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SUNDAY BELONGS
TO THE LORD



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This Bulletin is primarily pastoral in scope, and is prepared for members of parish liturgy committees, musicians, singers, teachers, religious and clergy, and all who are involved in preparing and celebrating the community liturgy.

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SUNDAY BELONGS TO THE LORD

The primary pastoral concern expressed by the National Council for Liturgy for the years 1974 and 1975 is the proper emphasis of Sunday as the Lord's day.

A better understanding of Sunday and its place in the life and worship of the community, as well as an awareness of the trends and forces pressuring the Sunday are important. It is also urgent that Christians face up to these pressures and start moving to make Sunday truly a day when God's people praise him.

This issue seeks to take a complete look at Sunday, with emphasis on the parish community, for it is here that Sunday succeeds or fails.

As we become more aware of the importance of Sunday, a positive approach should develop in Canada to strengthen and emphasize the day that belongs to God.

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EDITORIAL

WHOSE DAY IS IT ?

In the modern world, a tug-of-war is going on over Sunday. Many persons and groups are claiming the first day of the week as belonging exclusively to them, for use in any way they see fit.

It's mine! says the worker, tired after a heavy week and a heavier Saturday night, as he rolls over for a few more hours of sleep.

It's mine! say the golfers and snowmobilers, fishermen and hikers, as they head out of town to enjoy the outdoors.

It's ours! say the families who enjoy a pleasant day together, at home or at the cottage, at the lake or on the slopes.

It's ours! cry the businessmen: some are open on Sunday to provide accommodation, food or fuel to travellers; but others are open merely because there is money to be made, or because the opposition is open — and it would never do to let them get ahead.

We have no choice, say those whose work is necessary to meet the needs of the public. Nurses, police, firemen, ambulance drivers and others have a week where their days off rotate, and seem to have little relationship with the weekly day of rest.

* * *

It's my day, says the Lord, but many people seem too busy or noisy to listen to his voice.

* * *

Whose day is it ? Does Sunday belong to man or to the Lord ?

Sunday belongs both to the Lord and to man.

It is the Lord's day: Sunday is the day he assembles his people to praise him. It is the day he calls us to give glory to God in the highest. Sunday is the day when the Father forms his people as he calls us together. This is the day he forms us by his word, unifies us, nourishes us with the bread of life. This is the day we gather together in Jesus' name, and he is among us. Sunday is the day that the Father sends us forth with a mission, as he sent his Son, to praise him and to work for the salvation of his world.

It is man's day too: Sunday is a day of rest and joy, of re-creation, of a fresh start in all his actions. It is a family day, a time for gatherings which reflect the happiness and peace and brotherhood of the Sunday liturgy.

* * *

Let's try to realize that Sunday need not be a day of opposition between God's law and our wants. We can give God what is his and still enjoy what is ours.

The Sabbath was made for man, and man was made for the Lord. As long as we keep both our perspective and our priorities straight, there need not be any problem with whose day Sunday is.

It belongs both to the Lord and to us who call him Lord.

RESPECT FOR THE LORD'S DAY

*If you refrain from trampling the sabbath,
and doing business on the holy day,
if you call the sabbath "Delightful,"
and the day sacred to the Lord "Honorable,"
if you honor it by abstaining from travel,
from doing business and from gossip,
then you shall find your happiness in the Lord
and I will lead you triumphant over the heights of the land.
I will feed you on the heritage of Jacob your father.*

Is. 58:13-14
(Lectionary, no. 223)

MEANING OF SUNDAY

RESURRECTION DAY

One can attach many meanings to Sunday, and all of these could be true as far as they go. But the primary meaning, the most important significance of Sunday is this: it is the day of the resurrection, the day of the risen Lord Jesus.

*By an apostolic tradition which took its origin
from the very day of Christ's resurrection,
the Church celebrates the paschal mystery every eighth day;
with good reason then,
this bears the name of the Lord's day . . .*

*For on this day
Christ's faithful should come together in one place
so that, by hearing the word of God
and taking part in the eucharist,
they may call to mind
the passion, the resurrection, and the glorification
of the Lord Jesus,
and may thank God who "has begotten us again,
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
unto a living hope" (1 Pet. 1:3).*

*Hence the Lord's day is the original feast day,
and it should be proposed to the piety of the faithful
and taught to them in such a way
that it may become in fact
a day of joy and of freedom from work.*

*Other celebrations, unless they be truly of overriding importance.
must not have precedence over this day,
which is truly the foundation and nucleus
of the whole liturgical year.*

Constitution on the Liturgy, no. 106

Day of the risen Christ: Every week, on the day we call the Lord's day, the people of God keep the memory of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. (Liturgy, no. 102) He rose on Easter Sunday, and a week later he appeared to Thomas and the other apostles. "Stop your doubting, and believe!" he says to Thomas and to us. Sunday is the day we profess our faith in the risen Lord. Happy indeed are we who believe without seeing him.

Christians have always held that Sunday is a day quite different from the other six. Every Sunday is a *little Easter*, a celebration of our Easter faith. In a special way, Jesus is present among his people by word and power, in the assembly and in their priest (see Liturgy, no. 7).

Day of the eucharist: Sunday is the day when God calls his people together in each community to listen as his word is proclaimed, to pray for their needs, to praise and thank him in Christ; he nourishes them with the bread of life, and sends them out to work for his glory and for the salvation of the world. When the Christian

assembly comes together in any parish or community, the Church is made present in a special way, and its Sunday worship gives honor to God, thanking him for the glorious resurrection of his Son. We also praise him because he has called us to die and rise with Christ in his paschal mystery. (See Bulletin 42, page 42.)

Day of commitment: On Sunday, God calls his people to reaffirm their baptismal promise of dying to sin and living for him. Both as a community and as individuals, we are invited to put away our sin and to rise again to new life in Christ. Each Sunday, in our weekly celebration of Christ's resurrection, we begin a new week in God's service.

As the first day of the week, Sunday is the time for a new beginning. It is a New Year's day, as it were, a day for recommitment, for rededication of our lives to God's glorious plan. By his word and eucharist, Jesus helps up to make a fresh start in following him. He invites us to open the way for his Spirit, and let him lead us through this week in his service. In this way, he wants to help us live as true Christian believers.

Day of praise and thanks: On this day, we are called to praise and glorify the Lord for his greatness. We thank him for it is right and fitting for us to do so: he has called us to be his people, and set us aside as a holy, priestly nation, to sing his praises. We offer this song of praise in the eucharist, the liturgy of the hours, and in the sacraments celebrated on this day. In other devotions, in personal and family prayer, we prepare ourselves for the Sunday eucharist and bring its benefits into our lives throughout the week.

The Father calls his people to praise him in the eucharist on Sunday, to thank him for raising Jesus and making him Lord, Messiah and high priest for the people of God.

NEXT ISSUE

Bulletin 44 is entitled **People of Prayer**, and will be available at the beginning of May. It takes a look at the prayer life of the Church and its members, and offers guidance for parishes which want to help their people grow in prayer.

This issue will make an excellent guide for parish councils, organizations, liturgy committees and families who want to deepen their prayer life.

Copies may be ordered now at \$1.50 (\$1.75 outside Canada) from CCC Publications; the address is given on the inside front cover.

GOD ASSEMBLES HIS PEOPLE

*From age to age you gather a people to yourself,
so that from east to west
a perfect offering may be made
to the glory of your name.* (EP III)

*Father, hear the prayers of the family
you have gathered here before you.* (EP III)

Remember all of us gathered here before you. (EP I)

Most of us grew up with Sunday Mass as a normal part of our life. We came to church to praise God, to thank him for his gifts, to ask his help, and to make reparation for sin. Some came because it was a good thing to do, or because the Church commanded us to fulfill our Sunday obligation. Our coming was the result of our own initiative and action, and this was good.

But in the past few years, we have begun to realize there is a deeper dimension to the Sunday assembly: the initiative comes first of all from God. It is he who gathers us for the Sunday eucharist, and we who come in answer to his invitation.

God brings his people together because he loves us. He wants to teach us his truth in his word, to show us the depths of his love, to give us light and guidance for our journey through life. He wants to form us in Christ, to deepen our faith and love. He brings us together to help us appreciate our redemption, for he has freed us by the death and rising of his Son, and it is this paschal mystery that we are celebrating today.

The Father has brought us together **to pray**. Sometimes we hear people doubting the value of prayer, especially prayer of petition. This, despite Jesus' command to lay our needs before the Father, to come to God through him. Of course God knows our needs better than we do, but he wants us to come in faith before him, asking in the name of Jesus. The prayer of the faithful, or general intercessions, is the way we do this in public worship, as well as by the silent moments of prayer in the eucharistic prayer itself; in private, each of us expresses these common needs in individual ways.

Our Father has brought us together **to give him praise and thanks**. The meaning of "eucharist" is *thanksgiving*. In the name of every creature, we express our gratitude to the Father for every work of nature and grace, for his wonderful deeds, especially for our redemption through the death and rising of Christ. The great *Amen* at the end of the eucharistic prayer should be an enthusiastic burst of thanks, sung or proclaimed loudly, to sum up and express the community's thanks to God in Christ.

Our heavenly Father has brought us together **to remember his Son**. In response, we have come to celebrate this eucharist as Jesus has commended us. We have come to remember him in this sacrifice, by which he has taken away the sin of the world. By eating this bread and drinking this cup, we proclaim his death and rising until he comes in glory.

In his love for us, the Father has brought us together for the breaking of bread because he wishes to nourish us with the eucharist. He gives us the bread of eternal life, the bread from heaven, and invites us to drink from the cup of salvation. Those who eat this food and drink this cup will have eternal life, and Christ will raise us up on the last day. The eucharist is the pledge of eternal life.

Lastly, God sends us forth, renewed in spirit, strengthened with food for the journey, to continue our pilgrimage. He sends us as he sent Jesus, as he sends his Church: with the mission of giving him glory and of leading the world to salvation. As witnesses, as children of light, as the holy people of God, he sends us to carry on the work of Jesus.

Here Is the Church

"Mass celebrated by any community is important, but especially the parish community which represents the universal Church at a given time and place. This is particularly true of Mass on the Lord's day." (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, no. 75: see Bulletin 28.)

The local assembly is the Church made visible and tangible. It is by his word and eucharist that the Father forms his people, his priestly nation, his chosen ones dedicated to sing his praise.

When your parish assembles on Sunday in response to God's call, you become a sign of the people of God for your community. This is where others see the Church, for you represent the visible Church as it is established throughout the world (Liturgy, nos. 41-42).

The holier your celebration, the greater glory given to God; the greater your faith, the more it will be deepened, for you come and celebrate in response to the Father's invitation.

REST AND PRAYER

In his brief address before the "Angelus" on September 19 to the people in St. Peter's Square, Pope Paul recalled the need to keep the Sunday holy:

"This custom of giving Sunday its due religious value, its true spiritual significance, is of the utmost importance. Rest and prayer — indeed rest in order to pray on holy days: this is an observance essential to impose the right rhythm on our extroverted and feverish activities, to bring into line all our intentions towards their true, supreme end, the reign of God. It is essential for peaceful association with our brethren in charity, in common prayer; essential for our meeting with Christ and with God. This is the recurrent event that we wish to talk about and celebrate with you."

Osservatore Romano (English),
September 23, 1971

SUNDAY IS THE DAY FOR EUCHARIST

Sunday is the day the Lord invites his people to celebrate because of the Good News of our salvation. He calls on us to rejoice and to praise him because he is our God and we are his beloved people. On the Lord's day particularly, we are called to hear his word and to celebrate the Christian eucharist.

Hearing God's Word

Sunday is the day to listen to God's word, to open our hearts to his message, to let his Spirit guide us by the inspired word of the bible. In this way, we know what we are thanking him for, and we are shown the way God wants us to live during this week.

During the liturgy of the word: In its three-year cycle of Sunday readings, the Church unfolds the riches of God's word for his people. Week by week, the Spirit guides us, opens the treasures of scripture, and invites us to a greater generosity in living our Christian lives. Whether we celebrate a specific season in the liturgical year or one of the Sundays in ordinary time, we are praising God for saving us in Christ. The readings reflect various aspects of our salvation, and point out both God's love for us and ways in which we should respond by our love.

Personal reading: Sunday is a day particularly suited for scripture reading. Some time should be spent in prayerful, reflective reading of the scriptures during the day, continuing the work begun in the liturgy of the word. This reading may involve the texts used in the Sunday Mass, or may be taken from other parts of the bible. Ten to fifteen minutes would be a minimum time for this reflective reading.

This period of scripture reading will become even more fruitful when a person takes a few moments every day to read God's word. The people of the Lord need to be formed according to his mind, and this is not going to happen as long as the bible is a pretty book gathering dust on a coffee table or shelf. Until we form the habit of daily reading in the word of God, the Sunday readings will be read and heard by people who are *spiritually hard-of-hearing*.

Family reading: In many homes today, parents are frightened by the potential horror of drugs, crime and other problems facing their children as they grow. What spiritual preparation have they given their sons and daughters to help them face the realities of life today ?

God's word has much to say about life, about temptation and evil and crime, about virtue and generosity. A steady program of bible reading, shared and discussed and prayed about, is open to each family: it is the best way of helping each member to have the mind of Christ, sharing his attitudes and working with him for God's glory and the world's salvation.

When the individuals and families in a parish or community read the bible in this way, they are much more open to the Spirit's action in each Sunday's liturgy of the word.

Some will object, of course, that there is no time. If the average person or family used the amount of time in reading scripture that is spent with the weekend papers and television guide, we would be much more attuned to the word of God.

Preparing the Sunday readings: To derive even greater benefit from the liturgy of the word, individuals and families should be encouraged to prepare for each Sunday's celebration by prayerful reading, study and discussion of the appointed readings. This may be done by using a book such as *Sunday Lectionary - Study Edition*. Concerned liturgy committees would encourage the listing of the references for next week in each Sunday's bulletin (see *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy*: the starter may also be helpful to families who prepare the Sunday texts).

Follow up: Once the Sunday liturgy has been celebrated, the work of the Christian community is not over; rather, it is just beginning. People interested in growing in the Christian spirit will want to go over the Sunday readings several times during the week, praying about them and letting the Spirit implant his message in their hearts and lives. A good Christian cannot be like the various kinds of bad ground in the parable of the sower. He will want to receive the word in good ground and bear everlasting fruit for the glory of the Father.

Celebrating the Eucharist

Having taught us by his saving word, the Father invites us to respond by offering our thanks to him with and through Jesus Christ, our high priest and savior.

"To eucharist" means to give thanks. As high priest of visible creation, man is called on to voice the praise and thanksgiving of this earth, filled with every blessing. (See third and fourth eucharistic prayers.) But as Christians, we have been called together in Christ by the power of his Spirit, and we are able to make a perfect offering to the glory of the Father's name when we celebrate the eucharist.

On the Lord's day, we are called together to share in the paschal mystery of the Lord Jesus, and to deepen and proclaim the unity of the people of God. Each Sunday we share our living sacrifice of praise and join Christ in his eternal offering to the Father.

The eucharist is the center of Christian living, the source of eternal life for all who believe. In the Sunday celebration the community of believers is gathered and offers the praise of its life to the Father.

Time and eternity are joined as heaven and earth join in the celebration. We offer this sacrifice in union with the saints and angels of heaven, with those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith, with the Church on earth. In this celebration, this community joins the entire Church in giving all honor and glory to the Father, in and through and with Christ, in the Holy Spirit.

St. Augustine reminds us that when we know God, it is to our advantage, not his. The same is true of our worship: we are the ones who benefit when we praise God in the eucharist.

What are we thanking God for when we celebrate the eucharist ?

• *for salvation:* Despite our sins, our constant relapses and lack of fidelity, the Father has saved us by the death and rising of Christ. Through baptism, he has made us share in this paschal mystery. We praise and thank him in the eucharist for saving us, for leading us and all his pilgrim people on the path of eternal life.

• *for life:* In the eucharist, the people of God thank him for life — for calling them to live here on earth: for life, ability, talent and power, for family and friends. We give him thanks also for his promise of unending life in his eternal kingdom. We praise him because from all eternity he has chosen us in Christ to be his beloved sons and daughters. We thank him for pouring his Spirit into our hearts, so that we may live as his children and with Christ build up the body, his Church.

• *for creation:* We thank him and praise him for creation, made through Christ. Who can look at the Rockies or the Alps, at the Grand Canyon or the Great Lakes, at the marvellous array of birds and animals, at the seas and their teeming life, at the sky and the clouds, at the sun and stars, at the crops and flowers and forests, at snow and heat, at day and night, at the unexplored vastness of the universe, and not sing praise to God the creator ? With St. Francis and the psalmist we rejoice in the beauty of the earth as a faint reflection of the glory and magnificence of God.

No Other Day

While the Christian people may celebrate the eucharist on any day of the year but Good Friday and Holy Saturday, the Sunday celebration has had a unique place from the beginning. In the New Testament, the early Church already had chosen Sunday as the Lord's day: see Acts 20:7 and Rev. 1:10. Before the end of the first century, the *Didache* testifies to the common practice of the Christian community (see *Our tradition* in this issue).

Recent reforms by Pius X, John XXIII, Paul VI and by the Second Vatican Council have given new emphasis to Sunday as the day of the Lord. It is the original Christian feast day (Liturgy, no. 106).

To suggest that other days are "just a good" as Sunday, or that another day can be a regular substitute for the Sunday eucharist is to give evidence that one has begun to lose sight of the Church's values.

* * *

The Father calls us together on the Lord's day, Sunday, that we may celebrate the eucharist from the rising of the sun to its setting, giving glory and praise to his name through Jesus Christ our savior in the unity and love of the Spirit.

DAY OF JOY AND REST

Sunday should never be seen as a gloomy day of obligation. The puritanical view which made it a sad day was not in the Christian tradition.

Day of joy: Sunday is a day of holy joy. The Church has long forbidden it to be a day of fasting and penance. Rather it is a little Easter, a time of rejoicing: we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death. Every Sunday is a little Easter when we praise the Father, because Jesus seized us from the kingdom of darkness, and brought us into the kingdom of light. Sunday is the day we celebrate our adoption as God's children and our membership in his holy people, the Church.

We proclaim this joy by our music and song during the eucharist as well as by the way we live the day: joy rather than gloom should be the sign of the faith and salvation that our lives proclaim. Sunday Mass is a victory banquet, celebrating Christ's triumph over Satan, and his invitation to us to share in his victory now and in eternity.

Joy is a gift of the Spirit of God. He gives it to all who love God and neighbor. It resides in our lives, and should be bubbling over in our daily actions. All that we do, especially on the Lord's day, should reflect the presence of the Spirit, who dwells in us as his temple.

Our joy in living for Christ, and in suffering for him, should be one of the signs of our witnessing for the Lord.

Day of rest: Intended to be a day of rest and freedom from work, a day of family gatherings, of peace, Sunday is too often a time of turmoil. Without condemning what modern society is making of our Sundays, we could take some serious thought on how we can live it as a day of rest and re-creation.

Sunday needs to become once more a day of extra time to spend with God in prayer, spiritual reading, Christian conversion. It can become once more a day of reflection on God's work among us, on his teaching, on the Church's explanation and elaboration of God's truth. It can be a day to consecrate to God, his work; to his love and peace, to his glory, and to our joy. Sunday is a time to revive our spiritual energy by prayer and contemplation.

As we begin to reflect in this way, we will be more filled with the joy of the Lord, and will begin to realize once more how he helps us to grow in his way on his day.

SUNDAY'S STORY

The history of the Christian Sunday deserves a full issue of the Bulletin. In this quick survey of the centuries, the main trends affecting the Lord's day are pointed out.

As he led the Hebrew people, his chosen nation, out of the slavery of Egypt, God gave them the last day of the week to be their weekly day of rest and worship. This was reinforced by the story of God's rest at the end of his work of creation.

Jesus and his apostles inherited this tradition, but the Lord was noted for doing good on the Sabbath, even though this broke the rigid standards of the Pharisees of his day. His stand that the Sabbath was made for man instead of the opposite has repercussions that last down to the present.

After his death, his followers hastily removed his body from the cross because of the coming Sabbath: it was a solemn holy day, the Passover.

The opening chapters of the Acts of the Apostles present a picture of the Church in which the daily temple worship was a normal part of living. Before long, however, the Christian Church became more conscious of its independent life — though strongly rooted in Judaism, even using the Hebrew scriptures as its own.

Sunday, the first day of the week (like our Monday) was a working day in the Roman empire. But it was the day of the Lord Jesus for Christians: it is mentioned in Acts 20:7 (a much more specific reference than Acts 2:42) and in Rev. 1:10. By the end of the first century, the *Didache*, the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, spoke openly of the way the Christian community observed the Lord's day. (See the following article, *Our tradition*.)

During the Roman persecutions, we find St. Justin explaining patiently to detractors that Christians do not gather on Sunday to eat babies, but rather to hear God's word and break the bread in remembrance of Christ, as he commanded us to do.

When Constantine gave legal freedom to the Church, it built its first basilicas, modelled on Roman law courts, and expanded throughout the empire and beyond. By the time of Gregory the Great (590-604) the Sunday liturgy had reached a high point in symbolism and orderly beauty. This was carried by Benedictine missionaries throughout Europe and its islands.

But in the centuries which followed a gradual decay took place in liturgy because of many influences: changes in culture, language, theology contributed to a growing misunderstanding of Mass and sacraments, a growth in quasi-magical expectations of sacramental results without adequate dispositions of faith. Participation was discouraged until people became idle spectators.

Liturgy and the Sunday go together. When one collapses, the other is not far behind.

The early middle ages saw further declines. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, the universal Church had to legislate annual confession and communion. (Any canon lawyer will tell you that laws are made to curb or halt entrenched

abuses. The fact these laws had to be passed by the fourth Lateran Council indicates how far common practice had moved away from the ideal.)

Holy days of obligation expanded in every direction until there were more than seventy. The meaning of Sunday seemed to be upheld by only one medieval custom, the *peace of God*, by which wars and fighting stopped for the Lord's day.

By the time of the reformation and the Council of Trent, both Sunday and the liturgy were in need of reform. The Protestant churches put strong emphasis on hearing and preaching the word of God. The reformed missal of Pius V went a long way toward restoring the Sunday as the primary and basic feast of the liturgical year.

Gradually Sunday was weakened again until by the time of Pius X, the Sundays after Pentecost were overridden almost every week by feasts of minor rank. He sought to restore all things in Christ by calling us back to the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit (the Council uses his words in the liturgy constitution, no. 14). He reformed the office and the calendar partially.

In the following decades, the liturgical movement began to grow, led in Europe and America by the Benedictines. But at the same time Rome set up another feast to take the place of the Sunday liturgy (Christ the King), and external solemnities were only too common. Octaves and commemorations did their best to weigh down Sunday celebrations.

Under Pius XII, hopeful steps began: *Mediator Dei* in 1947 was hailed as the *Magna Carta* of the liturgical movement. The experimental Easter vigil in 1951 — who can forget that thrill of the dramatic darkness-to-light symbolism in the first celebration? — was followed by the restored Holy Week ceremonies in 1956, and greater emphasis on participation, especially on Sundays, was in the last of Pope Pius XII's liturgical documents.

At the Vatican Council, the first document issued was the liturgy constitution, which opens by stating the goal of the Council — and it is still the goal of renewal today:

- *to intensify the daily growth of Catholics in Christian living;*
- *to adapt many Church observances to respond to the requirements of our times;*
- *to foster whatever can contribute to the unity of Christians;*
- *to strengthen aspects of the Church which can invite all to become believing members.*

The Council's statements on Sunday began a new era by seeking to restore the primacy of the Lord's day:

"Every week, on the day which she has called the Lord's day, the Church keeps the memory of his resurrection." (Liturgy, no. 102)

See also no. 106, quoted on page 69 of this issue.

Since the Council, in the ten short years since the liturgy document was issued, we find other celebrations creeping in. Sincere piety is at the root of this, no doubt, but the long-range results can be just as bad as during the liturgical declines of the past.

To conclude our brief history of Sunday in the Catholic Church, we come to the statement of concern made in June 1973 by the Canadian National Council for Liturgy:

Recognizing the efforts that have been made since the Vatican Council to strengthen the primacy of the Sunday liturgy in the life of the Church, the National Council for Liturgy views with concern the fact that the unique character of the Sunday liturgy, in various ways and at various levels, is in danger of becoming somewhat obscured in our country.

The following are the sources of our concern:

1. In some areas, at the parochial level, the Sunday liturgy with its proper texts is replaced by another Mass designed to mark some current festival or cause. This is noted especially, but not exclusively, in reference to national festivals, such as Canada Day and Thanksgiving Day which always occur in close proximity to the Sunday.
2. In some areas, at the parochial level, while the Sunday liturgy is celebrated with its proper texts, the theme of the Mass is unrelated to those texts and is directed, instead, toward some current festival or cause. This is noted especially, but not exclusively, in reference to the celebration of Mother's Day and Father's Day, which occur on designated Sundays of the year.
3. The number of worthwhile causes within the Church in Canada, whether national or diocesan, which are being attached to the Sunday liturgy has a natural tendency to increase. Some such causes are emphasized to the extent that they are assigned or they are allowed to assume the title of the Sunday, such as Respect for Life Sunday. On these Sundays it is observed that the liturgical theme of the Sunday is widely disregarded.

Accordingly, the National Council for Liturgy recommends to the Office for Liturgy:

1. That guidelines be published regarding the celebration of the proper Sunday liturgy in the following or like manner:
 - a) The Sunday liturgy with its proper texts may not be supplanted except on those occasions listed in the *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy*, under the title of Table of Precedence. This is a basic liturgical principle.
 - b) The theme of the Sunday celebration is to be drawn from its proper liturgical texts and may not be supplanted by a theme in favor of some extraneous festival or cause. These latter may be noted in the celebrant's introductory remarks, or in the general intercessions, or by way of announcement before the final blessing.

If, by coincidence or design, the proper readings are related to the festival or cause in question, then these might be given a fuller treatment within the theme of the Mass, e.g., within the homily.

The basic liturgical principle is that extraneous themes should not be arbitrarily or artificially imposed upon the celebration of the Sunday liturgy.

c) The homily, drawn from the sacred texts of the Mass, is an integral part of the Sunday liturgy. Accordingly, it must never be omitted. Understandably, the Canadian Catholic Conference or the local ordinary may consider some matters of such importance as to attach them to a particular Sunday so that they may be brought effectively before the faithful, e.g., Organization for Development and Peace, Vocations, Propagation of the Faith. Whenever such official causes, requiring extended promotion on a Sunday, cannot be adequately treated within the framework of a true homily, they should be dealt with before the concluding rite.

2. That every effort be made to keep the proper Sunday liturgy unencumbered, for it seems that it is becoming a crutch for a growing number of causes.
3. That, insofar as possible, the Sunday should retain its proper liturgical title and not be designated by the special cause attached to it.

This Bulletin is one step in the long journey of restoring and keeping Sunday as the day that belongs to the Lord.

* * *

A good book on Sunday in the early Church is: *Sunday, the history of the day of rest and worship in the earliest centuries of the Christian Church*, by Willy Rordorf, SCM Press, London, 1968, xvi, 336, indices.

You might be interested in reading once more what Father Jungmann said before the Council about the meaning of Sunday in Christian life. See pages 91-122 of *The Eucharistic Prayer and the Meaning of Sunday*, J.A. Jungmann, S.J., translated by Clifford Howell, S.J. Fides Dome Book D-41, Fides Publishers, Notre Dame, Indiana.

OUR TRADITION

Some passages from the Didache, The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, written around the end of the first century of the Christian era, help us to realize how far our traditions go back.

Chapter XIV

1. On the Lord's own day, come together and break bread, and give thanks after confessing your transgressions, so that your sacrifice may be pure.
2. Let no one who has a dispute with another come together with you until they are reconciled, so that your sacrifice may not be defiled.

3. For this is what the Lord spoke of: "In every place and time offer me a pure sacrifice, for I am a great king, says the Lord, and my name is wonderful among the nations." (Mal. 1:11, 14)

Chapter IX

1. With regard to the eucharist, give thanks in this way.
2. First, with regard to the cup: We give thanks, our Father, for the holy vine of your servant David, which you have made known to us through your servant Jesus. To you be glory for ever.
3. With regard to the broken bread: We give you thanks, our Father, for the life and knowledge which you have made known to us through your servant Jesus. To you be glory for ever.
4. As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and gathered together to become one, so let your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.
5. Let no one eat or drink of your eucharist except those baptized in the name of the Lord.

Chapter X

1. After being filled, give thanks in this manner.
2. We give you thanks, holy Father, for your holy name, which you have brought to life in our hearts. We thank you for the knowledge, faith and immortality which you have made known to us through Jesus your servant. To you be glory for ever.
3. Almighty ruler, you made all things for your name's sake. You gave men food and drink for enjoyment that they might give thanks to you, but you have blessed us with spiritual food and drink and eternal life through your Son.
4. Before all things we give thanks to you, because you are mighty. To you be glory for ever.
5. Lord, remember your Church. Deliver it from all evil and perfect it in your love, and gather it together from the four winds. Gather it into the kingdom you have prepared for your Church, for you have made it holy. Power and glory are yours for ever.
6. Let grace come, and let this world pass away. Hosanna to the God of David. If anyone is holy, let him come; if anyone is not holy, let him repent. Come, Lord Jesus ! Amen.

PLANNING FOR CELEBRATION

The proper celebration of Sunday as the Lord's day, the main Christian feast, is the prime goal proposed by the National Council for Liturgy in our country. This goal will be realized only when each parish and community in Canada takes effective preparation for and celebration of Sunday Mass as a serious responsibility.

CENTRAL WORK OF THE PARISH

Ask any gathering of good parishioners this question: "What is the one most important work of our parish?" After some initial discussion, they will begin to emphasize the spiritual aspects of parish life. We hope they are sufficiently instructed to be aware of the Council's teaching that *the eucharist is the center and heart of the life of each Christian community:*

- o The liturgy is the *summit* toward which the Church directs all its activities, and the *fountain* from which flows all its power. "The *goal of apostolic works* is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in its sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's supper." (Liturgy, no. 10)
- o "A bishop . . . is the steward of the grace of the supreme priesthood, especially in the eucharist, which he offers or causes to be offered, and *by which the Church constantly lives and grows.*" (Church, no. 26)
- o "In discharging their duty to sanctify their people, pastors should arrange for the celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice to be the *center and culmination of the whole life of the Christian community.*" (Bishops' pastoral office, no. 30:2)
- o "The eucharist shows itself to be the *source and apex of the whole work of preaching the gospel.* . . . The eucharistic action is the *very heartbeat of the congregation over which* the priest presides. So priests must instruct them to offer to God the Father the divine victim in the sacrifice of the Mass, and to join to it the offering of their own lives." (Ministry and life of priests, no. 5)

Liturgy is directed both to God and his people. We offer our worship, praise, and thanks to the Father, through and with Jesus our high priest. Through the liturgy, God teaches and sanctifies his people, giving us light and life to love him and to continue in his service.

Because full participation in the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit (Liturgy, no. 14), the pastoral efforts of the Church must concentrate on releasing the dynamic grace of the liturgy, especially of the eucharist, for all the people of the Lord.

The parish is centered on the eucharist:

"The celebration of Mass is the action of Christ and the people of God hierarchically assembled. For both the local and the universal Church, and for each person, it is the *center of Christian life.*

"Mass celebrated by any community is important, but especially the parish community which represents the universal Church at a given time and place. This is particularly true of Mass on the Lord's day." (General instruction of the Roman missal, nos. 1, 75, as quoted in Bulletin 28)

In order that a parish community may become a truly eucharistic community, nourished on the word of God and the bread of life, the bishop, pastor and other priests are called on to lead the people of God through the liturgy to the heights of Christian living (see Liturgy, nos. 41-42).

Working with the bishop is the diocesan liturgical commission (see Bulletin 39, pages 179-184; no. 40, pages 207-211; no. 41, pages 259, 291-292; also Bulletin 35, pages 216-218, 227-229; no. 36, page 241). The pastor has the collaboration of the other priests and his parish council, particularly the liturgy committee. Bulletin 35 is devoted entirely to the work of this committee, and is still available for distribution to all members.

Good liturgy needs good preparation, and the key man in each parish is the pastor. When he is enthusiastic about the importance of the liturgical apostolate, he can lead others to work with him in promoting honor to God and the spiritual growth of the community.

We quote the opening paragraph of the pastoral notes in *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1974*, which the National Liturgical Office prepares each year to help you to realize the Church's ideals in your community worship:

The liturgical apostolate is an essential part of the Christian life, not a luxury to be taken or left: participation in the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit. These introductory notes contain many positive, pastoral ideas and suggestions for unleashing the dynamic power of the liturgy in the spiritual life of your believing community, so that its life of worship may influence and guide its daily life.

EARLY TESTIMONY

On the way to his martyrdom, around the year 150, St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote to the Christians of Ephesus. His letter speaks of their Sunday assembly:

I will write you another letter, if in answer to your prayers, Jesus Christ permits it and God wills it; in that letter I will continue to tell you of God's plan for the new man, Jesus Christ. This plan requires faith and love in him, and includes his suffering, death and resurrection. I will certainly do this if the Lord reveals to me that each one of you is attending your meetings in the state of grace, united in faith and in Jesus Christ, and that you are ready to obey your bishops and clergy without any division, and to share in one common breaking of the bread. This is the medicine of immortality, the supreme remedy by which we escape death and live in Jesus Christ for ever.

*St. Ignatius of Antioch
Letter to the Ephesians, no. 20*

NEED FOR SERIOUS PREPARATION

In order to have a good Sunday celebration, serious and detailed preparation is necessary. Those who are most involved in the celebration should make responsible preparations for it: celebrant, liturgy committee, musicians and readers lead the list.

Good celebration: The elements of a good celebration are:

- o *Faith and reverence*
- o *Something to sing about*
- o *Thorough preparation*
- o *Offered by men of prayer*
- o *Full sharing of roles*
- o *Celebrating life*
- o *Willingness to improve*
- o *For the glory of God*

Further thoughts on each of these points may be found in Bulletin 34, pages 113-114.

At the other extreme, poor celebrations have bad effects: celebrants and readers who fail to choose texts carefully, who fail to prepare and carry out their role fully, musicians who do not plan their singing according to the needs of the community and of the Sunday, people who are satisfied with imposing an instant, unprepared celebration on their community. Poor celebrations weaken faith, insult the community, and undermine the work of good liturgists.

Preparing Sunday's Celebration

1. **Theme:** Considering the Sunday, the season, the assigned readings, what are we celebrating? Since it is Sunday, we are celebrating the resurrection (every Sunday is a little Easter). What is the particular aspect of God's saving work in Christ that is the theme of today's Mass? If there are several themes or approaches, which one is best for our community at this present stage of its spiritual growth?

2. **Readings:** What are the readings assigned for this Mass? Look at the gospel first; then in the light of this text, consider the first reading, which is always chosen in relationship to the gospel. The responsorial psalm is a response to the first reading, and attains its full meaning when understood in this way. During the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, and on special feasts, the second reading is also chosen to harmonize with the other texts. On Sundays in ordinary time, when green vestments are worn, the second reading is a semi-continuous reading of one of the apostles, presenting an independent text. But it is more easily seen as part of the celebration when we realize that the apostle is simply telling us how we — this congregation — should live out the word of God in our lives this week.

After reading over these texts as a group (gospel, first reading, psalm; second reading; when a specific acclamation is assigned, it may be looked at as an introduction to the gospel), the planners should choose the key ideas that need to be mentioned in the introduction to each reading, or to all three at once. Someone is assigned to prepare these.

The readers who are to proclaim the texts will need help in understanding the text they read in relationship to the other readings and to the day's theme. Who will help them? How?

3. **Music:** Once the theme of the Mass and the import of the readings have been understood, the music should be chosen. A number of factors should be considered.

- *Theme:* Some music may be related to the theme by use of the liturgical index at the back of the choir edition of *Catholic Book of Worship*.

- *Seasonal:* Some of the hymns will be related to the current liturgical season. Again, see the liturgical index of the hymnal.

- *Eucharist:* The choice of ordinary chants (*Lord, have mercy; Glory to God; Holy, Holy; memorial acclamation; great Amen; Our Father; Lamb of God*) will depend on how far the parish community has gone in learning these, which are of prime importance. Often one of the hymns chosen will be related to a particular part of the Mass, or to a general theme of praise and thanksgiving, such as a hymn or song of praise after communion.

4. **Homily:** The General instruction (paragraph 42, quoted in Bulletin 28) points out that it is *ordinarily* the celebrant who preaches the homily. The discussion of the theme and readings should be helpful to him in his preparation of the homily, and the other parts of the Mass which are his responsibility. (See Bulletin 35, pages 233-236 on homily preparation.) The praying, studying and thinking that he has done in preparation should make a valuable contribution to the entire discussion.

The Congregation for Divine Worship points out that the celebrant is able to draw the celebration together and take care of other themes (Bulletin 40, pages 197-203).

5. **Interventions:** The celebrant is invited to make interventions (brief instructions or introductions), or to have others make them, at various points in the Mass. A full list of these and their value is described in *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1974*, pages 12-13. The interventions may reflect the season, the Sunday theme or the particular part of the Mass.

One important intervention is the introduction to the day's Mass. It may be made by the priest or someone else after the greeting. Many communities prefer to have someone read it just before the Mass begins.

6. **Prayer of the faithful:** How can a parish make the general intercessions a real prayer, a prayer that reflects the concerns of the universal Church and of this community? The intentions are described in *Guidelines*, pages 23-24. As the group of planners is preparing the celebration, they will be able to note thoughts and phrases in the readings and other texts (both proper and common) that can be used in preparing petitions that have meaning. Forms printed in various other publications, including the CCC *Homily Aids*, may be used for inspiration. The celebrant is to develop the invitation to prayer and the closing prayer, but the group may help him by suggesting useful approaches and thoughts.

7. Choice of options: The planning committee should also help the celebrant with suggestions for use of holy water or penitential rites at the beginning of Mass; which penitential rite; preparation of a special form of the third penitential rite; introduction to the eucharistic prayer; choice of preface, when possible; choice of eucharistic prayer and memorial acclamation; choice of dismissal.

8. Bulletin: The parish bulletin should be considered by the group as a valuable pastoral aid. Notes can be included each week to explain the season, or one of the Sunday readings, or the Sunday theme, as well as general notes about the value of participation, the meaning of various actions or prayers in the Mass. Past issues of the National Bulletin on Liturgy offer a rich source of such ideas.

Depending on whether the bulletin is distributed before or after Mass, it can explain the theme of today's Mass or next Sunday's celebration. Suggested readings may be included for home study and meditation. An appropriate prayer for family use could be included.

Members of the liturgy committee or planning group could help to write these notes, or at least to decide some of the points to be covered.

9. Posters and banners: With the growth of craft classes and groups in many communities, the parish committee should consider the development of banners for the liturgical seasons and major celebrations of the year. Posters, or even a simple display on a bulletin board near the main entrance, may be prepared by families, school classes or individuals for various Sundays or seasons. Every parish has untapped potential: why not tap it for the benefit of the entire community?

Is this all a daydream? Can any parish do this? Before we say it is impossible, perhaps we could plan one Sunday a month. And when we've begun to get the idea, it will take less time. Then we can begin to work on two to three weeks at a time.

Resources

Among the resources available, we may suggest:

- *Homily Aids:* Included with the CCC interim sacramentary, these provide a brief study of the readings and develop one approach to the homily. Valuable for readers and planning group as well as for the celebrant.

- *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy:* Canada's pastoral aid is of value to all who are planning liturgy. The starters (see *Guidelines*, pages 19-20) provide a prayer based on the Sunday texts. This may be useful in your bulletin or as part of the introduction to the Mass.

- *Sunday Lectionary — Study Edition:* Intended for readers and celebrants, this book presents the Sunday readings in a page-for-page reproduction (5 by

$7\frac{3}{4}$ inches) of the Sunday section of the lectionary. Sunday Calendars to 1980, a sound introduction for readers and pronunciation guide make this a valuable aid for preparing celebrations.

- *Sacramentary*: The proper texts for each Sunday as well as the order of Mass are useful to the group as it plans the liturgy.
 - *Commentaries*: Montreal's weekly *Discover the Bible* (2000 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal 109, P.Q.) is an excellent aid. *Guide for the Christian Assembly*, though expensive, provides good help for a serious community. (Both were reviewed in Bulletin 34, pages 124-125 and 129-130.)
 - *Other resources* are listed in Bulletin 35, pages 224-226.
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PREACHING FROM THE LECTORY

"By means of the homily, the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of the Christian life are expounded from the sacred text during the course of the liturgical year. The homily, therefore, is to be highly esteemed as part of the liturgy itself." (Liturgy, no. 52)

The homily is based on the scripture readings of the day, or on other parts of the Mass: it "should draw its content mainly from scriptural and liturgical sources. Its character should be that of a proclamation of God's wonderful works in the history of salvation, that is, the mystery of Christ, which is ever made present and active within us, especially in the celebration of the liturgy." (Liturgy, no. 35: 2)

* * *

* The preacher must be the servant of the word. When preaching from the day's readings, it would seem best for the homilist to show this by standing at the open book, and referring now and then to it by looks or gestures. Gradually the idea that the homily is normally based on the lectionary texts will become part of the congregation's awareness, and they will listen even more carefully to the readings as they are proclaimed.

* Occasionally one sees a preacher close the lectionary before beginning to preach, as though he were saying: "Well, that's that. Now let's get down to the *real* word of God, my homily!"

* Too often we hear — in place of the homily — a talk on something that has little or nothing to do with what a homily should be. Not based on the readings or other Mass texts, this interlude is pushing a collection, local bazaar, or similar project.

* Has anyone really faced up to the question of how to handle special days, national collections, or similar things without losing the homily? We would be pleased to hear from you: share your ideas and solutions, please.

ALWAYS A HOMILY

Our homily series continues with a brief article on the value and need of a homily in every Sunday celebration.

The Vatican Council saw the homily as an integral part of the liturgical renewal, and called on priests to fulfill the ministry of preaching with exactitude and fidelity. The homily is to "draw its content mainly from scriptural and liturgical sources. Its character should be that of a proclamation of God's wonderful works in the history of salvation, this is, the mystery of salvation, which is ever made present and active within us, especially in the celebration of the liturgy." (Liturgy, no. 35:2)

"By means of the homily, the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of the Christian life are expounded from the sacred text during the course of the liturgical year. The homily, therefore, is to be highly esteemed as part of the liturgy itself; in fact, at those Masses which are celebrated with the assistance of the people on Sundays and feasts of obligation, it should not be omitted except for a serious reason." (Liturgy, no. 52)

Over a period of time, the homily builds up faith, by the celebrant's faith and attitude as well as by his words. During the three-year cycle, the Church forms the faith of God's people by the carefully selected readings and other texts. The celebrant helps them each week to realize what wonders the Lord is working in this community, and invites them to open their hearts and lives to the action of the Spirit. By the homily, the celebrant is also leading the community into the eucharistic action, where they praise the Father for his saving works among them and all his people.

To do this well, however, the celebrant needs to prepare carefully, as suggested in Bulletin 35, pages 233-236. As noted in *Need for serious preparation* in this present issue, the liturgy committee and other members of the parish can be of assistance to him.

Problems: There are problems that the Church needs to face: how can we accept or reconcile what is sometimes done to the Sunday liturgy or homily by celebrating other events (see *Those days* in this issue), or by pumping up enthusiasm for special collections? What about parishes which segregate children for the liturgy of the word? What about places where they disrupt the close sequence of readings and homily by inserting alien announcements (which belong in the bulletin; if they must be made during the Sunday assembly, their proper place is before Mass or after the prayer after communion — see *Guidelines*, page 30).

To deprive this assembly of God's people of a well prepared homily is to remove from them the richness of his word. It requires prayer and preparation and hard work, but that is the priest's special task in the Church: read paragraphs 4-6 of *Ministry and life of priests*, and encourage all members of the Church to pray for those who preach and for those who hear the word.

BUT WE CAN'T SING !

Instead of writing about the glories of music, let's face a serious problem: Sunday Masses without music, and, worse still, churches where no music is heard at all. These pages are presented as some questions for discussion by the liturgy committee and members of the parish.

Why No Music ?

The reasons vary: a one-priest parish in a small village, and the pastor has a tin ear and can't sing; no organist or choir; no leadership; "We tried it once and it didn't work."

A pastor who cannot sing — or who has enough sense to know he can't — is not a total handicap. It may mean that he will not sing the celebrant's parts of the Mass, but it need not prevent the rest of the community from singing their common parts. They do not need the priest to intone the *Glory to God*: the whole hymn may be sung by all from the beginning.

No choir: While you may not have the makings of the Sistine Chapel Choir or the Vienna Boy Singers in your parish, have you really done a survey of every person in every family to see who could be a possible member? Have you gone beyond an appeal in the bulletin or a short announcement? If the members of the committee really believe in having a choir, they will canvass every member of the parish until they have formed at least a nucleus of reasonably good singers.

The choir need not be massive, row upon row. Indeed, it may have only five or six members at first. A suggestion is outlined on page 19 of *Catholic Funeral Rite* (pastoral note 12b). What is said there can apply to the Sunday choir too. A small group can add beauty and spirit to the celebration, and give strong leadership and encouragement to the congregation.

What about inviting members of a youth group to lead the singing on a regular basis? What about a children's choir? Would singing every Sunday, along with the time they spend in practice, be a valuable by-product of religious education classes? Look at the local primary and secondary schools, and at the way they prepare young people in your neighborhood for concerts, music festivals and other events.

No organist: Again, let your liturgy committee take a name-by-name look at the parish list. Who can play the organ? Who can play other instruments? How many young people play the guitar reasonably well? Perhaps there is a person in the community who is not a Catholic, but who would be willing to be employed as organist, at least for one or two Sundays a month. Discuss your problems with ministers, governing committees and members of other churches in the area. Advertise.

Is the parish open to spending several hundred dollars to train several young organists, or to help pianists learn a related art form?

No leadership: This can be considered in two ways: no leader for the choir, or no one to lead the congregation.

- *No choir leader:* Try the parish list approach again. Is there a music teacher in the community who would be willing to do this? Perhaps a member of the choir has the ability to be trained to lead it: send him or her to one of the summer schools of liturgical music that are advertised in the Catholic press. Ask one of the larger parishes in the diocese, one which has a good choir and good leadership, to give you some help and guidance as you begin.
- *No leader of song:* How many people are capable of leading singsongs at Scout campfires, office parties, wiener roasts? Look at that parish list again, and go through every name once more. Contact everyone who has the potential. Out of all your parish you should get at least a few who are willing, with some help and training, to try the job. Get them that guidance and training, at least from some parish in the diocese that has good music in its liturgy.

For those who find it difficult to learn hymn hymns, or to teach them to the congregation, a suggestion may be offered: bring in the record player before Mass, and teach everyone one or two of the dozens of hymns presently available on inexpensive discs. The CCC Publications Service has put three such records into general circulation; a group from London diocese and Winnipeg's liturgy commission have also produced useful recordings.

One Mass without music: Work to find an organist, choir and song leader who will be happy to bring music to this Mass. Perhaps a few choir members would be willing to start a second, smaller group for this celebration. Or maybe this Mass could become a folk Mass if you presently have none.

What and When Should We Sing ?

Hymnal: The Canadian Church is blessed by having *Catholic Book of Worship* as a national hymnal. The choir and organist use the choir edition, as do those who plan liturgical celebrations. The liturgical index is a valuable source of suggestions. Specific musical directions are given for the Sunday Mass, for Holy Week, for weddings and funerals, for confirmation. A wide choice of music, modern and traditional, has been brought together from international sources.

The members of the congregation use the pew edition, either in its hardcover or loose-leaf format. This provides them with all they need to respond and participate in the Sunday liturgy, and gives a repertoire adequate for the average parish for years to come.

Holy Week: Full details on Holy Week music are included in the CCC Holy Week record and on its jacket, as well as in the hymnal; Bulletin 37, pages 37-44, covered this topic in 1973. These resources tell you what to sing and when to sing it. The hymnal provides the music you need.

Weddings and funerals: Even when we have no regular choir or organist, we seem to find someone for weddings. Does this say something about our priorities?

- *Weddings:* Guidance on wedding music was included in Bulletin 35, pages 230-232.

- **Funerals:** A full outline of musical opportunities and needs for wakes and funerals is included in pastoral note 12 (pages 19-22) of *Catholic Rite of Funerals*. This information should be shared with your choir, organist and choir leader.

Sunday celebration: Some guidance is given in the hymnal, especially in the choir edition; in *Checklist for Sunday liturgy*, in Bulletin 35, pages 207-213; and in *Guidelines for music in the liturgy*, Bulletin 34, pages 148-153.

Sharing Responsibility

If there is a parish in the diocese which is unable to have music, it is the responsibility of the diocesan liturgical commission to offer help and guidance. Any parish which cannot seem to get music going has the right to ask its commission for this help.

The commission should also be organizing a music or choir workshop, sessions for organists and song leaders, as a means of promoting better liturgy. The constitution on liturgy speaks in no. 29 of helping all — including the choir — to develop the spirit of the liturgy as they carry out their ministry. (See, for example, *Music workshops* in this issue.) “Have” parishes, those with good choirs, should be willing to share their abilities with others.

Since good music promotes good liturgical celebration, and helps to deepen the faith of all, it should be a matter for prayer. The choir and others involved in the ministry of music should be remembered occasionally in the prayer of the faithful (but be careful not to word it as though you were praying for them because they are hopeless). The musicians should be encouraged to thank God frequently for the talents he has given them for use in his service and in the service of his people.

In the parish bulletin, talk about the meaning and importance of music in every liturgical celebration: see the liturgy constitution, nos. 112-121. When people understand why music is important, they will be more willing to work along with you in this apostolate. Talk about the ministry of music with parish organizations, during visits. Get others concerned, get them working with you, and let them share in the responsibility of building a choir.

God has called us to be his beloved people who sing his praise. While he has given some of us the ability to carry a tune only in a book or basket, most people have some ability to sing. In his providence, surely he hasn't left your parish destitute, devoid of any talent at all.

It is there, perhaps hidden and shy, but it is waiting for you to uncover it and release its power of praising God and leading his people in joyful song.

MUSIC WORKSHOPS

Father James Hutton, diocesan director of liturgy for Sault Ste. Marie, describes the workshops held in his diocese to help musicians and clergy benefit more from Catholic Book of Worship. Further information on holding these workshops in your diocese may be obtained from the National Liturgical Office.

It Can Be Done, Believe Me!

This article will share my practical experience in introducing the *Catholic Book of Worship* in our far-flung diocese. The Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario covers the area from North Bay in the east, to Sault Ste. Marie in the west (270 miles), and from there 250 miles north to the small town of Manitouwadge. Within this large area, there are about 55 English-speaking parishes which would benefit from the hymnal. The problem, however, is to gather people together from these widely scattered parishes. Because the parishes center around three cities, North Bay, Sudbury, and Sault Ste. Marie, it was decided to have three workshops. Another area (North Shore of Lake Huron) felt the need for a workshop, and so a fourth one was added. In all, about 250 people were reached through these four workshops for musicians, choir directors, choir members and members of parish liturgy committees, plus two workshops for the clergy of the diocese. Mrs. Margaret Peirce, a member of the committee who put the Canadian hymnal together, came from London, Ontario, to conduct these workshops along with myself.

The timing and topic arrangement of each workshop depended on the day. In one center we began at 10 a.m. on Saturday and ended around 5 p.m. The Sunday workshop began at 1:30 p.m. and ended around 8 p.m. The preferred order for topic arrangement was on the Sunday workshop and so this order will be followed in this description.

The purpose of this specific order of topics was to begin with the liturgical and psychological highpoint of the eucharist and to work down to the secondary rites, as described below. In this way we were able to consider the more important rites both liturgically and musically when the participants were able to absorb more.

The workshop began with a short scripture service which also made use of a familiar hymn melody with a new text (no. 346). Since our workshops took place in the fall of 1972, we made an effort to help people prepare for Advent and Christmas by using examples from the hymnal which dealt with these liturgical seasons.

1. Introduction (45 minutes): After a short five-minute comment by myself, Mrs. Peirce briefly gave a history of the *Catholic Book of Worship* and spent most of her 40 minutes explaining the wealth of resource assistance available through the indices of the book (pages i-xvi) with special emphasis and explanation of the metrical index of tunes. This index is of such great value for choir directors and liturgy planners that the time spent on this is well worth it.

2. Eucharistic prayer (55 minutes): After my ten-minute introduction of the liturgical theology of the eucharistic prayer, Mrs. Peirce spent 45 minutes helping participants to discover the musical resources of *CBW* which would

dress up this high point of the Sunday liturgy. In this regard, emphasis was on singing the sanctus (nos. 165-168, 170-171); memorial acclamations (211-215) and the great amen (216-220).

3. Liturgy of the word (70 minutes): In ten minutes an explanation of the structure and purpose of the liturgy of the word indicated the mood and atmosphere which belongs to this part of Sunday Mass. Mrs. Peirce then again used the hymnal as the resource book containing all the necessary materials to serve this particular liturgical moment. Nearly an hour was spent on the responsorial psalm (nos. 172, 173, 185, 186, 237, 247). The gospel acclamation was also considered (201-210).

4. Entrance rite and preparation of the gifts (45 minutes): A short five-minute introduction permitted about 40 minutes for a look at the hymn section of *CBW* for entrance rite music. Hymns 255 (352), 249, 279, 327, 322, 324 (385), 313 (432) and Lord, have mercy (166) enabled not only the learning of new hymns for Advent, but also demonstrations of the use of the metrical index for preparing congregations to sing hymns at other seasons. As well, the preparation of the gifts showed the same flexibility: 251, 248, 434 (funeral), 397 (marriage, funeral), 416.

5. Communion and dismissal rite (45 minutes): A five-minute presentation of the liturgical significance allowed 40 minutes for teaching more contents of *Catholic Book of Worship*:

Communion rite: *Agnus Dei* 167, 168
Hymns 422 (284), 418, 371, 378, 376, 385 (387 melody)

Dismissal rite: Hymns 362, 361 (327), 339, 351, 341.

Weddings and Funerals

As time permitted, a 30-minute discussion and demonstration of music in the hymnal for these two events followed the principles already laid down about the relationship of the various parts of the eucharistic liturgy.

The workshop ended with a period of sharing and questioning from the participants. In this schedule, intersperse coffee breaks and perhaps a meal, and you have a full day.

It has been my experience that such an approach was the most helpful and practical way of introducing our parishes to *Catholic Book of Worship*. Many who came as sceptics or unaware of the wealth of materials in the hymnal, left as enthusiastic and hopeful people, ready to return to their parishes to work out their programs. This approach was instrumental in promoting the use of *CBW* in over thirty of the parishes in the diocese.

As a follow-up to this introductory workshop, Mrs. Peirce returned in the spring to again visit the areas of the diocese in preparation for Holy Week. Our people responded well and found the time spent together at the beginning of Lent most worthwhile as evidenced by favorable reactions to parish Holy Week celebrations.

Our diocese is small, wide spread, not musically advanced, with few resources and personnel. However, goodwill, generous and eager hearts desiring to grow and learn proved to me that *it can be done*. I trust that sharing this will encourage others to do the same.

Father Jim Hutton
Diocesan Director of Liturgy
Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

MUSIC AND LITURGY

Summer school programs in music and liturgy are being offered this year by Saint Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Indiana. Among the courses offered:

* *Graduate and undergraduate* (June 24-July 26): with specialization in composition, conducting, organ or voice.

* *Post-session in liturgy* (July 29-Aug. 7): study of the liturgy of the Mass.

Non-degree courses include:

* *Music in worship* (July 15-26): study of recent regulations and the musical potential and options they provide; repertoire and creativity; organ accompaniment and repertoire; Afro-American music for worship; folk music for worship; cantor's style and a practicum in cantorial style.

* *Afro-American music in worship* (July 22-26): co-sponsored by the National Office for Black Catholics, this includes history of Afro-American music in general, as well as a study of its use in worship.

Further information and application forms are available from:

Rev. Lawrence Heiman, C.P.P.S.
Saint Joseph's College
RENSSELAER, Indiana 47978
U.S.A.

SUNDAY IN SONG

In its liturgical index, Catholic Book of Worship lists these hymns which sing about the Lord's day:

320. On this day, the first of days
321. This is the day

(This hymn has variations for use during the times of Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension, Pentecost, and when baptism or confirmation are celebrated on the Lord's day.)

322. This is the day the Lord has made
323. I was full of joy
324. Jour du Seigneur (*with variations for Advent and Easter seasons*)
325. Day of the Lord (*translation of no. 324*)

Use of these hymns will help us to keep in mind that Sunday belongs to the Lord.

PROBLEMS

ERODING THE LORD'S DAY ?

This article appeared as the editorial in Bulletin 39, pages 131-132. It is reprinted here as part of the complete presentation on Sunday as the day of the Lord.

Pius X acted to solve the problem in his time, but as the years went by, it got out of control again. The Second Vatican Council made a brave attempt to stem the flood — but it is already starting up again.

What is the problem we are talking about ? All those celebrations that keep getting tucked in there with the Sunday liturgy.

We know they are good. No one can be Christian and be against lepers or migrants or missions or peace or ecumenism or vocations or mothers. But we are not asking anyone to take a stand against such worthy causes.

All we ask is this: *What are we doing to the Lord's day ?*

Little Easter: Priests and congregations sometimes lose sight of whose day Sunday is. How often are we reminded that it is God who calls his people together at the beginning of each week to worship him ? We find it easy to forget that he has chosen us to be his beloved people: he has set us apart to sing his praises. While we worship him all week by our prayer and way of living, on Sunday we assemble to render public thanks in the eucharistic. The Lord's day is the day we celebrate the paschal mystery. (Occasionally we need to reread the liturgy constitution, nos. 102 and 106.)

Only ten years ago the Second Vatican Council called us back to a more serious celebration of Sunday. Like St. Pius X, the Council wanted to bring back the Lord's day as the foundation of our worship, as *the original feast day of the Christian Church*.

Erosion: It is becoming more difficult each year to concentrate on the Sunday liturgy. Already other celebrations are creeping in.

- **Pious days:** National and international pressures are on us to remember many good causes. World peace, Christian unity, lepers, missions, migrants, mothers and fathers, peace and development, respect for life, communications, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, are some of the current pressures. Special collections are demanding special sermons; local and diocesan finances exert local influence on the Sunday celebration.

- **Distractions:** Some people have been confusing the issue these past few years by complaining of the "terrible burden" of Sundays and holy days at Christmas time, and by attempting to solve it by dumping the Sunday celebration. Some are pushing for weddings and funerals on Sundays or Saturday evenings as an adequate substitute for the Sunday liturgy.

Sabotage: Perhaps the worse blow to Sunday as the Lord's day comes however from the poor celebration that is all too evident in many churches. Little

preparation, no spirit of prayer or celebration, poor preaching and singing, inadequate understanding of participation, little time for silent prayer: these are the insidious things that undermine many Sunday celebrations, and gradually lead priests and people to seek distracting occasions to add tinsel and glitter to the day of the Lord.

Back to Christ: The time has come to blow the whistle. At every level — parish, community, diocesan, national and international — we should be reacting against pressures that distract us from the main thrust of Sunday.

Let's stop eroding Sunday, and start to give it its proper and primary place in our liturgical celebration.

SUNDAY ANY DAY ?

Some people are going about these days recommending that the Christian community should gather for its weekly celebration on any of the seven days. One day is just as good as another. If Wednesday or Friday is more convenient for the community, then so be it: that will be the Lord's day for us !

This position is completely contrary to the tradition and present teaching and practice of the Church.

Tradition

Sunday's story, in this issue, gives a brief outline of the history of the Lord's day for the Christian people. We cite one further example:

Around the year 150, St. Justin the martyr wrote his *First Apologia* (explanation) to the pagan Roman emperor, Antoninus Pius. After describing the action of the eucharistic celebration, he says:

On Sunday all who live in the towns or in the country assemble. The memorials of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits. When the reader has finished, the presiding officer speaks, and instructs and urges us to follow these shining examples.

Then we all stand and pray together. When we finish the prayer, bread, wine and water are brought forward. The presiding officer offers prayers of thanksgiving according to his strength, and then the people cry out "Amen !" (This is a Hebrew word meaning "May it be so !")

Then follows the distribution and sharing in what has been blessed with the eucharistic prayer. Deacons bring a share to those who are not present.

We hold this common celebration assembly on Sunday because it is the first day in the week, the day when God made the world, transforming darkness and matter, and when Jesus Christ our savior rose from the dead. He was crucified on Friday, and on the day after Saturday, the day of the Sun, he showed himself to the apostles and taught them these things.

(First Apologia, no. 67)

Present Teaching and Practice

Vatican Council: Sunday is the original feast day, the nucleus and foundation of the liturgical year. The Church celebrates the paschal mystery every Sunday, the Lord's day. It is a day of joy. (Liturgy constitution, nos. 102, 106; see also no. 42.)

General instruction of the Roman missal: When Mass is celebrated by the parish community, it has special meaning because it represents the universal Church gathered at this time and place. *This is particularly true of the community celebration on the Lord's day.* (Instruction, no. 75; see Bulletin 28.)

Canada's bishops: The Sunday celebration shows forth the universality of the Church, uniting people of all ages and classes. The Christian Sunday enriches the lives of Christians. The Sunday celebration forms a sense of community and is a sign of God's presence among men. All Christians should work together to deepen their understanding of the mystery of Christian eucharistic community. (April 1972 statement: full text in Bulletin 33, pages 69-70.)

* * *

Individuals and small groups will continue to assemble for Mass on weekdays, even for daily Mass. But nothing can replace the value of Mass offered by the people God assembles on the Lord's day.

TEACHING ABOUT SUNDAY

A parish bulletin can be one way of helping people to deepen their understanding of Sunday as the Lord's day. Brief, positive articles — rather than handwringing deplored comments — can build up the faith and ideals of a Christian community.

One small rural parish ran a series of carefully prepared articles on the Lord's day over a period of four weeks. These were entitled:

- *Sunday — a day for God*
- *Sunday — a day of worship*
- *Sunday — a day of praise*
- *I am present among you.*

Using some of the ideas contained in this issue of the National Bulletin on Liturgy, why don't you prepare some simple paragraphs on the meaning of Sunday for your parish bulletin? A similar approach could be used once or twice a year.

This is an area where members of the liturgy committee can be of help, making notes of the ideas that impress them most, and then putting these into short articles for your bulletin.

"THOSE" DAYS

In the secular world we have heart month, brotherhood week, mother's and father's days, national pickle week, national tavern month . . . In the Church, we now find days set aside for vocations, missions, lepers, peace, unity, migrants, communications.

Each of these is a noble cause. Like motherhood, one is not supposed to be against them. And we are not. But we are against cluttering up the Lord's day to the point where he can hardly be seen through all the goings on.

May we suggest you read *Eroding the Lord's day?* in this issue, or read it again. It says what we are talking about.

Read the statement of the National Council for Liturgy, on page 79 of this issue. It says what we mean:

- Let's stop cluttering up the Lord's day with "special" Sundays.
- Let's stop trying to push good causes onto Sunday.
- Let's start using liturgically legitimate means — votive Masses on ferial days, announcements in our parish bulletins, petitions in the prayer of the faithful, references in the homily.
- Let's start facing up to our obligations toward missions, diocesan, national and international responsibilities through our regular church support instead of having special collections and resultant "sermons" in place of a proper homily.
- Let's stop thinking we can have one "day" — always a Sunday, unfortunately — to push some cause, and think we've satisfied our obligation for another year. Realizing that "Respect for Life Sunday" was cluttering both Sunday and Easter season, Canada's bishops have made it a week (thereby taking the pressure away from Sunday); and have moved it outside the Easter season.
- Let's not celebrate a lie. If we are doing nothing about a particular part of God's world — lepers, migrants, or disaster victims, let's do something about them. Then, when this is a *normal* part of our parish life, then perhaps we can celebrate about it.
- Let's keep external solemnities in their place — which should not be the Lord's day. (See *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1974*, page 47.)

Good causes are part of our Christian life. But we should stop turning the Sunday liturgy into a soother to make up for our lack of activity. Let's avoid making it a means of publicizing events and projects, however praiseworthy.

* * *

We can hear it now: just before the Lord was ready to give his great discourse, he announced the times of events on Good Friday and Easter, and asked everyone to be present in the upper room for Easter Sunday evening for an important meeting . . .

* * *

Many ways of celebrating: We should not limit ourselves by thinking that special days are to be celebrated at Sunday Mass only. There are many ways of observing these days: many ideas are suggested in Bulletin 38, page 88. The

more these other ways are developed, the more meaning and impact these particular days will have on the minds and hearts of the community. Then if a specific day is mentioned in the liturgy, it will have some meaning for the assembly, and will truly be part of their celebration of prayer and praise.

SUNDAY OBSERVANCE

In 1973, the liturgical commission of the Diocese of London concentrated its efforts on promoting understanding of the meaning of Sunday. Using a folder (8½ x 14 inches, four-fold) in blue and red on goldenrod paper, the commission presented the Lord's day to the people of the diocese. Other dioceses in Canada and elsewhere have reproduced the leaflet for mass distribution.

The contents of the folder are reproduced here with permission:

SUNDAY

Sunday Observance

My dear Catholic people:

The celebration of Mass on Sunday, the day of the Lord, has been a cornerstone of Catholic religious practice from the beginning of the Church to the present day.

This leaflet is intended as an aid to a deeper understanding by everyone of the Sunday eucharist and its observance, as an invitation to those who sometimes absent themselves from the Lord's Supper to be more faithful, and as an invitation to those who have left the family of the Church to return.

With warmest regards, I am

*Devotedly yours in our Lord,
† G. Emmett Carter
Bishop of London*

Sunday Eucharist: Value and Obligation

Why does the Church make so much of the eucharist?

If the eucharist were merely man's creation, another good way to worship God in common, the Church would not make much of it at all. But the faith of the Church is that the eucharist is first of all the work of God, and that it holds a central place in God's plan for the salvation of man.

In Old Testament times, it was always God who took the lead. At Mount Sinai he called his people together to hear his word. The people then replied in faith, "All that the Lord has said, that we will do" (Ex. 24:3), and sealed this covenant or bond of love in blood.

In the Sunday eucharist also, it is God who takes the lead; it is God who calls man together into his special presence, to hear his word, to respond in faith, and to seal a personal relationship of love with him in the body and blood of Christ.

The eucharist is the God-given and privileged place of encounter between God and man. It is salvation event; for it is here, in this celebration, that God calls man today and offers him salvation in the sacrifice of Christ. In other words, we achieve union with God in a bond of love — in this we find our salvation.

Do Catholics still have an obligation to go to Mass on Sunday ?

Yes. Nothing has changed in this regard at all. You see, the obligation comes from the very nature of the Church. What is the Church ? A eucharistic community, a community whose very heart and centre is the celebration of the eucharist (as the Mass is commonly called today). This is what the Church does above all else. If we belong to the Church, it is first of all to celebrate the eucharist. It is as simple as that.

Of course, the question itself should not be necessary. There are many things in life that are real obligations, but which we rarely approach from this point of view. A mother has an obligation of love toward her children, but it is not for this reason that she loves them. It doesn't say much for our love of God if it is only out of obligation that we celebrate the sacrifice of Christ, the greatest act of God's love for mankind.

Is Church law regarding the Sunday obligation likely to change ?

No. As explained above, the obligation to take part in the Sunday eucharist stands by itself. But the written law does have important values, even if it only supports an existing serious obligation arising from the nature of the Church and God's plan for our salvation. The law keeps before our minds what is essential to the life of the Church (no eucharist, no Church); it gives us direction, and it shores up our weakness. For similar reasons, society makes laws for its members; otherwise life would be chaotic.

Why can't we fulfill this obligation during the week ?

The Sunday Mass has a different dimension. On Sunday the whole community is called together, and that's the point. On Sunday we are called together to become a holy people, a single family under God.

Why is this assembly on Sunday ? It's part of God's plan. It was on Sunday that Jesus rose from the dead. It is on Sunday that the community is called together to celebrate that same Jesus and to be one with him in his death and resurrection.

Is it a mortal sin to miss Mass on Sunday ?

It most certainly can be. But first, what do we mean by mortal sin ? The Christian life is centered upon a personal relationship — friendship with the living God. The “state of mortal sin” is the condition of a man who has set aside his friendship with God. Sin is a breakdown in love between man and God.

Now, what does the Sunday eucharist have to do with all this ? Everything; because the Sunday eucharist is God’s invitation to friendship — God’s invitation to sit at his table, to share in his life, to be his friend. If, then, our departure from the Sunday eucharist is taken at its face value, it means that we are setting our friendship with God aside, that we choose to keep him out of our lives. We are talking about the complete breakdown of our friendship with God which, as we say, is called mortal sin.

Often enough, of course, we don’t think clearly about what we are doing. We miss Mass without careful thought — through weakness, carelessness, laziness, habit, or for some flimsy excuse. In the cold light of day, however, the fact remains that we neglect God’s invitation to be his friend, we threaten our relationship with God. Despite our lack of thought, we play around with God’s love, and we may slip away from it altogether.

What is the degree of our guilt ? We must consider before God and the Church, and in our own hearts, the extent of our realization and neglect, and, in short, the total picture.

The eucharist is a love-feast, and the Lord himself understands that sometimes we simply can’t be there. Attendance at Mass is not some cruel law with punishment hanging over us for any infringement, however involuntary. Practising Catholics know the importance of Mass. They make it a point to be there. They know when they are excused.

Finally, there are those who just don’t believe anymore. They don’t care about the Mass, the sacraments, the Church. They have written these things off as of little or no importance. Unhappily, we can only say that they have lost the faith; they are, in fact, no longer Catholics. Regardless of the reasons, it must fill us with regret. We hope and pray for their return.

Must I confess missing Mass before I receive communion ?

When it is a question of mortal sin, yes. When it is not, but there is still some fault involved, it is best to bring it to confession. Of course, if you miss Mass through no fault of your own, it is not a matter for the sacrament of penance.

Am I a good Catholic if I go to Mass on Sunday ?

It’s a good start. “It is not those who say to me, *Lord, Lord*, who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven” (Mt. 7:21). The Mass is directly related to our day-to-day lives. Those who celebrate the eucharist have an obligation to live more and more like God, with concern for all men, to bring the Good News of God’s love to those around them, to work for God in the society of men. If we fail to see the direct connection

between liturgy and life, then we have missed the point completely. If we fail to take it seriously, then we cannot celebrate at all.

Problem Areas

I'm a Catholic, but I don't bother with Mass any more.

It won't work. Sooner or later, and the sooner the better, you will have to come to terms with yourself and face this situation. It is just not possible to remain a living Catholic and at the same time cut yourself off from the community and what the community is all about, the eucharist. You will have to change your attitude and ways — or cease to call yourself a Catholic.

I go to Mass at Christmas and Easter.

No one will be impressed. Some Catholics try to "hang on" in this way, "making their confession and communion," only to disappear into the woodwork once again. Eventually, you will have to face the root issue, that you cannot square your own practice with the basic demands of life within the Church.

Why should I go to Mass? I don't get anything out of it.

Good question. A better question is, "What do you bring to Mass?" Do you bring faith? In the liturgy of the word, do you hear God? In the liturgy of the eucharist, do you make the great prayer of thanksgiving your own? Do you offer your life with Christ to God? Do you seal your love of God in the partaking of the body and blood of the Lord? Do you participate or do you just sit around putting in time?

If you don't get anything out of it, if it doesn't turn you on, then perhaps what is missing is the one essential ingredient — faith. A dull Mass is inexcusable; but every Mass without faith is dull. We all need to pray for growth in faith.

Those who go to Mass are hypocrites: that's why I don't go.

A rather sweeping statement. There are some hypocrites, of course. They just go through the motions, choosing to forget that liturgy must affect their everyday lives. As for the others, their presence at the Sunday eucharist is a sign of their constant commitment to do better, even if they often fail in their efforts. In communion, at the table of the Lord, God claims us as his sons and daughters, we, for our part, must seek to live as his children, to live like God. If our lives do not give evidence of this commitment, then it is up to us to do something about it, to come back to where we should be. But let's not stand outside and thank God that we are better than those sinners inside. After all, we are a Church for sinners.

I don't believe in the institutional Church.

A cliché at best. The Church is the community of believers; at the very heart of the community is God's family meal — the eucharist. The symbolism is loud and clear. To sit at God's table, to partake of his food is to be claimed by God as his very own, son or daughter of God, sharer in his life and heir to the kingdom.

The Church is where the family is, in the eucharist. Your own family has to have a structure, a visibility; it is an *institution*; otherwise it would not exist at all. In the great family of the Church the institutional aspects can present problems. People must be our first concern.

Parish Liturgy

Our parish liturgy is very poor. We shop around.

You may be right. Such problems exist. But your solution may be wrong. Your first responsibility is to your own parish. Barring some compelling reason, you should put your efforts into your own parish liturgy. Above all, you should not flit about, always looking for something new or better. There are things to be improved in every celebration; but good liturgy is rooted in solid faith. So, if you find your parish liturgy poor, first ask yourself if you have courteously spoken about it to your parish priests and the parish council.

There is no sense of community in our parish church.

Then, it calls for work. You must be sure, though, that you have the right kind of community in mind. The Sunday eucharist is not for some exclusive group. Its final purpose is to gather everyone into a single community of love under God — to reach beyond differences, to overcome prejudices and hatreds that hold men apart, and to gather together as one people, the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, all men, regardless of race, language, social status or anything else. This is what the Sunday assembly is all about. This is what your Sunday community should be. For this kind of community: Amen !

Why can't I just pray to God alone ?

It is fine, but not quite enough. In fact, Jesus taught us to pray always. The truth is that we have to pray alone; otherwise our life with God will not be real at all, and even the eucharist will not mean much in our lives. Private prayer even has some advantages over prayer in common — no noise, no clutter, no distraction, alone with God.

But the eucharist adds a new dimension to private prayer. In the eucharist, God calls us out of personal isolation; he calls us together with the whole community of man to be his people, a single family under God. The eucharist is the Lord's idea.

MASS FOR THE PEOPLE

Sunday Mass is the chief parish celebration of the week. On the Lord's day, God gathers his beloved people to hear anew the proclamation of his wonderful deeds and to thank him for the love he has shown to us. Our praise is given in the name of all his creation.

The Church has long recognized the importance of Sunday Mass, emphasizing the dual responsibilities of the community to take part in the celebration and of the pastor to celebrate for his people. Each pastor and bishop is required by law to offer Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation for the people he serves (see *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1974 Liturgical Calendar*, page 33).

In some parishes, it is the practice to announce Masses (usually in the parish bulletin) for particular intentions. While this is not against the law, one is tempted to ask if it is the right direction for progress.

The following announcement is taken from the Sunday bulletin of a country parish:

Sunday Belongs to Everyone

Every pastor has the duty of praying for his people, including the obligation to celebrate one Mass on Sundays for all the people of the parish. In this parish, it is our custom to offer every Mass for you, residents and visitors.

Please do not ask to have a Mass announced or said for particular intentions on Saturday evening or Sunday. These days are reserved for all God's people: *Sunday belongs to everyone*.

We are always ready to celebrate such intentions any time during the week, and we suggest that you come to the Mass you request for your intention.

* * *

May we suggest this as a topic at your next liturgy committee and parish council meeting?

ST. PAUL'S ADVICE

Avoid anything in your everyday lives
that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ.

(*Phil. 1:27*)

WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

Canada has long had the custom of not celebrating funerals and weddings on the Lord's day. But in the past decade, afternoon or evening celebrations became more common. Then, in 1970, the first Mass of Sunday could be celebrated on Saturday. And then the problem arose: some people began to maintain that weddings and funerals on Saturday afternoon would suffice for the Sunday celebration for those who were present.

In Canada, the celebration of weddings is strongly discouraged on Sundays, holy days of obligation, or during Holy Week. On a solemnity, the wedding Mass is not permitted, but one of the wedding readings may be used in the Mass of the day, and the special blessings are given to the bride and groom.

In Canada, a funeral Mass may be celebrated any day except Sundays, holy days of obligation, and during the Easter triduum (from the Mass of the Lord's supper to Easter Sunday inclusively). On these days, the funeral may be celebrated without Mass, using only the rites for the reception of the body, the liturgy of the word, and the final commendation, as given in the ritual.

These are not always popular stands. Some Mediterranean countries have funerals and weddings on Sunday. But in our country, the sanctity of the Lord's day demands that we say *NO!*

IMPORTANT TOPIC

Respect for Sunday is one of the main concerns of the Bulletin. In the past two years, these articles have appeared. They are worth reviewing to deepen our understanding of Sunday as the original feast day of the Church

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RENEWING THE COVENANT

In the Old Testament, God spoke to his people and made a covenant with them. They were to serve him, and he would be their God, and they would be his people. At Sinai, for example, he said:

"If you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you will be my own people, for all the earth belongs to me. I will consider you as a kingdom of priests, a consecrated nation." (Exod. 19:5-6) These words are echoed in Eph. 1:3-14 and 1 Pet. 2:9-10.

Each Sunday, the Lord Jesus gathers us to celebrate the eucharist ("at his command" are the words of the third eucharistic prayer). In obedience and gratitude we recall the new covenant made in his blood to forgive the sins of all.

In the Lord's prayer, we state our readiness to do the Father's will. At the greeting of peace, we declare that we are living in harmony with God and man.

Each Sunday celebration, from the penitential rite at the beginning to the dismissal in peace and love, is an opportunity for God's people to renew the covenant, to honor him as God, to keep his commandments, and to trust in his faithful love.

Take another look at paragraph 10 of the constitution on the liturgy.

A DAY OF MEDITATION

A person who wants to offer an extra act of praise on the Lord's day may wish to spend a few moments of meditation on Ps. 119(118). By taking one or two sections of eight verses, he may pray and reflect on God's law, especially as it affects his life as a believer.

By *law* we can understand the commandment of love (Jn. 13:34-35), or the two great commandments (Mt. 22:34-40 and parallels) or the ideals of Jesus as outlined in the sermon on the mount (Mt. 5, 6, 7).

Any of these texts may also serve as a source of meditation on the Lord's day.

The more fully we are attuned to the will of God, the more pleasing will our prayer and worship become.

GENERAL NOTES IN THEIR PLACE

A member of a parish liturgy committee asks: "I am wondering how liturgically correct it is to use flowers which have been used at a funeral home or artificial flowers for altar decorations. I would appreciate having a response for our committee."

The editor offers this response, and shares it with the readers of the Bulletin for further discussions.

There are no official answers to your questions about flowers, but I will venture a few personal thoughts on the subject.

1. **Flowers from a funeral home:** Some people get very excited about not using these in church, and others are glad to have them. Often, however, little thought goes into the judgment. It depends really on local attitudes toward death. The pastoral notes at the beginning of *Catholic Funeral Rite* describe the Christian approach. It might be good to encourage your committee members to read those notes.

Some people see flowers used as a cover-up to avoid the stark reality of death. Others appreciate their beauty as God-given, as did our Lord; he spoke of the lilies which outshone Solomon's glory.

How correct is it to use flowers from a funeral home? Who knows? But if a parish community doesn't wish to use all (or any) of the flowers offered to them, how about sharing them with shut-ins? This could provide an occasion for a visit to the sick and aged members of the parish. Perhaps the social committee of the parish council could invite some parishioners to take seriously their responsibility to the sick (as outlined in the introduction of *Pastoral Care of the Sick and Rite of Anointing*, especially nos 32-34): it would be so much more beneficial to the kingdom and its coming.

2. **Artificial flowers:** My personal inclination is to think of these in three-letter words, like BAD and UGH! For igloos and missions north of the DEW Line, and for individuals who are allergic to fresh flowers, fine. But surely sham has no place in church! Plastic or paper flowers are an easy way out: dust them once a year, and tell the Lord: "Sorry, we're too busy to bother the rest of the time." Plastic wreaths for November 11, Advent and Christmas come into the same category, I would think. Even popular music rejects paper roses.

Artificial flowers speak to me of fake, superficial sentimentality, of supermarket religion. All-day lollipops would be as good. I would rather see no flowers at all instead of plastic things. Even the local barber shop can have something better than plastic flowers.

On the other hand, dried flowers, handcrafted imitations are a different matter, and represent a much more credible use. But again, the tendency to leave them for a long time means that people stop seeing them, and after a while, these decorations may as well not be there.

3. Use of flower (real ones) as “altar decorations” and in church: The only rules on these are good liturgical sense and good sense in general. My personal inclination is toward moderation in the use of flowers, living plants rather than cut flowers, and a careful, planned use of flowers.

Flowers are a living celebration, a joyous gift, an added touch of beauty in creation. When used in church, they should add this note of joy and beauty to enhance the celebration. It is for this reason that they were never used in Lent, even on Sundays, since they would distract the people of God from their serious lenten task of conversion.

Perhaps we could state a number of general ideas for using flowers as decorations.

They should be used to enhance and beautify, not to distract or disturb.

* *Main altar:* The celebrant should be able to walk around the altar when incensing it; no flowers should block his route or make it tricky for priest or ministers to move about freely during the celebration.

Among other reasons, the altar is facing the people so that the congregation can see clearly. To have a forest or hedge of flora between priest and people is not desirable. A floral “centerpiece” is out of place: for us the bread of life and cup of salvation are the focus of attention.

* *Lectern:* A spray or pot of flowers could be placed near the lectern, to show our respect for God’s word. But perhaps one should be asking other questions here: is the lectern dignified enough? Do we use candles during the gospel? This is the way the Church normally solemnizes this proclamation.

* *Place of reservation:* Rather than a jungle, one or two plants may be used to decorate this part of the church. More important however is whether the parish has really begun to observe the Church’s guidelines for location of the tabernacle.

* *Baptistry:* Should flowers be placed near the baptistry on occasions which celebrate this sacrament? These would include the Easter vigil, after the water is blessed, Pentecost, the occasion of solemn baptism or reception of persons into full communion with the Church, confirmation; perhaps the feasts of the Lord’s baptism and St. John the Baptist. Care should be taken that the flowers do not distract from the main altar or make movement in the baptistry perilous.

Do they need to be exotic and imported? In many months of our year, God gives us flowers. At these times parishioners should be encouraged to bring some — in moderation, of course — from their gardens; wild flowers are beautiful too, and should not be neglected. In winter, parish members who have a green thumb could be invited to lend their plants for a week. And as we do in fasting, we give away what we save as alms. (See Bulletin 42, pages 25-26, 44-45.)

Funerals: In the past few years one hears the question being asked more frequently, “Should we send flowers, or is it better to give the money to a good cause?” Some thoughts for discussion were presented in Bulletin 40, page 210.

In the church, it would seem that the general ideas for Mass given above should be observed. It would not be out of order to place a plant near the Easter candle.

Weddings: In parishes which are trying to promote growth in the spirit of liturgy, the use of flowers is one of the questions discussed early. My personal suggestion has long been to have a few plants or sprays, and keep the rest for the reception hall and bride's home. Sometimes the friends of the wedding party will help place them after the rehearsal.

Moderation: In all things, especially flowers. Each plant is such a beautiful work of creation ! To bank hundreds of flowers is to lose the effect of the individual plant's beauty.

A few, well-placed flowers can enhance a liturgical celebration. This is the way they should be used.

RESOURCES FOR LITURGY

A twenty-page catalogue of resources for liturgy has just been issued by Publications Service of the Canadian Catholic Conference. It is being sent to all subscribers to the National Bulletin on Liturgy, and to each English-language and bilingual parish in Canada. We recommend that your liturgy committee should have an opportunity to study it.

The various publications and records produced by the CCC are described, with some ideas on their background and their usefulness in parish and community liturgy.

* * *

"It never fails" department: The day after the catalogue was printed, word was received that the choir edition of *Catholic Book of Worship* would be reprinted, but higher paper costs would mean the price is now \$4.50. It is still a good bargain.

But good news too ! Bulletin 34, *Celebration and Growth*, has just been reprinted, and is available once more, at \$1.50 a copy (\$1.75 outside Canada, because of higher postage rates).

GREETINGS

When reading some of the letters of the early fathers of the Church, one is struck by the forms of greeting they use. Similar to those found in the New Testament letters, these may be adapted and used in bible services. Perhaps some day we will feel more ready to use them — or others of similar nature — in our own letters and in personal meetings among fellow-believers.

I send your Church my greeting as the apostles did,
in all the fullness of God,
and I wish you all happiness.

*St. Ignatius of Antioch
Letter to the believers of Tralles*

Greetings to you, my sons and daughters,
peace in the name of the Lord who loves us.

Epistle of Barnabas

Greeting in the name of Jesus Christ, Son of the Father.
I wish you every happiness in Jesus Christ our God,
to you who are at one with his commandments,
completely filled with God's grace
and cleansed from every impurity and sin.

*St. Ignatius of Antioch
Letter to the Romans*

May mercy and peace be yours
from almighty God and Jesus Christ our savior.

*St. Polycarp
Letter to the Philipians*

Every good wish to you
for perfect joy in Jesus Christ.

*St. Ignatius of Antioch
Letter to the Ephesians*

All grace and peace to you
from almighty God
through Jesus Christ.

*St. Clement of Rome
First letter to the Corinthians*

All happiness to you
in God the Father and in Jesus Christ.

*St. Ignatius of Antioch
Letter to the Magnesians*

Mercy, peace and love to you
from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Martyrdom of St. Polycarp

Greetings in the blood of Christ,
where we find unfailing and eternal joy.

*St. Ignatius of Antioch
Letter to the Philadelphians*

All happiness to you
in purity of spirit
and in the word of God.

*St. Ignatius of Antioch
Letter to the Church of Smyrna*

AN OBSERVATION

One of the hopes of the human race is the fact that young men and women can become angry at abuses and injustices, and concerned about changes that need to be made in institutions and systems. Their ideals are high and unblunted.

One of the stark realities, however, occurs fifteen or twenty years later, when the same young people are in a position to do something about the abuses, problems and attitudes they decried earlier.

- Some elect to stay with the *status quo*: don't rock the boat, be satisfied the way things are; don't expect anything higher of human nature; go along with the crowd. The fire has gone out, and the ashes are well wetted down to prevent ignition of any sort. And they stay that way for the rest of their life.
- Some will be as fiery as ever, still demanding change at once, instant reformation, upheavals in institutions, aboutfaces by everybody. They will continue to be frustrated by the fact that the world goes on without making the changes they want.
- There are some who continue to work in faith, steadily, undiscouraged, within the system, not looking for immediate results, knowing that Christ and his Spirit are still active among us.

Pope John was one of this third group. Where are you ?

NEW RITUAL OF RECONCILIATION

Eight years of research by pastoral experts from all parts of the world led up to the publication of the revised ritual for the sacrament of penance. Issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship on February 7, the 120-page book provides new pastoral directives and rituals richer in meaning for celebrating this sacrament.

Following an introduction on the Catholic teaching on penance, the book presents three forms of the sacrament, with rituals for reconciling individuals; for several persons with individual confession and absolution; and for groups with general confession and absolution. General absolution is permitted only in restricted cases, and carries the obligation of individual confession at a later date.

Many scripture texts have been gathered together to help priests and penitents celebrate this sacrament better. Eight penance celebrations are included as models for local services.

More Expressive Rituals

The reconciliation of individual penitents is a richer celebration than in current practice. As described in the new text, the rite will consist of:

- * A welcome by the priest, the sign of the cross; and a brief invitation to trust in God;
- * An optional reading of a scripture passage; the priest may simply repeat a sentence or two from the bible, proclaiming God's mercy and inviting mankind to turn back to him;
- * The confession of sins, as in the present rite; suitable pastoral advice may be offered by the confessor;
- * A work of penance is suggested by the priest, so that the penitent may make satisfaction for sins and lead a better life;
- * A sign of repentance, such as a prayer of sorrow or contrition by the penitent; present Canadian practice encourages this before the sacramental celebration;
- * Absolution by the priest, using a slightly longer form than at present;
- * A brief prayer of praise for God's mercy.

The revised celebration has a character of liberation and salvation by God through his Church.

Canadian Developments

In Canada, no immediate changes are foreseen. The National Liturgical Office is already working with the International Committee on English in the Liturgy, helping to prepare an acceptable English text. When this has been approved by the Canadian Bishops and by the Holy See, the new rites will be introduced in this country, after suitable adaptations and thorough pastoral preparation.

While it should be at least a year before these changes take effect in local churches, parishes can begin preparing by better penance celebrations in Lent and Advent, and by continuing to preach the gospel message of repentance and conversion.

Rite of anointing: Because of the urgency of helping priests to understand and use the full richness and new approaches of *Pastoral Care of the Sick and Rite of Anointing*, the second part of this issue presents a study of the ritual and its implications in pastoral ministry.

CARE OF THE SICK

PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK

In the autumn of 1973, the Canadian edition of Pastoral Care of the Sick and Rite of Anointing appeared. Nearly 3,000 copies of this book are now being used across Canada. It has been well received.

There are many problems still to be answered, and some erroneous ideas removed. This article, like a guided tour, goes into the main areas of concern. Priests and laity are invited to study the text of the new rites, and suggest useful changes for our country.

All references by page or number are to the Canadian edition; the numbers are the same as the Roman and ICEL editions of the rite.

The gospel narratives tell us of Jesus' concern for the sick; of his sympathy and compassion for them, and of the many healing miracles he worked, especially when he saw faith in those who asked his help. He sent his apostles to anoint the sick with oil, and to lay hands upon them. (Mk. 6:13) In his vivid description of judgment day, he reminds us that it is our concern for the sick, in whom he is present, that will be our proof of love; our failure to care will be our condemnation. (Mt. 25:31-46)

When we read the Acts of the Apostles and other New Testament letters, we find the same concern is shown by the early Christians: Peter and Paul cure the lame beggar in the temple (Acts 3:1-10); James (5:14-15) encourages the sick to ask for the Church's aid:

*Is there anyone sick among you ?
Let him call for the priests of the Church,
and let them pray over him
and anoint him in the name of the Lord.
This prayer, made in faith, will save the sick man.
The Lord will restore his health,
and if he has committed any sins, they will be forgiven.*

History tells us that anointing of the sick has undergone a number of changes: sometimes it was for the sick, and at times it was reserved for the dying. Various parts of the body were anointed, and a number of formulas have been used. The goal of the sacrament — to heal physically or spiritually — has been seen in different lights down through the centuries. This is seen clearly when the old form (page 9) is compared with the new one (no. 76, page 57). (See *Rite: apostolic constitution*, pages 9-10.)

The Vatican Council began the latest stage in this sacrament's history by changing its name from "extreme unction" to anointing of the sick, by pointing out that it is for the sick as well as for the dying, and by calling for changes in the number of anointings and the prayers used in the celebration. (*Constitution on the liturgy*, nos. 73-75; *Rite: decree*, page 7; *apostolic constitution*, page 10)

The new rite was issued in Latin in January, 1973, and the International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) performed a tremendous service to the English-speaking world by producing its *green book* by July. This is a translation for approval or amendment by English-language bishops of the world.

Because the new rite was to take effect at the beginning of 1974, and to introduce the new attitudes and pastoral practice that the reformed rite requires, Canada's bishops issued the ritual in its interim translation for use in our country. The National Liturgical Office and Publications Service of the Canadian Catholic Conference issued the new rite in September 1973.

New Rites

The revised ritual presents a positive development in the theology of this sacrament. It is seen clearly as a sacrament of faith (see Liturgy constitution, nos. 9, 11, 14, 19, 59, 61). The paschal mystery — the death and rising of Christ and our sharing in it — is presented as the source of the power of the sacraments (*Rite*: nos. 2, 3, 7; apostolic constitution, page 10), and the readings and prayers reinforce this truth.

The Christian attitude toward sickness and pain (introduction, nos. 1-4) leads to the reason for the sacraments of the sick (nos. 5-7, 26), and to the responsibility of all members of the Church toward those who are sick (nos. 32-35).

Form: The form is in two parts, one while anointing the forehead, and the second while anointing the hands (see introduction, no. 23 — which also discusses special cases; and no. 76).

Anointing: The oil is normally blessed by the bishop at the Mass of chrism, but in special cases, it may be blessed by the priest who celebrates the sacrament (introduction, no. 21), using the prayer in no. 75. Otherwise, he says a prayer of thanksgiving over the blessed oil (no. 75a). We should note the similarity between this practice and the blessing of baptismal water in each celebration outside the Easter season (with a prayer of thanksgiving in paschal time over the Easter water).

The anointing should be real, not just a dab. The former practice of wiping away the oil is now happily dropped: finally we are beginning to realize that the temple of the Spirit is holier than blessed oil.

Who is anointed? The subject of anointing is covered in nos. 8-15 of the introduction, and this section requires careful study. It discusses people who are dangerously ill due to sickness or old age (no. 8); sick persons before surgery (no. 10); old people in weak condition (no. 11); sick children (no. 12); persons who are unconscious or who have lost the use of reason (no. 14); persons who are doubtfully dead (no. 15). This section also covers scruples (no. 8), repeated anointings (no. 9), catechesis of the faithful (no. 13 — this is discussed in greater detail below), and dead persons (no. 15). *The only way we will get to understand the changes is to study this section carefully.*

As will be described later, the book is clearly divided into two: pastoral care for the sick, and pastoral care for the dying.

Symbolism: If the new rites are to achieve their pastoral goals, we have to be more serious and sincere about symbolism. We have to let symbols *symbolize* once more.

* *Laying on of hands:* The priest lays his hands on the sick person's head in silence. This imposition should be done as seriously as the bishop does when ordaining a deacon or priest. To enable the rite to regain its scriptural importance, the Canadian ritual has added some lines of explanation which will help the priest to explain the rite before he carries it out in silence. *Serious study* is needed by all priests if we are to go beyond these first simple facts about the rite.

* *Pauses for silence* are called for by the ritual in a number of places: in the penitential rite (see no. 52), after communion (no. 57), while imposing hands (no. 73). Following the general rule, a pause for silent prayer should follow *Let us pray*, and may follow the readings and homily. This pause for reflection and prayer is important, and should not be neglected in normal circumstances.

* *Profession of faith:* In the renewed liturgy since the Vatican Council, we are called on to profess our baptismal faith in a solemn way on a number of occasions: at the Easter vigil, and on Easter Sunday for those not at the vigil service; in the celebration of baptism; and now in the rites for the sick. Holy water is used as a reminder of baptismal faith and our sharing in the paschal mystery (no. 69) before anointing. When viaticum is celebrated, the holy water (no. 102) and a solemn baptismal profession of faith (no. 108) are part of the rite. (See introduction, no. 28.)

Like every sacrament, the anointing of the sick presupposes faith, and by words and actions nourishes, strengthens and expresses faith (Liturgy, no. 59).

* *Real anointing:* A more generous anointing, signifying the outpouring of the Spirit is desirable in the rite of anointing. The rite speaks simply of anointing the person on the forehead and hands. Details about crosses, which part of the forehead, which side of the hands, are not even considered in the rite or its introduction.

Old laws abolished: To prevent scruples (as in no. 8, for example), especially for persons who remember obscure laws or cases, Pope Paul has abrogated canon law or other laws which go against the ritual (apostolic constitution, page 12).

New attitudes, fresh approaches, new wineskins are needed for the new wine ! Let's not stick back in less happy realms of the theology of the pastoral care of the sick.

A Closer Look at the Book

Interim text: The Canadian ritual is obviously an interim book. It was issued in this form for several reasons:

* *Sacramental form:* In the summer of 1973, Pope Paul reserved to himself the right to approve the translation of the form. The wisdom of this decision to publish an interim ritual is already evident: the approval was not received until

mid-January 1974. This is the reason the Latin form is printed in place, since the English form was not definitive when the book was issued.

* *Pastoral urgency*: The new rites had to go into effect on January 1, 1974 (apostolic constitution, page 12). Waiting for the final version of the form would have meant having to continue the old rites and deprive people of the pastoral richness of the new rites for a longer period of time.

By publishing the interim version of the texts, the CCC has provided the opportunity to Canadians to become familiar with the ritual, and to explore the prayers and scripture it contains. This also means *you* can suggest further improvements and adaptations which may be incorporated into the permanent edition (see introduction, nos. 38-39). A number of good suggestions have already been received by the National Liturgical Office.

* *ICEL regulations*: The International Committee on English in the Liturgy does not permit interim versions to be issued as permanent books.

Rather than deprive the Canadian Church of the pastoral advantages of the enriched rites, it was felt that an interim edition would be of substantial help to all.

The universal English form of this sacrament, now approved by the Holy Father, is :

Through this holy anointing
may the Lord in his love and mercy help you
with the grace of the holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

May the Lord who frees you from sin
save you and raise you up.

R. Amen.

Format: Though the ritual is obviously an interim book, it has been carefully prepared in a way that will lead to the permanent form. Two colors are used to distinguish between text and rubrics; boldface or lightface indicate the parts for celebrant or others. Ribbons have been provided to enable the celebrant to take advantage of the wealth of scriptural readings, prayers and other options in the rites. The size of the book is similar to the *Collectio Rituum* (Bruce, 1954), the first official English vernacular ritual in Canada, a book noted for its dual ability of being used with dignity either in a church celebration or in a smaller gathering in a bedroom. The ritual is designed to fit easily in a suitcoat pocket.

Preliminary material: The list of contents (pages 5-6) give a brief picture of what this ritual contains, but only a careful study of each reading, prayer and rubric will unfold the great wealth it holds. *No one else can do this for you.* A "quick index" of rites is given on the inside back cover for convenience.

* *Decree and apostolic constitution* (pages 7-13) and *introduction* (pages 15-26, nos. 1-41): These documents give a brief but thorough outline of the theological and ritual changes, considered from a warm, pastoral point of view. In the view of this editor, the introduction to this rite and the introductory rubrics at the beginning of each chapter are among the finest produced by the Holy See, for they are filled with pastoral zeal, liturgical understanding and practical wisdom. But these need careful study, and no pastor of souls can neglect them or wait for someone else to study them for him.

Care of the Sick

Ministry: The introduction looks at the offices and ministries for the sick in nos. 32-37. While the last three paragraphs deal mainly with the priest's work, nos. 32-34 speak of the responsibility of every Christian. When studied in the light of the opening paragraphs (nos. 1-4) on the meaning of sickness in the mystery of salvation, we begin to see the new directions in which the Church is leading us. These need careful study and application. The Council's document on the Church today (no. 18, mystery of death; no. 39, a new heaven and a new earth) should also be reviewed.

Visiting the sick: In four brief sections, nos. 42-45, the ritual speaks of the responsibility of all Christians (no. 42) to visit and comfort the sick. The priest too has a special obligation to offer them encouragement by his words of faith (nos. 43-45). The sick person is encouraged to pray, and his family and friends are asked to pray with them (no. 44), drawing their prayer first of all from the scriptures. While the ritual provides many examples of readings, psalms and prayers, priests in particular have work to do in helping people to get over their reticence about praying together. A form of prayer is suggested in no. 45, but the priest has to choose and prepare his own prayers and readings from the wealth of resources in the ritual and elsewhere. If other sources are used, paragraph 13 of the liturgy constitution should not be forgotten.

Parish liturgy committees should be invited to discuss the many questions that can arise from a concerned study of the recommendations in nos. 42-45.

Communion of the sick is discussed briefly in nos. 46-48, but these three paragraphs raise some interesting questions which need to be considered seriously:

- *Frequency of communion:* While daily communion of the sick is normal in many Catholic hospitals, people confined to home rarely get this opportunity. The rite calls for giving the sick every opportunity to receive communion *frequently and even daily, if possible, especially during the Easter season* (no. 46). Before dismissing this with the label of "impossible" we should ask ourselves about auxiliary ministers, about communion at any time of the day (no. 46), with the new relaxed fasting rules. (See Bulletin 40, page 227; Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy - 1974, page 31.) This is an area of discussion with the liturgy committee and with parish organizations.

- *Pyx:* A pyx or another small closed container may be used when the minister brings the eucharist to the sick. (no. 47)

◦ *Communion under the form of wine alone:* When a sick person is unable to receive the host, he may receive the blood of Christ under the form of wine. (no. 46) Practical suggestions are given in no. 95, so that this will be done with reverence.

◦ *Preparations at home:* The priest is reminded that he is the one to instruct people about what to prepare. The requirements are simple: table, linen cloth, candles, holy water and sprinkler. (no. 48) This rubric would be a good suggestion for your parish bulletin.

A responsible sharing in the care of the sick by *auxiliary ministers* is the only way in which the average priest and parish can bring communion frequently to the sick of the community. Past issues of the Bulletin have covered this subject adequately. (Bulletin 31 is entirely on these ministers; Bulletin 40, page 228, discusses recent changes in this legislation so that their work can be done more easily.)

Can your community help your sick members to be more united to your Sunday celebration by sending auxiliary ministers to bring them communion each Sunday? What about other special feasts? What about the Easter season? (no. 46) What about *every day* for those who wish to receive the sacrament that often?

And now the question to ask is this: What are you doing in your parish community? Another question for the liturgy committee and priest to face together!

Ordinary rite of communion of the sick: The rite (nos. 49-58) consists of these actions: the minister greets the people while carrying the eucharist; when they reach the place where the table is prepared, he places the pyx on the table, and all make an act of adoration. He sprinkles all with holy water to remind them of their sharing in Christ's paschal mystery through baptism. After the penitential rite (or sacramental confession), a passage from scripture is read, and the priest may explain it briefly. They say the Our Father, and the sick person and the others present receive communion as usual. The vessel is purified. Following silent prayer, he closes with a prayer and a blessing with the pyx or with one of the formulas.

The rite provides many options, and other suitable prayers and readings may be chosen from other parts of the ritual. If the minister is not a priest, the only changes would be no sacramental confession. Since the blessing is invocative, anyone may use it; whether or not be should use the sign of the cross is a point for further discussion.

Short rite: When bringing communion to many people in different rooms of a hospital or other institution, the short rite is used. (See nos. 59-63). But the priest or minister is encouraged to add other parts from the ordinary rite (no. 59). Now that the sick may receive communion at any hour, hospital and community liturgy committees should discuss their current practices thoroughly. Is it necessary to have one person bring communion to everyone? Can communion be distributed at different times in different parts of the building?

Anointing of the sick: Here we are speaking of the sick, not the dying. In describing the preparations for the celebration, the rubric instructs the priest *to plan the celebration properly* by choosing the readings and prayers according

to the sick person's condition (no. 64). Again, it is good to review the types of sick people who may be anointed (introduction, nos. 8-15) — the sick person need not be confined to bed (no. 66). The sacrament of penance is celebrated before the rite rather than during it. Normally the sick person and those who look after him receive communion during the rite.

The rite (nos. 68-79) begins with the greeting and the reminder of baptism (nos. 68-69). Then the celebrant gives a brief introduction (*in these or similar words*) or says a prayer (no. 70). The penitential rite (no. 71) is followed by a scripture text (any suitable one in the ritual), and the priest may explain this reading (no. 72). After the litany, the priest lays his hands in silence on the sick person's head (nos. 73-74). He says a prayer of thanksgiving over the oil, or blesses it at this point (nos. 75-75a, 21). Then the priest anoints him (no. 76) and offers a prayer for the sick person, according to his condition (no. 77). Following the Lord's prayer, which may be sung, he gives communion to the sick person and to the others present, and says a concluding prayer (no. 78). He gives the blessing with the pyx or with one of the formulas.

Some variations in the rite are suggested in the introduction (no. 41). Many options are provided in the ritual.

Further rubrics provide for anointing during Mass (nos. 80-82), and celebration of anointing in a large congregation, during or outside Mass (nos. 83-92). The parish or community liturgy committee should consider the pastoral possibilities in hospitals, homes for the aged and religious communities.

Thanks: An important reminder about ways of celebrating one's gratitude upon recovery is given in the introduction (no. 40c).

Care of the Dying

The new ritual introduces a number of changes into the rites we have been using up to the present. Priests and liturgy committees will have to discuss these and see what changes in pastoral practice are demanded: home Masses (no. 94), communion under both forms (no. 95), proper preparation (no. 93), and training of auxiliary ministers (no. 29), are some of the subjects for discussion.

Viaticum is to be given to those *in danger of death*, when the Christian is in his passage from this life to the Father. It is most desirable that the sick person should receive viaticum during Mass when possible, and under the forms of bread and wine. A renewal of baptismal faith is important. If no priest is available, others may bring viaticum to the dying person. Further details should be read in the introduction, nos. 26-29, and in the rite, nos. 93-99.

Although the ritual says that viaticum during Mass is to be considered the normal form, it handles this by rubrics only, and prints the full rite for viaticum outside Mass (nos. 100-114).

The rite is simple and clear: confession first, if desired; greeting, first reminder of baptism (holy water), instruction, penitential rite, concluding with the plenary indulgence for the dying (nos. 100-106). Then a scripture reading, a brief explanation, baptismal profession of faith and brief litany (nos. 107-109).

After the Our Father, the priest gives communion (preferably under both forms) as usual, and adds the brief prayer that Christ will protect him on the way to eternal life. After cleansing the vessel, a period of silent reflection may be observed (nos. 108-113). The rite concludes with a prayer and blessing. Then all present may give the sick person the sign of peace.

From the rite, it is obvious that it should be celebrated when the person is fully conscious and able to participate.

Continuous rite: Despite the fact that this rite may be celebrated more often, the ritual considers it *a special case*. Careful study of the introduction, nos. 30-31, is needed to bring out the important points: if there is not time for all three sacraments of penance, anointing and viaticum, then penance and viaticum come first, and anointing after. If too sick to receive viaticum, he should be anointed (nos. 30, 117a). Confirmation is discussed in nos. 31, 117, 124, 136, 137, and those who may be confirmed are listed in no. 31. Preferably confirmation should not be celebrated in the continuous rite — see no. 117.

The rite begins with a greeting, baptismal reminder (holy water); he helps the person to become disposed, or gives a brief instruction (nos. 118-119). The penitential rite is celebrated if others are present or if the sick person does not wish to confess at this time, and the plenary indulgence is granted. (nos. 120-122) Following the baptismal profession of faith and a short litany, he explains the laying on of hands and carries out this rite in silence (nos. 123-125). A prayer of thanksgiving over the oil (or the blessing of the oil) leads to the anointing, the Lord's prayer and viaticum, followed by the moments of silent prayer (nos. 126-132). The priest concludes by a prayer and blessing and then all may give the sign of peace (no. 133).

Anointing without viaticum (no. 30) is celebrated as above, with the changes noted in the text (nos. 117a-133 and 134).

Conditional anointing (see nos. 15 and 23) is described in no. 135.

Rite for commendation of the dying: The purpose of these prayers is outlined in nos. 138-142, and wise pastoral advice is given. The rite provides short texts and aspirations (no. 143) and many readings and psalms (nos. 144, 151a-k). Further suggestions are given in no. 145.

When death is near, the Church provides the prayers in nos. 146-151. Immediately after death, no. 151 is said, or the priest may choose another text from the funeral ritual (see *Catholic Funeral Rite*, nos. 64, 181-183).

Treasury of Readings and Prayers

In *Pastoral Care of the Sick and Rite of Anointing*, the Church has given us a treasury of readings and prayers suitable for those who are sick or dying.

Bible texts: The main group of scripture texts is found in nos. 152-229. More difficult texts are preceded by brief introductions to help the one who reads to understand the word more fully and to explain it better. These explanations were prepared by the National Liturgical Office. Readings which are particularly apt for the dying are marked *for the dying*, and are listed in no. 152a. Other

readings are found in the various rites (nos. 53, 72, 107, 143-144, 151a-k, 247-258). Prayerful study of these texts in advance will help the priest to choose the most suitable ones for each sacramental celebration and visit to the sick.

Other options provided in this final part of the ritual include greetings (nos. 230-231), variations of the penitential rite (nos. 232-233), prayers after communion (nos. 234-236), blessings (nos. 237-238), and alternative prayers for use in the anointing rite (nos. 239-246). ICEL has placed these options in the body of the text, making their use much easier. But again, they should be familiar to the celebrant so that he may be able to choose the options which suit each particular case and pastoral situation. Priests are free to prepare other versions of the third penitential rite, but it is recommended that they do this in advance and include the text in their book. The National Liturgical Office would appreciate a copy of such adaptations.

Mass for viaticum: Lectionary texts for this Mass are provided in nos. 247-258. The collects may be chosen from the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*) or from the votive Mass of the eucharist.

Celebration

Some of the principles involved in the renewal of the liturgy are:

- *local and universal Church*
- *fuller use of scripture*
- *spiritual good of the faithful*
- *division of roles*
- *full participation*

These are explained in the pastoral notes of *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy* — 1974, pages 7-9 and 10-11. As the Council notes, "Pastors of souls must realize that, when the liturgy is celebrated, more is required than the mere observance of the laws governing valid and licit celebration. It is their duty also to ensure that the faithful take part knowingly, actively, and fruitfully." (Liturgy, no. 11)

A sense of celebration (see Bulletin 34, pages 113-114) is needed: celebrating with meaning, adapting where necessary according to pastoral needs (ritual, nos. 40-41), feeling at home with the rite and its spiritual import. The celebration — and indeed the whole area of pastoral care for the sick — should be filled with the paschal spirit, with singing and Christian joy. The ritual lays down no color for vestments: one wonders if perhaps white is not the best choice now.

Preparation and consultation are necessary: we have to do our homework by careful study of the rites, and we need to prepare the situation with the sick person and his family. (See ritual, nos. 37 and 64, for example.) Some priests have obtained an extra copy of the ritual for the sick person to use for prayer and spiritual readings.

Celebrated in this way, the sacraments are truly sacraments of faith, reflecting the faith of the Church, of the celebrant, of the sick person and of the community. Such celebrations build up and strengthen faith. This is the prayer made in faith of which James speaks (James 5:15).

The ministry to the sick is one of the important tasks of the priest. If he has insufficient time for it, then other less important tasks must be handled by others. Auxiliary ministers can share in this ministry to the sick members of the community. The generosity of the Christian community is waiting to be tapped!

Catechesis

A solid program (not a one-shot effort) of positive catechesis is needed (introduction, no. 13) if the people of God are to understand the excellent developments in the sacrament of anointing of the sick. Priests and deacons, auxiliary ministers and liturgy committees need to study the ritual's introduction, rubrics and texts carefully. The American bishops' liturgy committee has provided a valuable study guide, as described in the note at the end of this article.

Frequent references can be made in homilies to the proper attitude and approach to care of the sick, anointing, viaticum; to the responsibility of all to be concerned about the sick and aged, and to visit them as well as pray for them (see Mt. 25:31-46); to the meaning of the prayer for the sick and dying in the general intercessions. The parish bulletin can speak about these ideas often, using ideas from the introduction. (This is a much more profitable use of space than jokes or lists of raffle winners.) Priests can explain the new approach to the sacrament to the parish council, liturgy committee and other groups in the parish.

The ritual is not a secret book. Auxiliary ministers should have a personal copy. Persons who are chronically ill will appreciate a copy for its treasury of prayers and readings. Those who care for the sick may wish to use it as a source of inspiration and strength. Doctors, nurses, and their local associations may appreciate an explanation of the changes — in attitude as well as ritual — that the new rite entails.

In the school and religious education programs, teachers and catechists will be able to benefit from a copy of the ritual and the American study guide. Copies should also be in the parish and school libraries.

Vocabulary: Terms such as *extreme unction*, *last rites*, *sick call* are not used in the new ritual. It would be well for us to approach the care of the sick in a renewed, paschal spirit, and to use the terms the ritual provides.

Our catechesis will depend greatly on the attitude the parish members have toward the sick and the aged. They should be considered as full members of the parish, and every step should be taken to help them participate as fully as possible in the sacramental life of the community. The weekly prayer of the faithful should be sincere, and for the sick it should be a source of comfort. Sunday communion should be normal, with the help of auxiliary ministers. (See Bulletin 33, pages 70-73; no. 34, page 165; no. 35, pages 203, 207, 222-223, 223, 225; no. 39, pages 185-186.)

Canadian Adaptations

The ritual (no. 38) encourages each country's bishops to adapt the rites to meet local needs (see also Liturgy constitution, no. 39). Some of the areas in which it could be adapted to Canadian needs and customs are:

- *local customs (not contrary to new rites)*
- *singing and music could be added at appropriate points*
- *introduction, the third penitential rite, and instructions may be adapted*
- *the order of some of the ceremonies may be changed*
- *other bible readings and prayers may be added*
- *pastoral notes may be expanded and cover other areas of concern*
- *ideas for catechesis may be included.*

Suggestions for such adaptations, as well as pointing out any errors or omissions, should be sent as soon as possible to the National Liturgical Office, at the address on the inside front cover. A number of good ideas have already been received, but more are welcome in order to make the ritual perfect for our needs.

SPELLING BEE

Now that the new rite of anointing of the sick is coming into common use, one can only hope that everyone will finally learn how to spell *anointing* properly — with one N at a time.

BOOK REVIEWS

ERSATZ LITURGY

The word *ersatz* has an interesting history. In German, it means **genuine**. During World War II, however, the Nazi government used it to describe wartime substitutes for coffee and other foods. The worse the substitute became, the more they emphasized that it was *ersatz*. As a result, the word entered English meaning **a poor, shoddy, cheap substitute**.

The word *ersatz* is perfectly suited for the type of liturgy proposed by three books published in 1973 (two by Paulist Press, one by Newman) and distributed in Canada by Griffin House. We are disappointed at the way these firms seem to have abandoned their excellent standards and sense of responsibility for the people of God. We review these books here only in order to **recommend that you do not buy them**.

Written by sincere people who do not understand what the Church's liturgy is or can be, these three books become guides on the path to destructive tendencies against liturgy and unity. They seem more apt for use in underground congregations than in those in unity with their bishop and the universal Church.

In *Parish Liturgies* and *More Parish Liturgies*, the group has decided that the second reading is generally irrelevant; they choose their own calendar, take liberties with the order of Mass, and ignore the Church's discipline on the use of alien eucharistic prayers. They attempt to be creative where they should not. If they had spent as much energy and time on understanding the Sunday liturgy as they did tinkering with it and writing about their efforts, they could have developed good Sunday celebrations in complete harmony with the mind of the Church.

The third book, on weddings, would be better described as *destructive*, rather than creative. Though the author gives the wrong year for the constitution on the liturgy, she speaks the truth when she states on page 5: "There is danger in a book like this." Despite good intentions and suitable precautionary warnings, she recommends total anarchy: mix everything up, ignore all our traditions, muck around with the order of Mass, edit the readings, use secular readings, sing kindergarten songs, do your own thing — and to heck with the public prayer of the Church of God. She has made it harder for people to arrange their wedding liturgy properly by indicating that anything can be changed, and by encouraging a sentimental and brainless jigsaw puzzle in place of an orderly celebration of joyful worship. She forgets that liturgy is the celebration of the universal Church and of Christ and of the entire believing community, that it is a profession of the Church's faith, and not just the private playground of the wedding party.

We do not commend the publishers or distributors of these books; indeed, we fear they may be on the money bandwagon with titles like these. In the past they have issued great books, and we pray that they will return to building up the body of Christ, instead of encouraging illegitimate experiments which are destructive of prayer, liturgy, unity and common sense.

Please save your \$19.50 by refusing to buy these books. Give it to the poor, preferably, but whatever you do, don't waste it on poor, useless, misleading books of ersatz liturgy.

Rev. Patrick Byrne

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PARISH LITURGIES, experiments and resources in Sunday worship, by Rev. Thomas Boyer. Paulist, 1973, paper. 6 by 9 inches, xvi, 308 pages. \$6.50.

MORE PARISH LITURGIES, by Rev. Thomas Boyer. Paulist, 1973, paper. 6 by 9 inches, xvi, 308 pages. \$6.50.

THE CREATIVE WEDDING HANDBOOK, by Wendy Somerville Wall. Newman, 1973, hard bound, illustrations. 6½ by 9¼ inches, 163 pages. \$6.50.

STUDY GUIDES

Two excellent study guides, one on the anointing of the sick, the other on the instruction on facilitating communion in particular circumstances (*Immensae caritatis*), have been prepared by the American bishops' liturgy committee.

Anointing: This guide contains a pastoral commentary on the pastoral ministry of the sick and on the sacrament of anointing. The rite is studied, and good background catechesis is given from the historical, theological and pastoral viewpoints. Suggestions concerning celebration and music (which should be looked at with *Catholic Book of Worship* in hand), as well as a selected bibliography, complete the book.

This book is recommended as a valuable pastoral aid for priests, liturgy committees, auxiliary ministers and others concerned with good celebration of the sacrament of anointing.

Communion: This is a study guide on the instruction which covers auxiliary ministers, communion twice a day, eucharistic fast for the sick and aged, and communion in the hand. A summary of the documents appears both in *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1974*, pages 31-33, and in Bulletin 40, pages 227-228. Because pastoral situations vary so widely between Canada and the U.S.A. (they do not have communion in the hand, for example), this book is not so necessary here. But it is worth studying for those who wish to go more deeply into these matters.

Copies may be ordered from Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, U.S.A., at \$1.50 (U.S.) postpaid. (Substantial discounts are available for orders of 100 or more.)

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Study text 1: *Holy Communion*, Washington, NCCB, 1973, 8½ by 11 inches, 46 pages.

Study text 2: *Anointing and Pastoral Care of the Sick*, Washington, NCCB, 1973, 41 pages.

SERIOUS ABOUT LITURGY

"This book is for congregations serious about good liturgy." Seriousness is the author's target. This little book is intended for congregations and individuals who accept *seriously* that the average congregation is the structure in which most Christians celebrate their only experience of religious ritual. This book is for those who have faced *seriously* that we have too long been sloppy celebrators, perhaps because we were influenced by the notion that what was done mattered more than how it was done. This book is intended for those who have confronted these two facts, and who are ready for a crucial service to our growing Church community.

"The primary focus is the average congregation." This work is aimed at the average congregation — as long as there is present among them, and represented among the liturgy planners, a certain holy restlessness to find better ways to articulate the community faith by word and action, for the sake of both the local community and the watching world. At times, the author seems to be aiming at a restructuring and a rethinking that might be a fact in only a handful of North American parishes. This could cause frustration, leading the reader to put the book aside as idealistic. But it shouldn't be put aside. The way into it is this searching for a better ritual home for our faith. The idealistic elements help us to go beyond the *why* and *how* to the *why not*. Huck is out to stimulate the worshipping community. One of his tenets is that "the planning of liturgy, which is the community obeying the summons to *come*, might best be in the hands of those who have obeyed the command to *go*."

"We have not taken the trouble to find out what makes liturgies tick." Huck takes ritual itself as his starting point and studies the content of Christian liturgical expression. Various graphs and charts help us examine the general format of our ritual in areas of high, middle and low involvement, the flow between loud and soft moments, and the movements and gestures of ministers and congregation. In all these lists and charts, he wants us to get some ideas of the qualities and potential of our ritual activity. Toward this same end, there is a substantial bibliography both in the acknowledgements at the beginning of the work and at appropriate points in the text. Charts, reading material, suggested ideas: all these lead us to practical thinking about creating effective ritual.

This thinking and creating is meant for the entire community, especially through the ministry of those men and women who feel called to serve the growth of their faith community in this way. This little book will serve them well in their role as sign makers who are serious about helping their fellow believers to move beyond merely hanging banners, singing a chance arrangement of hymns and droning through some spoken words. This book will help bring them to realize why their work is so important in vitalizing and integrating a worshipping community:

"God, now as always, is finding and surprising us through each other and especially through our efforts to discover the strongest possible signs for our faith."

Liturgy Needs Community Needs Liturgy, the possibilities for parish liturgy, by Gabe Huck. Paulist, 1973 (in Canada: Griffin House, 455 King St. West, Toronto 2B, Ontario). 4½ by 7 inches, illustrations, 88 pages. \$1.35.

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