospel of Lazarus is read.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As a human being,  
he wept for Lazarus, his friend;  
as eternal God,  
he called him forth from the tomb.  
In his compassion for the human family,  
Christ leads us by the Easter mysteries  
from death to new life.

Through him the hosts of angels adore you  
and rejoice in your presence for ever.  
May our voices join with theirs  
in the triumphant chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF PASSION SUNDAY (PALM SUNDAY)

*The redeeming work of Christ*

This preface is used in Masses on Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Though he was sinless, he suffered willingly for sinners;  
though innocent, he accepted condemnation to save the guilty.  
By his dying he washed away our sins;  
by rising again from the dead  
he won justification for us all.

And so, with all the angels and saints,  
we sing the joyful hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE CHRISM MASS I

*The priesthood of Christ and the ministry of priests*

This preface is used in the Chrism Mass.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

By the anointing of the Holy Spirit  
you made your only-begotten Son  
High Priest of the new and eternal covenant,  
and with heavenly wisdom ordained  
that his one priesthood should continue in the Church.

Christ accords the dignity of a royal priesthood  
to the people he has made his own.  
Some of these he chooses with a brother's care  
to share his sacred ministry by the laying on of hands.

He appoints them to renew in his name  
the sacrifice of our redemption  
and to set before your family the paschal meal.  
He calls them to lead your holy people in love,  
nourish them with your word,  
and strengthen them through the sacraments.

They are to offer their lives to your service  
and for the salvation of all,  
as they strive to grow in the likeness of Christ  
and to honour you  
by their courageous witness of faith and love.

And so we join the angels and saints  
in the joyous hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

PREFACE OF THE CHRISM MASS I

*The priesthood of Christ and the ministry of priests*

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE CHRISM MASS II

### *The anointing of Christ*

This preface is used in the Chrism Mass.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise,  
Father most holy,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

You anointed Jesus with the oil of gladness  
to proclaim to all generations the gospel of salvation.  
He is the divine physician who bears our infirmities  
and heals within us the wounds of sin and death.  
Christ is the new Adam from whose side  
flow the life-giving waters in which we are reborn.  
He is the exalted Lord who pours out upon the Church  
the promised gift of the Holy Spirit.

By the power of the Spirit,  
who fills the oils we bless and consecrate,  
you continue this saving work within the Church  
until Christ comes again in glory.

Through him the choirs of angels and all the powers of heaven  
worship in awe before your presence.  
May our voices blend with theirs  
as they sing with joy the hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

PREFACE OF THE CHRISM MASS II

*The anointing of Christ*

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF EASTER I

### *The paschal mystery*

This preface is used in Masses of the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday and throughout the octave of Easter. It may also be used on the Sundays of Easter.

At the Easter Vigil, the words **on this Easter night** are used; on Easter Sunday and throughout the octave of Easter, the words **on this Easter day** are used; on other days of the season of Easter, the words **in this Easter season** are used.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
that we should always sing your glory, Lord;  
but we praise you with greater joy than ever  
on this Easter night/day [*or*: in this Easter season]  
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.

He is the true Lamb who took away the sins of the world.

By dying he destroyed our death;

by rising he restored our life.

Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,  
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF EASTER II

*New life in Christ*

This preface is used in Masses during the season of Easter.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
that we should always sing your glory, Lord;  
but we praise you with greater joy than ever  
in this Easter season  
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.

Through him the children of light rise to eternal life  
and the gates of heaven are unlocked  
to receive his faithful people.  
For his death is our ransom from death  
and in his resurrection all are raised to new life.

Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,  
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

### PREFACE OF EASTER III

*Christ lives and intercedes for us for ever*

This preface is used in Masses during the season of Easter.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
that we should always sing your glory, Lord;  
but we praise you with greater joy than ever  
in this Easter season  
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.

He continues to offer himself for us,  
to plead our cause before your throne.  
Christ is the victim who dies no more,  
the Lamb, once slain, who lives for ever.

Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,  
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF EASTER IV

*The restoration of the universe through the paschal mystery*

This preface is used in Masses during the season of Easter.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
that we should always sing your glory, Lord;  
but we praise you with greater joy than ever  
in this Easter season  
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.

In him a new age has dawned:  
the long reign of sin is ended,  
a broken world has been restored,  
and life for us is once again made whole.

Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,  
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF EASTER V

*Christ is priest and victim*

This preface is used in Masses during the season of Easter.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
that we should always sing your glory, Lord;  
but we praise you with greater joy than ever  
in this Easter season  
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.

By offering his body on the cross,  
he brought to completion the sacrifices of old.  
By commending himself into your hands for our salvation,  
he showed himself the priest, the altar, and the lamb of sacrifice.

Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,  
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD I

*Christ ascends into glory*

This preface is used in Masses on the Ascension of the Lord. It may be used, as may the prefaces of Easter, on the Sunday between the Ascension and Pentecost.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
that we should always sing your glory, Lord;  
but we praise you with greater joy than ever  
in this Easter season  
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.

[Today] the Lord Jesus,  
the King of glory, who has conquered sin and death,  
ascended to the highest heavens  
while angels gazed in wonder.  
He is the mediator between God and humankind,  
judge of the world and Lord of heavenly powers.  
He has not abandoned our human condition  
but has filled us with hope  
that where he, our head, has gone before us  
we, his members, shall follow after.

Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,  
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD II

*Christ taken up into glory*

This preface is used in Masses on the Ascension of the Lord. It may be used, as may the prefaces of Easter, on the Sunday between the Ascension and Pentecost.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
that we should always sing your glory, Lord;  
but we praise you with greater joy than ever  
in this Easter season  
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.

In his risen body he plainly showed himself to his disciples  
and was taken up to heaven in their sight  
to claim for us a share in his divinity.

Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,  
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD III

### *The promise of the Holy Spirit*

This preface is used in Masses on the Ascension of the Lord. It may be used, as may the prefaces of Easter, on the Sunday between the Ascension and Pentecost.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
that we should always sing your glory, Lord;  
but we praise you with greater joy than ever  
in this Easter season  
when Christ became our paschal sacrifice.

Christ, the High Priest, has entered once for all  
into the sanctuary of heaven.

There he invokes upon your Church  
the perpetual outpouring of your Holy Spirit.

The shepherd and guardian of our souls,  
Christ calls us to be united in prayer  
as Mary and the disciples were united,  
awaiting the fulfilment of his promise,  
the life-giving Spirit of Pentecost.

Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,  
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF PENTECOST

*The Spirit completes the paschal mystery*

This preface is used in Masses on Pentecost Sunday.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

To bring the paschal mystery to completion,  
you bestowed the Holy Spirit this day  
on those you made your adopted children  
by uniting them to your only-begotten Son.

At the Church's beginning  
your Spirit imparted to all peoples  
the knowledge of the living God  
and gathered the many languages of the earth  
into one voice to profess a single faith.

Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy,  
and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME I

*The paschal mystery and the people of God*

This preface is used in Masses on Sundays in Ordinary Time.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through the mystery of his cross and resurrection  
he freed us from the yoke of sin and death  
and called us to the glory that has made us  
a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,  
a people set apart to proclaim your mighty works,  
for you have called us out of darkness  
into your own wonderful light.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME II

*The mystery of salvation*

This preface is used in Masses on Sundays in Ordinary Time.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Out of compassion for us sinners  
he humbled himself to be born of the Virgin.  
By suffering on the cross, he freed us from unending death;  
by rising from the dead, he gave us eternal life.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME III

*A human being saves the human race*

This preface is used in Masses on Sundays in Ordinary Time.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

We know that your boundless glory is shown in this,  
that you, the most high God,  
came to the rescue of our mortal nature.

In our very weakness you found a remedy:  
that nature which led to our downfall  
became the means of our salvation,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him the hosts of angels adore you  
and rejoice in your presence for ever.

May our voices join with theirs  
in the triumphant chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME IV

*The history of salvation*

This preface is used in Masses on Sundays in Ordinary Time.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

His birth brought the human race a new beginning;  
by his suffering he wiped away our sins;  
by rising from the dead he opened the way to eternal life;  
and by his ascension to you, Father, he unlocked the gates of heaven.

And so we join the throng of saints and angels  
as they sing the unending hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME V

### *Creation*

This preface is used in Masses on Sundays in Ordinary Time.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

All things are of your making,  
all times and seasons obey your law.  
But you fashioned the human family in your own image  
and set us over the world in all its wonder,  
that we might be stewards of your creation,  
praising you day by day  
for the marvels of your might and wisdom,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And so, with all the angels and saints,  
we sing the joyful hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME VI

### *The pledge of an eternal Easter*

This preface is used in Masses on Sundays in Ordinary Time.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

In you we live and move and have our being.  
Each day we experience the wonders of your love,  
and receive even now a pledge and foretaste of life eternal.  
Possessing the firstfruits of the Spirit,  
through whom you raised Jesus from the dead,  
we hope to enjoy his paschal victory for ever.

And so, with all the angels and saints,  
we sing the joyful hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME VII

### *Salvation through the obedience of Christ*

This preface is used in Masses on Sundays in Ordinary Time.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You so loved the world  
that you gave your only Son as our Redeemer.  
You sent him as one like ourselves,  
though free from sin,  
that you might love in us what you love in Christ.  
Your gifts of grace, lost when we disobeyed you,  
are now restored by the obedience of your Son.

And so we join the angels and saints  
in the joyous hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME VIII

*The Church made one by the oneness of the Trinity*

This preface is used in Masses on Sundays in Ordinary Time.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

When sin had scattered your children afar,  
you chose to gather them back to yourself  
through the blood of your Son and the power of the Spirit.  
Thus a people made one by the oneness of the Trinity  
shines forth as your Church,  
the body of Christ and the temple of the Spirit,  
to the praise of your manifold wisdom.

And so we join the multitude of angels  
in their joyful chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME IX

### *The Day of the Lord*

This preface is used in Masses on Sundays in Ordinary Time, but not in Masses celebrated on Saturday evening.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

From sunrise to sunset this day is holy,  
for Christ has risen upon us today  
and scattered the darkness of death  
with light and life that will not fade.

This day the risen Lord assembles us,  
unfolds for us your word,  
and breaks for us the bread of life.

And though the night will bring this Sunday to a close,  
you call us to live in endless light,  
the never-ending Day of the Lord.

And so, with the choirs of angels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF CHRIST THE KING

*Christ, the king of all creation*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of Christ the King.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You anointed Christ the Lord, your only Son,  
with the oil of gladness  
as eternal priest and king of all creation.

As priest, he offered himself on the altar of the cross  
and redeemed the human race  
by this perfect sacrifice of peace.

As king, he claims dominion over all creatures,  
that he may present to your infinite majesty  
a kingdom of truth and life,  
a kingdom of holiness and grace,  
a kingdom of justice, love, and peace.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

*The motherhood of the blessed Virgin Mary*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (1 January).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
almighty Father, ever-living God,  
to give you thanks, blessing, and praise  
as we celebrate the motherhood of the blessed Virgin Mary.

By the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit  
she conceived your only Son,  
and, in the glory of her virginity,  
she brought forth the eternal light of the world,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him the choirs of angels and all the powers of heaven  
worship in awe before your presence.

May our voices blend with theirs  
as they sing with joy the hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

### *The mystery of the presentation of the Lord*

This preface is used in Masses on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord (2 February).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

On this day your Son, who is one with you from eternity,  
was presented in the temple  
and was revealed by the Spirit as the glory of Israel  
and the light to enlighten all peoples.

We too go forth rejoicing to meet the Saviour  
and join with the saints and angels  
as they sing the unending hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF THE VIRGIN MARY

*The vocation of Saint Joseph*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of Joseph, Husband of the Virgin Mary (19 March).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
almighty Father, ever-living God,  
to give you fitting thanks and praise  
as we honour Saint Joseph.

He is the just man whom you gave as husband  
to the virgin Mother of God,  
the wise and faithful servant whom you placed over your household.  
With a father's love he cared for Jesus, your only Son,  
who was conceived by the overshadowing of the Spirit.

Through Christ the choirs of angels and all the powers of heaven  
worship in awe before your presence.

May our voices blend with theirs  
as they sing with joy the hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

*The mystery of the incarnation*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord (25 March).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Virgin Mary received with faith the angel's message  
that the power of the Holy Spirit would overshadow her  
and that a child would be born among us for our salvation.  
She bore him in her womb with purest love,  
that your promises to Israel might be fulfilled  
and the hope of nations realised beyond all telling.

Through Christ the hosts of angels adore you  
and rejoice in your presence for ever.

May our voices join with theirs  
in the triumphant chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE HOLY TRINITY

### *The mystery of the Holy Trinity*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of the Holy Trinity.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

With your only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit  
you are one God, one Lord,  
not in the unity of a single person  
but in a Trinity of one nature.

All that you reveal of your glory  
we believe also of your Son and of the Holy Spirit.

In confessing the true and eternal Godhead  
we adore three distinct Persons,  
one in being and equal in majesty.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with cherubim and seraphim,  
we sing the unending hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST I

### *The sacrifice and sacrament of Christ*

This preface is used in the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. It may also be used in Masses on the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He is the true and eternal priest,  
who founded this memorial of his unending sacrifice.  
He gave himself to you as victim for our deliverance,  
and commanded us to make this offering in his memory.  
As we eat his body, given for us,  
we grow in strength.  
As we drink his blood, poured out for us,  
we are washed clean.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST II

### *The effects of the holy Eucharist*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

At the Last Supper, as he sat at table with his apostles,  
Jesus offered himself to you as the Lamb without blemish,  
the acceptable gift that gives you perfect praise.  
He left this memorial of his passion  
to continue its saving power until the end of time.

In this great sacrament you feed your people  
and strengthen them in holiness,  
so that the human family, which shares the same earth,  
may be enlightened by one faith  
and drawn together by one love.

We come then to this sacramental table  
to be transformed by your grace  
into the likeness of the risen Christ.

And, therefore, earth unites with heaven  
to sing a new song of praise;  
we too join with the hosts of angels  
as they proclaim your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

PREFACE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST II

*The effects of the holy Eucharist*

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

*& Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

*The boundless love of Christ*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lifted high on the cross,  
Christ poured out his life for us,  
so great was his love.  
From his wounded side flowed blood and water,  
the fountain of the Church's sacraments,  
that all might be led to the heart of the Saviour  
and joyfully draw from the springs of salvation.

Now, with all the angels and saints,

we praise your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

*John, herald of Christ*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of the Birth of John the Baptist (24 June).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We praise your greatness as we honour the prophet  
who prepared the way before your Son.  
Among those born of woman  
you marked John the Baptist with your special favour.  
His birth brought great rejoicing;  
even in the womb he leapt for joy, so near was our salvation.

Alone of all the prophets, John pointed to the Lamb  
who would take away our sins.  
He baptised Jesus, the giver of baptism,  
in waters made holy by the one baptised.  
By shedding his blood  
he gave his last and greatest witness to your Son.

With joyful hearts we echo on earth  
the song of the angels in heaven  
as they praise your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES

*The twofold mission of Peter and Paul in the Church*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of Peter and Paul (29 June).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

We are gladdened by the workings of your grace  
in the apostles Peter and Paul:

Peter was the first to confess the faith,  
while Paul proclaimed its deepest mysteries.

Peter gathered the earliest Church from among the flock of Israel,  
Paul became the teacher and apostle of the Gentiles.

Each in his appointed way gathered into unity  
the one family of Christ.

They shared a martyr's crown  
and are venerated together throughout the world.

Now, with all the angels and saints,  
we praise your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

*Christ transfigured shows our glory*

This preface is used in Masses on the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord (6 August).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He revealed his glory before Peter, James, and John  
to strengthen his followers against the scandal of the cross.  
His human body shone like the sun  
to show that the whole Church, which is his body,  
will one day shine with the glory of Christ, its head.

With joyful hearts we echo on earth  
the song of the angels in heaven  
as they praise your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY INTO HEAVEN

*Mary assumed into glory*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary into Heaven (15 August).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Today the virgin Mother of God was taken into heaven  
to be the beginning and the image of the Church in glory  
and a sign of hope and comfort for your pilgrim people.  
You preserved her from the corruption of the grave,  
for she had given birth to your Son,  
the source of all life.

And so we join the multitude of angels  
in their joyful chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE HOLY CROSS I

*The triumph of the glorious cross*

This preface is used in Masses on the feast of the Holy Cross (14 September).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You chose the wood of the cross for our redemption,  
that where death had its beginning,  
there life might arise in triumph;  
and that Satan, who conquered through a tree,  
might on a tree be overcome,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him the choirs of angels and all the powers of heaven  
worship in awe before your presence.

May our voices blend with theirs  
as they sing with joy the hymn of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE HOLY CROSS II

(PASSION OF THE LORD I)

*The power of the cross*

This preface is used in Masses on the feast of the Holy Cross (14 September).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

Through the saving passion of your Son  
the whole world is called to acknowledge your sacred majesty,  
for the power of the cross  
reveals the judgement that has come upon the world  
and the triumph of Christ crucified.

And so we join the angels and saints  
in the joyous hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF ALL SAINTS

*One with the saints in glory*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of All Saints (1 November).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

Today we keep the festival of your holy city,  
the heavenly Jerusalem, our mother,  
where around your throne  
the saints, our brothers and sisters,  
sing your praise for ever.  
Their glory fills us with joy,  
and through their communion with us in the Church  
you give us inspiration and strength  
as we press forward on our pilgrimage of faith.

In company with them and with all the angels  
we cry out with a single voice  
in praise of your glory:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY

*The mystery of Mary and the Church*

This preface is used in Masses on the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary (8 December).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You allowed no trace of original sin to touch the Virgin Mary.  
Full of grace, she was to be a worthy mother of your Son  
and prefigure the beginning of the Church,  
the fair Bride of Christ, without spot or wrinkle.  
Purest of virgins, she was to bring forth your Son,  
the innocent Lamb who takes away our sins.  
You chose Mary before all others  
to be our gracious advocate and our pattern of holiness.

And so we join the multitude of angels  
in their joyful chorus of praise:

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE DEDICATION OF A CHURCH I

### *The mystery of God's temple*

This preface is an integral part of the rite of the dedication of a church and is used with Eucharistic Prayer I or III in the Mass of dedication.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise,  
Father most holy.

The whole world is your temple,  
shaped to resound with your name.  
Yet you also allow us to dedicate to your service  
places designed for your worship.  
With hearts full of joy  
we consecrate to your glory  
this work of our hands, this house of prayer.

Here is foreshadowed the mystery of your true temple,  
here an earthly image of your heavenly city.  
For you made the body of your Son,  
born of the Virgin,  
a temple consecrated to your glory,  
the dwelling place of the Godhead in all its fullness.

You have established the Church as a holy city,  
founded on the apostles,  
with Jesus Christ its cornerstone.  
You continue to build your Church with chosen stones,  
made living by the Spirit  
and cemented together by love.  
In that holy city you will be all in all for endless ages,  
and Christ will be its everlasting light.

Now, with all the angels and saints,  
we proclaim your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

PREFACE OF THE DEDICATION OF A CHURCH I

*The mystery of God's temple*

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF THE DEDICATION OF A CHURCH II

*The mystery of God's temple, which is the Church*

This preface is used in Masses on the anniversary of the dedication of a church when the celebration takes place within the dedicated church.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

You have allowed our human hands to build an earthly dwelling  
where you never refuse to show your people favour  
on their pilgrimage to you.  
Here in sacramental signs  
you manifest and accomplish  
the mystery of your dwelling among us.  
Here you shape us as your holy temple  
and build up the whole Church,  
which is the very body of Christ.  
Thus you bring closer to fulfilment  
the heavenly city Jerusalem,  
the vision of your peace.

And so, with all the angels and saints,  
we bless you in the temple of your glory  
and join in their chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

### PREFACE OF THE DEDICATION OF A CHURCH III

*The mystery of the Church, the Bride of Christ and the temple of the Spirit*

This preface is used in Masses on the feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome (9 November). It is also used in other Masses celebrating the anniversary of the dedication of a church when the celebration takes place outside the dedicated church.

The Lord be with you.  
— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.  
— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

You are pleased to dwell in every house of prayer,  
that, by the constant working of your grace,  
you may build us up as the temple of the Holy Spirit,  
resplendent with life and holiness.

Every house of prayer  
is a sign also of the Church on earth.  
Day by day you make it holy,  
preparing it for heavenly glory  
as the spotless Bride of Christ  
and the joyful Mother of a great company of saints.

Now, with all the angels and saints,  
we praise your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

PREFACE OF THE DEDICATION OF AN ALTAR

*The table of Christ's sacrifice and banquet*

This preface is an integral part of the rite of the dedication of an altar and is used with Eucharistic Prayer I or III in the Mass of dedication.

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

True priest and true victim,  
he offered himself to you  
on the altar of the cross,  
and commanded us to celebrate  
the memorial of that sacrifice  
until he comes again.  
Therefore your people have built this altar  
and dedicate it to your name  
with grateful hearts.

This is a truly sacred place:  
here the sacrifice of Christ is offered in mystery,  
perfect praise is given to you,  
and our redemption made continually present.

Here is prepared the Lord's table,  
at which your children,  
nourished by the body of Christ,  
are gathered into the one holy Church.

Here your people drink of the Spirit,  
from the stream of living water  
flowing from the rock of Christ.  
They will become in him  
a worthy offering and a living altar.

Now, with all the angels and saints,  
we proclaim your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

PREFACE OF THE DEDICATION OF AN ALTAR

*The table of Christ's sacrifice and banquet*

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF CHRISTIAN DEATH I

### *Our hope of rising in Christ*

This preface is used in Masses on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (2 November).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In him, who rose from the dead,  
our hope of resurrection dawned.  
The sadness of certain death  
gives way to the bright promise of immortality.

Lord, for your faithful people  
life is changed, not ended.  
When the body of our earthly dwelling is laid aside,  
we gain an everlasting dwelling place in heaven.

And so, with angels and archangels,  
with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF CHRISTIAN DEATH II

*Christ died, that all might live*

This preface is used in Masses on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (2 November).

The Lord be with you.  
— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.  
— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus accepted death on the cross  
to save us all from dying;  
one man chose to die,  
that all might live eternally in you.

And so we join the multitude of angels  
in their joyful chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF CHRISTIAN DEATH III

*Christ, our life and resurrection*

This preface is used in Masses on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (2 November).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He is the salvation of the world,  
the life of the living,  
and the resurrection of the dead.

Through him the hosts of angels adore you  
and rejoice in your presence for ever.

May our voices join with theirs  
in the triumphant chorus of praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF CHRISTIAN DEATH IV

*From earthly life to heavenly glory*

This preface is used in Masses on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (2 November).

The Lord be with you.

— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

Your providence brings us to birth;  
your governance rules our lives;  
made subject to the law of sin,  
we return by your command  
to the dust from which we came.  
Yet by your merciful touch  
we have been saved through the death of your Son  
and are raised to the glory of his resurrection.

And so we join the throng of saints and angels  
as they sing the unending hymn of your praise:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

## PREFACE OF CHRISTIAN DEATH V

*Our resurrection through Christ's victory*

This preface is used in Masses on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (2 November).

The Lord be with you.  
— And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.  
— We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
— It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just,  
our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

We had deserved to perish because of our sins,  
but through your loving-kindness  
when we die we are called back to life with Christ,  
whose victory is our redemption.

With joyful hearts we echo on earth  
the song of the angels in heaven  
as they praise your glory without end:

The priest joins his hands and, together with the people, sings or says the *Sanctus*.

 *Musical Setting of Preface*

