LEARNING ABOUT LITURGY
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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LEARNING ABOUT LITURGY

There are many scholarly works abounding in libraries and bookstores. There are theses and reviews, pamphlets and newsletters. But is there one book that puts it all together to explain in simple terms what the liturgy is in today's parish?

That is the goal of this issue of the Bulletin:

• to provide a simple, practical introduction to the liturgy, written from the pastoral perspective; it is intended for beginners and for those who have been involved in the liturgical apostolate over a period of time.

• to help people in various liturgical ministries understand their work in relationship to the whole work of liturgy;

• to promote better liturgy by encouraging all to work together for God's glory and man's salvation, with a clearer vision of what worship is.
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LITURGY

What is it?
Is it a celebration?
a feeling or a mood?
a ceremonial occasion?

Does it consist of guidelines?
books of worship?
vestments or processions?
music and singing?

Is it people?
Is it prayer?
Is it our action,
or is it the Lord's?

YES!
Liturgy involves each of these, and much more.

It is the life of prayer
and the prayer of life
of the body of Christ, the pilgrim people of God:
prayer offered in faith and love
as a living sacrifice,
bringing unending glory
to the Father
through the Son
in the Spirit.

AMEN!
INTRODUCTION

ROOM TO GROW

Let's work together to deepen our understanding of the liturgy, to grow in our appreciation of its meaning, power and place in the life of the Church. We can begin to do this if we are ready to move at least one step forward from where we are, to practise what we are learning, and to share it with others.

Areas of concern: In this issue of the Bulletin, we want to help every parish and community in our country to improve its liturgy. We are working to help you improve the Sunday celebration in your church. We hope to show you the importance of many aspects of your community's Sunday worship: music and singing, reading and preaching, serving, general intercessions, preparation and participation.

The liturgy also involves the sacraments as an important part of the public worship of the parish community. Baptism and marriage are the two sacraments, after the eucharist, which most parishes wish to celebrate with greater dignity. The celebration of the complete funeral liturgy is also an important concern for parish liturgy committees. This Bulletin seeks to be of help in these areas.

One aspect of parish life that is frequently neglected is prayer. Concern for the prayer life of the parish family is a serious responsibility for priests, liturgy committees and for every member of the parish. The essential relationship between personal and public prayer is emphasized in this Bulletin.

This issue is presented as serious assistance to your priests, liturgy committee and everyone who knows that liturgy is good, and who wants to do something practical about it.

As an introduction to liturgy, this Bulletin is intended first of all for someone who wants to know what and why and how. It will also serve as a way of checking the progress of the liturgical spirit in your community of believers, pointing out areas that need some attention.

Put it into practice: It is easy to read or think or talk about improving our parish liturgy, but we cannot stop there: we have to put it into effect in our community. And that means we have to work with others to understand and practise better liturgy.

There is no simple formula for liturgical renewal. It demands prayer, for we are speaking of public prayer. It requires striving for holiness and sincerity, for worship is offered to the God who sees our hearts and rejects lip service. Better liturgy means hard work, study, efforts to practise what we believe.

The work is demanding, but the reward is incalculable: we are offering greater praise to the Father in the name of all creation, and we are helping his people to grow in faith and love.

This Bulletin does not have simple answers for those who want liturgical growth. But if we try to put what we read into practice, we know that we are
obeying the call of the Vatican Council, and carrying on its work: under the Spirit's guidance, the Council set out to renew the Church by renewing the liturgy.

The Council's first major document, the constitution on the liturgy, reminds us of the goal of Vatican II:

- to help Catholics to grow daily and strongly in Christian living;
- to adapt changeable practices to the needs of our times;
- to foster whatever will lead to greater unity among Christians;
- to improve aspects of the Church which call all men to belong.

In order to reach these goals, the Council began its work by renewing the liturgy. (See Constitution on the liturgy, no. 1.)

The above words are important, for they remind us of the responsibility of your parish or community to renew itself and save the world through the liturgical apostolate.

WHAT IS LITURGY?

You go to one parish church for the Sunday celebration, you enjoy it, and you come home refreshed. Then you go to another, find it has no life, and come home wondering about the value of liturgy.

A good celebration expresses and nourishes the faith of those who participate, while a poor celebration weakens their faith, and makes one wonder how deep it might be.

Some parish communities have an energetic, active, eager liturgy committee; others “just can’t seem to find anyone who has time” to belong.

In some worshipping communities, they believe in the liturgy, and put it into practice. Some are still struggling to find the way, and others have just given up.

What Is Liturgy?

Liturgy is public worship which honors God, teaches his people, and leads them to deeper faith and greater holiness. It is offered by the whole Christ, head and members, by Jesus and his brothers and sisters. It is glory given to the Father through the Son in the Spirit.

The Vatican Council reminds us that liturgy is an exercise of Jesus' office as high priest. He makes us holy through signs we can grasp by our senses. In the liturgy, the entire body of Christ, head and members, offers full public worship to the Father in the Spirit. (See Liturgy constitution, no. 7.)
Another way of describing the liturgy is this: it is the public worship of God offered through and with Christ by his people. Offered primarily in the Mass, sacraments and the liturgy of the hours, this worship must be based on sincerity and prayer. It has meaning only when offered by people who are trying to serve God faithfully, and who prepare for worship by their prayer, and continue to live it by their daily lives of Christian love and concern.

Liturgy is not to be confused with its externals. Though our liturgy uses books and vestments and buildings as instruments, these are but means toward the goal of offering the best possible worship to God. Worship is judged by the intentions in the hearts of the worshippers (the Lord is not taken in by lip service and whitened sepulchers), more than by the ceremonies themselves. Ceremonies are of little value if they do not help educate people in the faith and help them to reach Christian maturity. (See Ministry and life of priests, no. 6.)

Why Worship?

It seems to be the people under forty who are asking “Why should we worship God?” And strange to say, these are the generations brought up on idol worship. From Shirley Temple to Elvis Presley, Charlie MacCarthy and Dean Martin, from track stars to astronauts, young and not so young have expressed natural respect for those they admire and like.

A much higher form of respect is worship. We respect God because he is — as today’s youth so succinctly put it — the greatest. God is the Lord, maker of the wonderful universe which we are beginning to explore a little more; we respect him for his might, his power, his wisdom, his greatness.

But Christian worship goes much further. We know God in a much more intimate way, as our Father. His own Son became one of us, and told us about our Father in heaven. Jesus is the only way to the Father, and he has shown us this way and invited us to follow him in every way, including the giving of worship to God.

The Christian revelation includes the wonderful passage in the letter to the Ephesians (1:3-14), words that should be read over often in a prayerful manner. Christians are called to be people of worship and prayer, men and women of holiness, persons whose lives are spotless and who give praise to God by their lives as well as by their words.

It is because we are God’s chosen people that we heed God’s invitation to come together on the Lord’s day to hear his word and to give him our praise and thanks. The word eucharist means thanks. Every Mass is an act of thanksgiving for God’s lavish gifts to his beloved people.

Mankind has a special role in worship. Chosen by God to rule over all his creation (Gen. 1:26-28; Ps. 8:6), the human race is called to voice the mute praise of all creatures and to be, as it were, the high priest of creation (see eucharistic prayers III, IV). This worship takes its full meaning because it is offered through our high priest, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were made.
**Presence of Christ:** For too long in our history, the presence of the Lord Jesus seemed to be limited to his sacramental presence in the eucharist. For some, the seventh paragraph of the constitution on the liturgy was a totally new revelation; for others, it was official confirmation and acceptance of scriptural truths:

Jesus is with us: in order to carry out his work of saving the world and giving glory to the Father, Christ is always present in his Church, especially when it is celebrating liturgy. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, both in the person of his minister, and especially under the eucharistic species. He is present by his power in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes, it is really Christ who is baptizing. He is present in his word: it is he who speaks when the scriptures are read in church. He is present when his people pray and sing, for he has promised: *Where two or three are gathered together for my sake, there am I in the midst of them.* (Mt. 18:20) (See Liturgy, no. 7.)

**Paschal Mystery**

The work which Jesus Christ came to do was to redeem mankind and give perfect glory to God. He achieved his work mainly by the paschal mystery, by his death, resurrection and ascension. (See Liturgy, no. 5.)

As the liturgy so often sings,

*his death destroyed our death,*

*his rising restored our life.*

In the liturgy, the pilgrim Church is thanking God for saving us by the death and resurrection of our savior. Life comes to us through death. *Death-resurrection* are often linked as one word to grope toward a human expression of the mystery.

The Easter mystery — the celebration of the life-giving death-and-rising of the Lord Jesus — is therefore the central theme of the Church's eucharist, the motif of our celebration throughout the year. It is particularly emphasized on Sunday, the Lord's day, which is a little Easter. (See Liturgy, nos. 102, 106.)

**Local and Universal Church**

Every liturgical celebration, especially the Mass, is the celebration of the mystery of Christ by the local Church — a particular group of believers with their own needs and concerns — in communion with the universal Church in this world and in eternity.

When Mass is celebrated by any community, it is an important spiritual event. But when the parish community, representing the universal Church at this time and in this place, celebrates its worship, God's praise is made actual and real *by your action.* This is especially true of a parish Mass on the Lord's day.

The universal Church's worship is made real and actual by the celebration of the local gathering of believers. When those who are called to be people of praise heed the Lord's call and come together on his day, the Lord is praised; the living sacrifice is made real in another cell of the Lord's body, and God's glory is celebrated from east to west, from the rising to the setting of the sun.

*For we are called to be people of praise,* men and women of prayer, believers who express their faith by their lives and by their worship.
Areas of Liturgy

Liturgy is public, prayerful worship offered by the Church — head and members — to God. It is offered to the Father in the Mass, the sacraments and the liturgy of the hours (breviary or divine office).

Mass: In the Mass, God's people are assembled to hear his word in faith, and to respond in love and creation. After hearing his wonderful deeds proclaimed, they join Christ and his entire Church in praising and thanking the Father for his gifts. By offering themselves with Christ, they are more ready to witness to him in their daily lives. In communion, he gives them his body and blood to be their food for the journey of life this week.

Sacraments: By the sacraments, Christ is making us holy, he builds up the people of God, and gives worship to the Father. They are sacraments of faith — through them Jesus nourishes and strengthens our faith. The more we prepare in faith to receive them worthily, the more he is able to foster our Christian spirit and lead us in his ways. (Liturgy, no. 59; see also Sacraments are worship, in Bulletin 44, pages 146-148.)

Liturgy of the hours: As eternal high priest, Jesus joins the human community to his praise of the Father. He continues this work of praise through his Church, which praises God and prays for the salvation of all men. Day and night the people of the Lord praise God and pray for his people (liturgy, nos. 83-84; see also Christ prays to the Father, Bulletin 44, pages 148-149.)

By extension, the whole area of the prayer life of the community is of importance in liturgy, since prayer and liturgy go together. Bulletin 44 was devoted entirely to this subject, and every issue of the National Bulletin on Liturgy treats of the prayer of God's beloved people.

As your community contributes to better liturgy, God is given greater praise and worship by his Church, and he continues to share his abundant blessings with all who love him.

* * *

What is liturgy? It is many things. Liturgy is the prayer of Christ and his brothers and sisters, the public worship of God's pilgrim people. It is the honor and glory, the praise and thanks which is offered to the Father by those he has called to be holy. It is the worship given by the Christian community as it strives to follow the Lord Jesus in love.

Centered in the eucharistic sacrifice, liturgy is the prayer that gives vitality and strength to our Christian living; it brings us courage and hope when we are weak and wavering. Liturgy is a beacon that can beckon us to move ahead and show us the way to follow in the footsteps of our master.
LITURGY'S IMPACT

Liturgy is not celebrated in a vacuum, but at a specific time in a specific community. Each celebration is making the universal Church and its praise of God present in a particular part of his family. Every liturgy is helping the Lord's pilgrim people to move forward along the road to God, or is hindering them by placing greater obstacles in their way.

Impact on faith: Every celebration is an act of faith. A good celebration, imbued with faith, strengthens the faith of all who take part. A poor celebration leads to a weakening of faith.

Good liturgy builds up faith. Each individual who is ready for spiritual growth will be desirous of receiving the graces that God offers to those who are properly disposed. Every Christian community which worships God in spirit and truth will be open to the spiritual gifts of God, and will be willing to use them for his greater glory and for the salvation of the world.

Teaching value: When well celebrated, the liturgy teaches God's people of his love and his invitation to us to respond by our love. By its solemnity, it shows forth God's glory and greatness; by its reverence and dignity, it teaches us the respect we owe to our God. Liturgy is worship first of all, but it also is an important way of instructing believers. In the liturgy, God is speaking to his people and Jesus continues to proclaim the Good News of our salvation. When they hear this word, God's people respond in song and silence, in prayer and life. (See Liturgy, no. 33.)

Celebrant and ministers have a responsibility toward their people to make adequate preparation for the celebration, by their lives, their study and their prayer.

Pastoral emphasis: The primary goal of our Sunday worship is to give praise to God. But it also has a strong pastoral emphasis: it helps to deepen our faith and holiness. A worthy celebration by people ready to take part in it gives glory to God and leads his people to greater sanctity. (See Liturgy, nos. 11, 14, 19.) The liturgy still remains the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit. (Liturg, no. 14)

It depends on us: The impact of the liturgy depends on us:
- our openness, dispositions, good will
- our preparation
- how well we celebrate it
- timeliness: is it hitting home with the gospel for today's needs?
- relationship to life and its problems.

The work of our redemption is carried on through the liturgy, especially the Mass. The liturgy is the best way we have of expressing the mystery of Christ, the nature of the Church and the gift of our salvation; through the liturgy we also proclaim these mysteries to others. Day by day, we are built up by the liturgy into the living temple, God's spiritual dwelling (see Eph. 2:21-22); this work goes on until we have reached the full stature willed by Christ (see Eph. 4:13).
By helping believers to preach Christ by their deeds and words, the liturgy points to the Church as a sign for the nations, calling God's scattered children back to the one shepherd and his one fold. (See Liturgy, no. 2.)

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

Understanding renewal: A much better understanding of the liturgical renewal is obtained when one understands the principles on which this renewal is based. These are outlined in detail in Liturgy, nos. 5-46, and elsewhere throughout the Vatican Council documents.

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

1) Local and universal Church: Every Mass is the celebration of the mystery of Christ by the local church, a particular group of believers, with their own needs and concerns, in communion with the universal Church. Full and careful use of all the options will enable the community to make each liturgical celebration its own without losing sight of the unity of the Church throughout the world.

2) Primacy of Sunday and the liturgical season: From the beginning, Sunday has been the original and primary feast day of the Church, the day on which God's people celebrate the death and rising of the Lord Jesus. Sunday is the “foundation and nucleus” of the liturgical year; other celebrations must not take precedence over this day. (See Liturgy, no. 106; see also no. 102.) Having seen what has happened in the past few years, however, we admit to being disturbed by the way other celebrations of “overriding importance” have been allowed to interfere with the Sunday Mass.

The temporal cycle (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, ordinary time), which recalls the mysteries of our salvation, takes precedence over the feasts of the saints. (See Liturgy, nos. 108, 103-104, 107.)

3) Fuller use of scripture: The Church now provides richer fare from God's word by a fuller pastoral selection of readings (see Liturgy, no. 51).

Scripture is of great importance in the celebration of the liturgy. The word of God is the source of the lessons that are read, and then explained in the homily; from scripture come the psalms we sing; the bible inspires the prayers and liturgical songs, and gives meaning to the actions and signs we use. To achieve true renewal of the liturgy, we must promote “that warm and living love for scripture” that has been traditional in the Church. (See Liturgy, no. 24.)

4) Spiritual good of the faithful: When planning the celebration, the priest considers the spiritual good of the assembly rather than his own desires. Texts are to be chosen in consultation with the ministers and others who take part in the celebration, including the members of the congregation. The parish or community liturgy committee can be of valuable assistance.
Careful planning will help the community to take part in the eucharist. When the deacon, readers, cantors, commentator and choir know ahead of time which options are chosen, and which texts they are responsible for, they are able to see that nothing upsets the celebration (see GI, nos. 313, 316).

5) *Division of roles*: Everyone is to carry out his role in a liturgical celebration by doing all that he should do, and by doing only his own task: he should not usurp others' roles. This applies both to ministers and to members of the congregation. (Liturgy, no. 28)

6) *Celebrations of the saints*: The Church honors Mary, the mother of God, with special love, admiring her as the one whom God has favored highly in his redeeming work. She is also the sinless model of what the Church hopes to become (see Liturgy, no. 103).

7) *Participation*: The promotion of active participation of the congregation as both their right and duty is one of the first points made in the constitution on the liturgy (nos. 14-19). The responsibilities of pastors of souls is clearly outlined in order that priests and people may be influenced and guided by the spirit of the liturgy.

People should be encouraged to participate actively by acclamations, responses, psalms and antiphons, hymns, actions, gestures, and by standing or kneeling at certain times. Pausing in silence to reflect and pray is also an important way of participation. (See Liturgy, no. 30.)

Most issues of the National Bulletin on Liturgy contain suggestions for improving community participation in the liturgy and deepening understanding of its meaning.

A checklist for Sunday liturgy is contained in Bulletin 35, pages 207-217, and may be used by the worship committee in analyzing and developing participation in your community celebrations. Bulletin 35 is a complete and valuable issue on the parish liturgy committee.

8) *Spirit of celebration*: Liturgy needs to be filled with a sense of celebration and joy, for we are God's beloved children, his people whom he has saved by the death and rising of the Lord Jesus. This sense of joyous celebration should inspire our preparations, our participation, our prayer, our entire way of life, for Jesus is with us and works in us; he has given us the gifts of his Spirit to enable us to love and serve one another and build up his body, the Church. (See *What lies behind a good celebration?* in Bulletin 34, pages 113-114.)
PARISH LIFE AND THE LITURGY

Liturgy lives or dies in the parish. All the work of renewal, reformed rites, new books and new pastoral aids — can be totally frustrated by a parish that does not care about God’s worship, or that refuses to develop the liturgical spirit. Liturgy comes to life, however, in a parish community where priests and people work together to praise God and to bring his holiness to mankind.

THIS PARISH COMMUNITY

Your parish is a particular part of the Church. It is God’s people gathered by him in this place, called to praise him by word, work and witness. It could be described as this community gathered around this altar, under the direction of the bishop. This parish makes the universal Church present and active in this particular community, and continues the Lord’s work here.

Your parish is the visible presence of the Church of God in this part of the world. It is a community of faith and love, the gathering of God’s beloved sons and daughters, the assembly of his worshippers in this place. A parish is people — God’s people; it is not to be viewed as a collection of buildings, institutions and schedules.

Your parish community is not remote in its life of faith and prayer. While praying and praising and worshipping God, it is also a community of love and concern, led by the Spirit to be actively concerned for man and his needs.

The eucharist is the center and source of life of every Christian community, be it family, parish or diocese. It is the heartbeat, the source of life of the parish community.

Purpose: Why does your parish exist? What is it supposed to do? What are its priorities? These are questions which parishioners and parish councils seldom ask themselves. A parish is a worshipping community, gathered around this altar: unless spiritual goals and work take first place, the energies of priest and people are going to be dissipated, frittered away on a miscellaneous variety of entertainment, activities and distractions. The primary work of the Lord — to form and strengthen his people for his work of praising God and saving his people — should also be the primary work of the parish. (Further thoughts on the role of the parish are discussed in Bulletin 35, pages 177-182.)

Liturgy: As shown in the following article, Important liturgical events in your parish include the Sunday eucharist and the celebration of the sacraments. The prayer life of the parish community, both at home and in church, has a deep influence on the public worship and the witness of the Christian community. These are the first concern of the parish liturgy committee.

The liturgy, well prepared and celebrated, with good participation by all, is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.

What is it in your parish?
IMPORTANT LITURGICAL EVENTS

The most important liturgical events in the life of your parish are the Sunday eucharist and the celebration of the sacraments; their fervor depends greatly on the prayer life of your community. These three broad areas are the ones on which the liturgy committee must concentrate its efforts.

Sunday Eucharist

The celebration of the eucharist on Sunday is the most important action of the week in each Christian community.

Sunday is the Lord's day, the first and most important day of the week for believers. This is the day when God's people celebrate the saving death-resurrection of the Lord Jesus. It is a day of praise, joy and rest for the followers of Christ, a day of rededication to his service. (Bulletin 43 discusses Sunday as the Lord's day.)

Sunday eucharist: In the Sunday celebration, God gathers his beloved children, and forms us into his people by his word. He leads us to praise him in Christ, to thank him with Christ, and nourishes us with the bread of life. When the parish community assembles for the eucharist on Sunday, the Lord is making his universal Church present and active in this civic community.

Responsibility for excellent liturgical celebrations on the Lord's day rests directly on the priests of the community and on the parish liturgy committee. Until a liturgy committee grasps the urgent need for good Sunday liturgy, the building of faith in the community will be haphazard and sporadic, and the spiritual life of the parish will be hesitant.

Guidance for parish liturgy committees is offered in Bulletin 35: the entire issue is devoted to their work. Many ideas for the Lord's day Mass are contained in Checklist for Sunday liturgy (Bulletin 35, pages 207-213).

Sacraments of Faith

As signs, they also instruct us. They are sacraments of faith: they presuppose faith and conversion, (Liturgy, no. 9) and also nourish, strengthen and express our faith. They give us grace, and their celebration disposes the people of God to receive his grace fruitfully, to offer him due worship, and to practise charity in our daily lives.

For this reason, the Council adds, it is most important for believers to understand the sacramental signs with ease, and to celebrate these sacraments frequently and eagerly, for they are intended to nourish our Christian life. (See Liturgy constitution, no. 59.)

Prayer: The meaning of these important liturgical events will depend on the faith and prayer life of the priests and people in the parish, and on the efforts they make to give God the best worship they can offer.
WORKING FOR GOOD LITURGY

Good liturgy, which gives honor to God and makes his people holy, is the goal and responsibility of the whole Church. In the parish community of faith, it is the special task of the priest, in cooperation with the liturgy committee and others, for he is the teacher of faith, the leader of prayer, and the shepherd of God's people.

What is good liturgy? Because it is the action of Christ our high priest, every liturgy is good. But its human elements, the faith and attitudes of the participants — celebrant, ministers, congregation — can always become stronger, and preparation and participation can always be improved. In working for good liturgy, it is these elements we seek to develop.

The Church wants all believers to participate actively and with full understanding in each liturgical celebration because the liturgy is the primary and indispensible source of the true Christian spirit. (St. Pius X, November 22, 1903; see also Vatican II, Liturgy, no. 14.)

Making it come true: To make this happen in a particular community, instruction and guidance are needed; otherwise, people's faith will be stultified by lack-luster non-celebrations.

Pastors have to give their people liturgical instruction, and promote active participation in both internal and external ways, giving them the example of full personal involvement in the liturgy. (Liturgy, no. 19) People need help to come with right dispositions, and priests need to go beyond rubrical exactitude. (Liturgy, no. 11) A spirit of celebration, as described in Bulletin 34, pages 113-114, must be developed in the community by sincere, zealous, patient efforts.

Take it or leave it? No! The liturgical apostolate is an essential part of the Christian life, not a luxury to be taken or left, since participation in the liturgy is the indispensable source — one we cannot do without — of the true spirit of Christ. By faith, prayer, study and work, the dynamic power of the liturgy can touch the spiritual life of each believing community, so that its worship may influence and guide its daily life.

Preparation: To bring this about requires work by all concerned with liturgical celebration:

• Team: Preparing the parish liturgy is a team effort, involving priests, ministers, readers and musicians. Adequate time, cooperation, a respect for liturgy and for the roles of everyone (see Liturgy, no. 28) is necessary for good planning. (See Bulletin 43, pages 82-87, Planning for celebration.)

• Creativity: Celebrants and liturgy committees are encouraged to be more creative in preparing celebrations to meet the specific needs of their community within the body of the universal Church. This may be done by:
  — Choosing scripture readings, options, music;
  — adapting or composing texts of introductions, greetings and instructions;
  — taking advantage of all four eucharistic prayers and the options within each one;
  — using the prayer of the faithful and the homily to proclaim God's continuing action among his people.
Creativity does not mean tampering with the eucharistic prayer texts or making up new ones. It is always exercised within the guidelines given by the Church.

Today the Church is encouraging liturgists to explore the fullness of the liturgy and to use it more effectively in the service of the Lord and his people. Further ideas are given in Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1974, pages 12-13.

Zeal for liturgy is a sign of God’s providence and of the activity of the Spirit in today’s Church, declares the Vatican Council. (Liturgy, no. 43) Efforts are to continue in parishes, communities and dioceses to make pastoral liturgy still more vigorous, so that God may be given greater honor, and his people become more holy in his service.

CHRISTIAN MATURITY

Christian maturity comes about by:

• a gradual growth in the faith,
• adoration of God as Father, especially through participation in the liturgy,
• growing more perfect in Christ, and
• contributing to the building up of his mystical body.

— A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy, no. 24

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(This booklet may now be obtained from the Publications Service of the CCC, at the address on the inside front cover.)
PRAYER

Bulletin 44 was devoted to the topic of prayer: the relationship between public and personal prayer, and the ways in which a parish community can help individuals and families to grow in their prayer life. Some of these points are discussed again to emphasize the important place of prayer in the life of the parish family.

CALLED TO BE PEOPLE OF PRAYER

From age to age you gather a people to yourself.
so that from east to west
a perfect offering may be made
in the glory of your name.

God our Father, in his love for us, chose us in Christ to be his people. Before he made the world, he chose us to be holy, and to live faultless lives in his presence. He brought us out of Satan's kingdom of darkness, and into God's kingdom of light.

We praise God for his glorious grace,
for the gifts he has given us in his beloved Son!

We are his chosen race, his royal priests, his own people, a holy nation. In his love, he decided to make us his sons and daughters through Jesus Christ.

We praise God for his glorious grace,
for the gifts he has given us in his beloved Son!

Our Father set us free by the death and rising of Christ, forgiving us our sins. He has told us about his great plan, which he wants to complete through his Son: he will bring all things together, with Christ as head.

We praise God for his glorious grace,
for the gifts he has given us in his beloved Son!

God chose us to be his beloved people in union with Christ, in order to accomplish his plan. He spoke the good news of salvation to us, and we believed.

We praise God for his glorious grace,
for the gifts he has given us in his beloved Son!

He has shown that we are his by giving us the Holy Spirit, as he promised us, his people. His Spirit brings love and freedom to all who belong to God.

We praise God for his glorious grace,
for the gifts he has given us in his beloved Son!

At one time we were not God's people, but now we are his people. Once we did not know his mercy, but now we have received his mercy.

We praise God for his glorious grace,
for the gifts he has given us in his beloved Son!

(Based on Eph. 1:3-14; Rom. 5:5; 1 Pet. 2:9-10.)
TEACHER OF PRAYER

The Vatican Council describes the work of the priest in the Church as a teacher of the word, a leader in worship, and as a father and shepherd of the people of God. These three roles are carried on simultaneously, and all involve the priest as a teacher of prayer.

Teacher of prayer: Priests work with the bishops to bring the word of God to his people. The priest’s primary duty is to proclaim the gospel to all. God’s word forms and builds up his people, and brings about their unity.

This is done among unbelievers and among the faithful, as priests share the gospel truth by their lives, by preaching, by working to solve contemporary problems in the light of Christ. Their task is to teach the word of God and in his name to invite all to turn back to him (conversion) and become holy in his sight.

The priest preaches God’s word to draw unbelievers to faith, weak believers to stronger faith, believers to share in the offering of Christ by their prayers and their recognition of Christ’s paschal mystery. (See Ministry and life of priests, no. 4.)

Leader of worship: Acting as ministers of Christ and co-workers of the bishop, priests are dedicated to the work of sanctification.

Through each of the sacraments, the priest leads men to God in Christ, healing and reconciling, restoring unity to the body of Christ. At the center of this work is the eucharist, which contains Christ, the living bread. The eucharist is the source of the priest’s work as a teacher, and the goal of his preaching. By helping people to take part in the Mass, offering themselves along with Christ, he leads them to prayerful participation in the liturgy, and to a deeper spirit of prayer at all times.

The priest himself continues the prayer of praise through the liturgy of the hours, through devotion to the eucharist reserved in the church, and by leading the entire community to greater praise. (Ministry and life of priests, no. 5)

Father and shepherd: In unity with Christ and the bishop, priests call God’s people together as brothers and sisters in the one family, and lead them through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, to the Father. In this way they build up the Church, the body of Christ.

As educators in the faith, priests help individuals to know the faith, to recognize and follow their vocation, to practise active charity and to live in the freedom of God’s children.

Priests help people to reach Christian maturity by guiding them to know God’s will, to share their gifts with others. He works with the poor, with youth, with married couples, with religious, to bring about spiritual progress in the life of the Church, both local and universal.

Building up the Christian community on a eucharistic basis and center, priests educate people in the spirit, leading them from worship to works of charity and witness.
As heralds of the gospel and shepherds in the Church, priests lead people to deeper faith by building the Christian community and devoting themselves to its spiritual growth. (Ministry and life of priests, no. 6)

Teacher of Prayer

Man of Prayer: Chosen from among the people of God, the priest is appointed to serve God by serving them. He offers prayers and sacrifices for their sins as well as for his own. Like the Lord Jesus, he makes his prayers and petitions to God with loud cries and tears (see Heb. 5:1-7). Filled with the Spirit, he opens his heart to the needs of mankind, and prays for all. Unless his prayer is sincere, based on humble living and active charity, he will become like the Pharisee who strutted in the temple and boasted of his good deeds.

Teacher of Prayer: Some of the ways in which a priest teaches people to pray:

- **Teaching:** In every way, by his word and example, the priest teaches others to pray. Sharing the wisdom of the Church as well as his own hard-gained experience, he helps young and old by his counsel and by his willingness to encourage them in their prayer life.

- **Preaching:** The importance of prayer as one of the ways in which a Christian lives the gospel is a continuing undercurrent in his homilies. He continues to help people pray more fervently in the liturgy. (See *Making Mass more prayerful*, in Bulletin 44, pages 135-142.)

- **As a confessor:** If problems in prayer are mentioned, he encourages the penitent with help to pray better, and may suggest further discussion in later confessions. When the person does not mention prayer, he may ask about the person’s prayer life: it is surprising how often a penitent does want to seek help, but is either discouraged or unable to bring up the subject with ease.

- **In preparing for the sacraments:** When helping people to prepare for the sacraments — whether for the first reception, or for a once-in-a-lifetime sacrament, or for next Sunday’s communion, the priest should encourage them to pray. By suggesting ideas for prayer, he will help guide them toward a deeper faith and better dispositions in preparation for the sacraments of faith.

- **In his pastoral ministry:** Bulletin 44 is filled with suggestions for helping people to grow in prayer. Praying with people while visiting them, especially those in sickness or need, will encourage them to stronger prayer. Use of various resources — we might mention, for example, the daily starters in *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy*, the prayer of the faithful, helps for prayer in the parish bulletin — will enable him to touch the prayer life of his people. Introducing his people to prayer with the bible, with the psalms and gospels, will lead them to prayer closer to what Christ wants of his beloved people.

Problems: Today’s busy priest may shake his head at what is being expected of him, and object:

- **I don’t know how:** Then learn, Father, for that is one of your primary jobs, far ahead of counting the collection, plowing the snow, cutting the grass or worrying about the roof or plumbing. Start with Bulletin 44, and just go ahead
and start preaching and talking and writing about prayer. Learn on the job, as it were, but learn!

- *I'm too shy:* Most priests want to share the fullness of Christ’s gospel with their people, and many people want to hear more about Jesus. But shyness does the devil’s work: the priest mumbles on about the weather or the hockey scores, and the people talk about the latest piece of idiocy they saw on TV.

The only way out is a bold proclamation next Sunday during the homily and in the bulletin: then you are committed when you tell them something like this:

“I am your priest, called by God to lead you to him. One of my most important works is to help you to pray better, both at Mass and in your personal and family prayer. Instead of wasting our time about unimportant things, let’s try to talk about praying when we meet. I’m going to pray harder for the guidance of the Spirit, and you have to pray for his help too.

“We may be shy at first, but let’s do everything in our power to open our parish to God’s Spirit, so that we can become men and women and boys and girls of prayer.”

Include a petition about this in the prayer of the faithful, keep prayer prominent in your preaching and reading and bulletin and instructions, and watch the prayer life begin to blossom once more.

- *I’m too busy:* We answered this one back in 1972, in Bulletin 35, page 196, speaking directly to parishioners and liturgy committee members:

If your priests do not have time to teach the people of your parish to pray, then they are too busy about the wrong things. The apostles rebelled against such nonsense: “It is not right to neglect the preaching of God’s word in order to handle finances.” After telling the community to choose others to look after distribution of charitable funds, they added, “We ourselves will give our full time to prayers and the work of preaching.” (Acts 6:2, 4)

If your priests haven’t time to teach you to pray better, then the parish council and liturgy committee and parishioners have a serious responsibility to protest. You need to rise up, rid your priests of unnecessary and time-consuming tasks, and let them devote themselves to prayer and concentrate on their spiritual work.

MEN OF PRAYER

Priests should pray and offer sacrifice for their own people and for all the people of God. Apostolic work and concerns should lead priests to a greater holiness. By meditating, they should give life and meaning to their work, and benefit the entire Church. Close collaboration with the bishop helps priests, especially diocesan priests, to advance on the path of holiness.

*See Constitution on the Church, no. 41.*

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PRAYER LIFE OF THE PARISH

The prayer life of the parish involves both public prayer, the liturgy, and the personal and family prayer of all the members of the parish. Public and personal prayer are interdependent — one without the other lacks life and vitality.

Mainly through its liturgy committee, the parish council shares the responsibility with the priest for the prayer life of the parish.

Some suggestions for fulfilling this responsibility are given here, but many more are contained in Bulletin 44, which is entirely concerned with prayer in the parish.

Public Prayer

The liturgy is the Church's public prayer, the public worship which God's people offer to the Father. Areas of concern in the prayer life of the parish are outlined below, and studied in more detail in other articles in this issue of the Bulletin.

Eucharist: The eucharist must be the center and basis of all prayer and work in the parish community. Particular effort needs to be expended by priest and liturgy committee to make sure that eucharistic worship is well celebrated.

- Sunday Mass: The Sunday celebration is the most important liturgical event in the life of the parish. Well celebrated, it builds up the faith, strengthens the community's love and service, and deepens prayer life. Poorly celebrated, it weakens the faith and undermines the spirituality of God's people.

- Weekday Mass: Those who take part in Mass on weekdays can benefit from an improved celebration: a brief homily and prayer of the faithful each day mean more work for the priest, but improved liturgy and prayer life for the people.

Sacraments: Guided by the teaching and reforms of the Vatican Council, a sound understanding of the sacramental life of the Church is needed by today's parishioners. Much better preparation for the sacraments is necessary if they are to be celebrated and lived as sacraments of faith.

Liturgical year: The Church's year of grace influences the way we pray in public, and it should also have its effect in our personal prayer: see Prayer through the year, Bulletin 44, pages 160-162.

- Penitential seasons: Special note should be taken of the penitential days and seasons. These opportunities are outlined more fully in Bulletin 42.

Personal and Family Prayer

It is normally in the heart of the family that the children of God learn to pray. Before we can celebrate public prayer well, we have to be people of personal prayer. In prayer we listen to God calling us to faith and conversion, and so we are prepared to celebrate liturgy (see Liturgy, no. 9).

The parish community, led by the priest (see Teacher of prayer, in this issue), should make sure that helping people to pray is one of their priorities.
Bulletin 44 offers many practical suggestions for parishes which take this responsibility seriously.

The strength of the parish and its liturgy depend on the faith of all who participate. A parish whose members pray well is one where liturgy will be a good celebration of strong faith and thanksgiving.

RULES FOR READERS

Prepare your text by reading it over carefully several times, along with the other readings of the Mass. What is God saying to his people in this celebration? Practise your text. Consult a commentary, and discuss your reading with others during the week before you are to read.

Pray that God will open the hearts of his people to listen to his word in a spirit of faith. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you proclaim God’s word as well as you can.

Carry the lectionary in the procession at the beginning and end of Mass. Hold it up so that all may see the book. By your bearing and appearance, be a sign of the respect God’s people should have for his holy word.

Proclaim the word of the Lord to his people with dignity. Read slowly, with adequate volume. The lectionary text is divided into senelines to help you proclaim well. Remember that the Lord is speaking to his people through you.

Live what you proclaim. Strive to put into practice what you read to the community. Pray for deeper faith and stronger love. The Lord is heard more clearly when your reading is verified by the way you follow him in your daily life.
DAY OF THE LORD

Since the time of the apostles, the Church has celebrated Sunday, the Lord's day, as the day of his resurrection. On Sunday, those who believe in Christ come together to hear God's word and to celebrate the eucharist. In this way they remember that the Lord Jesus suffered, died, was raised and glorified to bring about the world's salvation. They thank the Father who has given us new hope and eternal life through his risen Son.

Sunday is the original feast day of the Christian Church. It is a day of joy, a day free from labor. As the "foundation and nucleus" of the liturgical year, Sunday should be celebrated as the day of the Lord. Other celebrations, whether local, national or international, should not replace or overshadow the Sunday liturgy. (See Liturgy, no. 106.)

Paschal mystery: Every Sunday is a little Easter, a day for God to assemble his people in prayer and praise. We come together to thank him for saving us by the death-and-rising of his Son, our brother.

From the beginning, Christians gathered to hear the word and for the breaking of bread. For almost two thousand years, Sunday has been the day for eucharistic celebration. St. Pius X and the Vatican Council worked to restore the Sunday to its prime place in our life of worship.

When a Christian community gathers to praise the Lord on Sunday, the Church is seen in visible form: the chosen people of God, called to sing his praise and to live holy lives in his presence.
A SUNDAY CELEBRATION

If we are to grow in our appreciation of the Mass, we should seek to deepen our understanding of what we are doing. When we see the whole picture more clearly, we will be able to realize the meaning and relative importance of each of its parts.

In this article, a good Sunday celebration is described. Some of the many options are indicated. Further details may be found in Bulletin 35, pages 207-213, and in the 1974 Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy, pages 12-30.

The Mass has two main sections, the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the eucharist. Introductory and concluding rites frame the central action of the celebration.

Preparation: Even before Mass begins, members of the congregation should be encouraged to prepare for the Sunday celebration. Their main preparation of course will be their personal and family prayer during the week, as well as their efforts to live as followers of the Lord Jesus. Banners and posters will help to set the mood of a particular season or celebration. The spirit of the day's Mass or of the liturgical season may be deepened by meditation on the readings. The parish bulletin could contain a note on the following Sunday's Mass, for use during the week. The better the preparation, the more effective the celebration and participation (see Liturgy constitution, no. 11).

Introductory Rites

The opening ceremonies of the Mass help the individuals and families who have come to this celebration to become one worshipping community. By drawing these persons together and leading them into a spirit of prayer, the introductory rites prepare this assembly of God's people to listen in faith to his word and to celebrate this eucharist with joy.

Entrance procession: The entrance hymn begins the celebration by uniting the assembly in one action. While it is being sung by the people and choir, the celebrant and his ministers come — preferably through the church — to the sanctuary. The reader carries the lectionary solemnly, a sign of our respect for God's word, and places the book on the reading stand. The celebrant comes to the chair and presides over the liturgy of the word.

After greeting the congregation, the celebrant may make a brief introduction to the day's celebration. Then he invites all to be sorry for their sins and to remain aware of their constant need of God's mercy and help. All sing the Glory to God as a hymn of praise. The celebrant concludes the introductory rites by inviting all to pause for silent prayer, and says the opening prayer of the Mass.

The opening rites of the Mass should be kept simple, unburdened by any attempt at elaboration or embellishment, since they are but an introduction to the main sections of the liturgy.
Liturgy of the Word

In the liturgy of the word, the Lord forms his people and welds them into one community of faith. He teaches his truth, and we respond. A well celebrated liturgy of the word builds strong faith, and prepares the community to offer and be offered in the eucharist.

During the liturgy of the word, the celebrant presides at the chair while the ministers proclaim the readings and lead the song.

The readings may be introduced briefly. A reader proclaims the first reading, usually from the Old Testament. After a moment of silent reflection, choir and people respond to the word by singing the psalm. Then a reader proclaims a second reading from the New Testament.

In preparation for the gospel proclamation, cantor and people stand and alternate in singing the alleluia as a welcome to Christ the Lord. Meanwhile the deacon or priest goes in procession to proclaim the gospel to the assembled people of God.

The homily is normally given by the celebrant of the Mass. By sharing his prayerful reflections on the word, he helps the community to understand the wonderful works of God, and prepares the people for this day's eucharistic action. The homily usually flows from the readings, or sometimes from other Mass texts. It is a sad error to turn the homily time into publicity or advertising for events and projects, however praiseworthy; this is an occasion for building faith, for explaining from the scriptures the mysteries of religion and the guiding principles for Christian living.

The profession of faith follows the homily. The creed is a traditional formula used by most Christians to give individual and community assent to the faith which the Lord gave them in baptism.

In the general intercessions or prayer of the faithful, the community presents its special petitions to the Father as Jesus commanded us to do. The celebrant invites all to pray together. A minister — deacon, cantor, another priest, member of the congregation, even a reader — announces the intentions, and all respond. The celebrant concludes by a prayer asking God to grant the needs of his people. When each community prepares its own petitions, a more effective prayer of the faithful results.

A thorough, prayerful preparation and a devout celebration of the liturgy of the word leads God's people to a growing awareness of his action in their midst, and to a deeper response of love and gratitude both in this Mass and in their daily living.
Liturgy of the Eucharist

The liturgy of the eucharist begins with the preparation of the gifts, reaches its climax in the eucharistic prayer, and concludes with the communion rite. For this part of the Mass, the altar becomes the center of the celebration.

Preparation of the gifts: The preparation of the gifts is the beginning of the liturgy of the eucharist. It is a low-keyed interlude between the service of the word and the eucharistic prayer. The rite should remain simple.

- **Altar**: The altar is prepared by the ministers, and the chalice and sacramentary are placed on it.

- **Gifts**: In procession, members of the congregation bring the gifts of bread and wine to the ministers or priest in the sanctuary.

- **Song**: The procession is accompanied by singing, which lasts until the gifts are placed on the altar, and may continue throughout the rite.

- **Collection**: While the collection of money for the poor and for the Church may be taken now, many communities prefer to pause for a moment after the liturgy of the word, and have the ushers go around; sometimes a hymn is sung during this. Then the collection is brought to the sanctuary with the gifts.

- **Prayers**: The celebrant says the prayers silently during the singing. If there is no song, he may say two prayers aloud, and the congregation may respond.

- **Prayer over the gifts**: The invitation to pray and the prayer over the gifts conclude the rite of preparation of the gifts.

Eucharistic prayer: This prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification is the center and climax of the Mass, when priest and people join the Lord Jesus in praising God for his great works and in offering the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood.

- **Introduction**: The celebrant may introduce the eucharistic prayer briefly, pointing out some of the reasons why this particular assembly is offering thanks, for the life of this community is part of salvation history. (See Bulletin 40, page 199, paragraph 8.)

- **Preface**: The preface is the opening of the eucharistic prayer. There are 83 prefaces in the sacramentary; this variety allows the priest during the year to emphasize varying aspects of our salvation, and to express the community's thanksgiving in richer terms adapted to the particular season or feast. When possible, it is better sung.

- **Acclamations**: The people take part verbally in the eucharistic prayer by responding to the preface dialogue and by singing (they should feel short-changed if they have to recite them on Sundays) the three acclamations: the Holy, holy, holy Lord at the end of the preface; the memorial acclamation after the narrative of institution (four forms of this acclamation are given, and each should be used during the year); and the great Amen! which concludes the eucharistic prayer. The people say or sing no other parts of the eucharistic prayer.

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• Silent offering: More important than verbal participation, however, is the act of offering which the people make. While the priest is expressing this aloud in his proclamation, members of this community are to be offering the victim; they also offer themselves to the Father, so that their daily lives may become more pleasing to him through Christ. By offering their personal living sacrifice from day to day, they are working to advance his kingdom. It is the responsibility of priests to help their people learn to make this offering, so that they may share more fully in the mystery of salvation at work in the liturgy.

Communion rite: The Mass is a victory banquet which we share with Christ, in his memory, as he has commanded us to do.

• Lord’s prayer: After a brief introduction, the priest leads the community in singing (saying) the prayer which Jesus taught us. (A meditation on this prayer is found in Bulletin 44, pages 154-159.)

• Greeting of peace: Before eating the bread of life, priest and people express their Christian love by sharing the peace of Christ. Mutual love, the sign by which Jesus’ followers are to be known, is necessary if we are to eat the bread of life with spiritual profit, for the eucharist nourishes and deepens our love for God as it strengthens our love for one another.

• Communion: Normally communion should be given from hosts consecrated at this Mass. Communion under both forms should gradually become the common practice once more; when the people share the cup of blessing, communion is a much clearer sign that they are sharing in the sacrifice they are celebrating. (While this may be achieved easily in smaller communities, the practical difficulties in larger Sunday celebrations need to be studied carefully; the use of the chalice on weekdays would be a beginning.)

Singing during the communion procession deepens the spirit of joy and brotherhood as all eat together at the table of the Lord.

• Prayer after communion: A period of silent reflection and praise may follow communion. Then the celebrant concludes the rite by asking God to carry out the effects of the sacraments in the lives of this community.

Concluding Rites

The final rites of the Mass, like those at the beginning, are deliberately simple in order to place the emphasis on the liturgies of the word and eucharist. All temptations to develop this part of the celebration should be overcome at once.

Announcements: While not a part of the Mass, announcements which are important for building community life — which is centered on the eucharist — may be made after the prayer after communion. It is more desirable to include them in the bulletin instead; “commercials” for sales items at the church door should be treated as were the buyers and sellers in the temple. The tendency to make announcements should be curtailed, not increased.
Concluding ceremonies: The concluding ceremonies of the Mass are deliberately simple, and should remain so:

- **Greeting:** The priest greets the people and they respond.
- **Blessing:** On occasion, this may be expanded by the prayer over the people or by the solemn form of the blessing.
- **Dismissal:** The deacon or celebrant sends every member of the worshipping community to carry on the work of God’s people by doing good works and praising the Lord throughout the week.

Recessional: As the celebrant and his ministers leave the sanctuary and go through the church, the congregation sings a hymn of praise and thanks, or one which reflects the liturgical season. Then all depart to go and live their Christian mission throughout the week.

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Weekday Masses: While the Sunday celebration remains the high point of the parish liturgy, weekday Masses should not be neglected. They may be less splendid in rites, but the richness of options available, especially during ordinary time, allows the celebration to be adapted to community needs.

Many of the Sunday ideas suggested above may be used on weekdays. A daily homily, a brief prayer of the faithful, a word on the life of the saint being commemorated, will lead people to a deepening of faith.

Weekday Masses need not be silent or drab. Care should be taken too that nothing takes place which contradicts the principles of liturgy and participation (see Underlying principles in this issue). Many communities find weekday Masses a good opportunity to practise and prepare modes of participation which will gradually become part of the Sunday celebration, but without making the weekday a replica of the Sunday. The Lord’s day and its special place in Christian living should be reflected in the celebration. (See also Bulletin 35, pages 199-200.)

LITTLE ONES AT MASS

Mothers who bring their toddlers to Mass have a number of suggestions to help young children grow in faith:

- Talk to them about church as a house of prayer, where all God’s people come together to pray on the Lord’s day.
- Teach them gradually to pray in silence, to have a quiet moment with God.
- Teach them the simple responses and use them in family prayer, so that the little ones will recognize them when used in church on Sunday.
- The genuflection and the sign of the cross can be taught at home. Children can come gradually to a fuller understanding of their meaning. Bible reading at
home may be preceded by making the cross on forehead, lips and heart, as at the gospel during Mass.

- Simple songs — Lord, have mercy; Holy, holy; Lamb of God — and sung responses may be used in prayers at home, and perhaps at meal prayers. Their musical repertoire should not be limited to Mother Goose and Doctor Seuss. The seasonal antiphon can be learned easily and used each day (see Catholic Book of Worship, nos. 172-200).

- The meaning of certain important parts of the Mass can be explained over and over, both at home and in church. Home practices can be related to these. Some of these highlights could include the sign of the cross at the beginning of Mass, the crosses at the beginning of the gospel, the response to the prayer of the faithful, the singing of the Holy, holy, holy Lord, the Lord’s prayer, the Lamb of God; Amen, And also with you each time they are used. (These are not necessarily the most important parts of the Mass, but they give a little child something to work on at the beginning. A helpful parent or one of the older brothers or sisters can prompt the child with the next response in good time.)

- Knowing who is involved in the celebration is also helpful to a small child. Particularly in a smaller parish he is able to know the priest; perhaps members of his family will be serving Mass or singing in the choir. He may know the reader.

- Some mothers tell us that sitting up near the front, where the child can see everything that is going on in the sanctuary, is one way of avoiding boredom. But readers and preachers should get used to a friendly smile or wave — or even a “Hiya” — from children who know them.

- Having their personal book to take to Mass, such as My Mass Book, is useful. Gradually they become familiar with the pictures and contents, and can relate them to what they see on Sunday. Such a book can also be used as a starting point for bedtime stories about our Lord. (See Tell me a story, in Bulletin 37, pages 57-62.)

- Resourceful parents will have some emergency equipment for entertainment or distraction: even the best of children grow weary at times. (I can still remember my mother filling my hat with puffed wheat when I was about three.) A book (preferably spiritual rather than entertainment), quiet toy (not keys or rosary), perhaps a candy to suck: these are some suggestions made by mothers.

- An occasional visit to the church on a weekday helps the little ones become more familiar and at home in the Lord’s house of prayer. Such a visit will also provide an opportunity to wander around and look at the baptismal font (with a reminder that they were baptized here, or in a similar font), sanctuary, statues and pictures, stations. A brief visit to our Lord in the blessed sacrament would of course be a moment of prayer for children and parent.

These ideas may be used to begin discussion at a day for parents (see Family prayer, in Bulletin 44, pages 176-179).

Further ideas will be developed, and could be shared with other parents in various ways, including your parish bulletin.
PREPARATION

A good celebration needs thorough preparation. Some suggestions to help priests, liturgy committees, musicians, readers, and all others who are involved in preparing and celebrating community liturgy are offered in each issue of the National Bulletin on Liturgy, as well as in the extensive pastoral notes in the annual edition of *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy*.

A number of past Bulletin articles may also be found useful. The number before the colon gives the issue, the rest are page references.

- Guidelines for music in the liturgy no. 34:148-153
- Sunday liturgy no. 35:191-194
- Daily Mass 199-200
- Starting point (prayer of the faithful) 204-207
- Checklist for Sunday liturgy 207-213
- Getting to know you (hymnal) no. 38:104-105
- Songs are for singing no. 39:177
- Eucharistic prayers (Roman letter) no. 40:197-203
- Spirit of the lectionary 204-206
- Helps in prayer and preaching 223
- Altar of the Lord 229-230
- Creativity 230
- A good reader 239-241
- These or similar words 253
- Final doxology 255
- Music for Advent and Christmas no. 41:293-296
- A good beginning (Lent) no. 42:37-39
- Need for serious preparation no. 43:84-87
- Making Mass more prayerful no. 44:135-142
- Singing is prayer 143-144
- A real prayer of the faithful 145
- Sacraments are worship 146-148
SACRAMENTS

SACRAMENTS OF FAITH

The sacraments are not holy actions we do or have done to us. Rather they are actions of Christ who is present in them by his power, and who meets those who believe and who are ready to encounter his saving action (read over nos. 7 and 59 of the constitution on liturgy).

Source and summit: All the sacraments are centered in the eucharist, which is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. A careful reading of the Vatican Council’s teaching (see Church, no. 11, and Priests, no. 5) will show the importance of the eucharist. All other sacraments lead to fuller participation in its graces. The eucharist is the center of the life of each Christian and of every believing community, such as the parishes and the family.

Celebrating the sacraments: Sacraments are liturgy, the worship which Christ and his people offer to his Father, and the way in which the Lord Jesus brings the fruits of his redeeming death-resurrection to his Church. Before we can celebrate the sacraments, the Church has to call us to believe and to turn back to God. (Liturgy, no. 9) In many periods of history, there has been a tendency to accept sacraments as automatic channels of grace, as convenient ways of confirming lip service. Fortunately, God is leading us away from such error through the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.

In the reformed rites, the sacraments are more evidently a celebration of both the local and the universal Church. By a fuller use of scripture and a proper sharing of roles, the celebration of the sacraments leads to the spiritual good of the faithful. Intelligent, faith-filled participation in a spirit of Christian celebration helps the community to take part fruitfully in the sacraments of faith. See Underlying principles, in this issue.

Preparation: Because the sacraments are celebrations of faith, the Church is taking a much more careful look at the way individuals and the community should be preparing to celebrate them. Less emphasis, thank God, is being placed on automatic reception at a certain age or grade, and more concern is being shown in preparing for a good celebration. More and more often, when people are not ready to celebrate the sacraments, they are being encouraged to postpone their reception until they are willing to prepare more carefully for them.

Today parishes are beginning to see the sacraments and sacramental occasions as pastoral challenges and opportunities. The following pages may suggest ideas for further action by your liturgy committee:

- Baptism of children: Children are welcomed to the baptismal font when their parents practise the faith they wish their child to share. In preparation for this important celebration, the priest (and often, some of the parishioners working with him as a team) visits or meets with the parents to discuss their responsibilities for raising their children in a Christian manner. The meaning of baptism and its celebration are also discussed thoroughly. He can also describe some of the ways the parish community is ready to help them by prayer, example and cooperation.
The sacrament is no longer celebrated every week. When the day of baptism arrives, it is a parish event, announced well in advance. All parishioners are invited to take part in the celebration, to welcome the new members of the Church, and to show the parents some of the community support they can rely on in the years ahead. (It is for this reason that babies should be baptized in their home parish rather than back at grandma’s home town.) The celebration takes place on the Lord’s day, occasionally during one of the Masses.

The former custom of baptizing every baby that “had a drop of Catholic blood” in it, in the hope that somehow the child would turn out for the better, is gradually dying out. When parents are lax or careless, more priests are postponing baptism, and then begin to work with the parents to help them deepen or regain their faith. In preparation for the sacrament, they must heed the call to conversion and faith (Liturgy, no. 9).

Soul-searching questions are being asked in more parish communities: when the parents do not wish to get involved with religion anymore, and do not want to live as members of the Church, what good does it do to baptize the child into a faith he will not have the chance to practise? When we consider the fact that a child’s character is mainly formed in his first five years, can Church or school overcome parental neglect or indifference in religious matters? How is the missionary responsibility of the priest and parish best applied in such situations?

- **Baptism of adults:** The Church is preparing a place on the museum shelf, beside the quaint customs of baptism at sword point or conversion because the king was Catholic, for the convert courses and adult catechisms of the past thirty years. These are being set aside now — not because they are bad — but because the Church is inviting us to take a giant step forward in faith.

The new approach stresses faith growing gradually through prayer and action, encouraged by the prayer and example of the believing community, over a period of years. More emphasis is placed on knowing Christ, on meeting him in others, in praying; the emphasis is placed on believing in Jesus more than on learning a lot of facts about him: these come later. The community's responsibility of helping catechumens by prayer and example is stressed much more. Lent is seen more clearly as a time of community preparation for baptism and its renewal, and the Easter vigil is more evident as the greatest night of the year.

An article describing adult initiation will appear in Bulletin 46.

- **Confirmation:** The normal order for the sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, eucharist) was established in the days of adult baptism. Today, when these sacraments are normally received by children, a healthy and vigorous discussion is taking place in the Church over the best age for confirmation. Some say it should be before first communion, following the sequence of the sacraments of initiation; some look upon it as a sacrament of Christian maturity. Those who see it as proclaiming maturity of faith about to be attained suggest confirmation in the later grades of elementary school. Others would prefer to wait until a person is mature in other areas of life, and is ready to accept mature responsibilities in living his faith: thus, a person can drive or fly at 16, can vote or drink in many places at 18. Some, fearing that only a few persons will accept confirmation, want everyone “done” at a safe age.
The sacramental rites seem to be urging a more mature age, since they encourage a renewal of the baptismal promises and profession of faith: the call to conversion and faith mentioned in paragraph 9 of the liturgical constitution.

Confirmation is normally celebrated within the eucharist, showing the close link between these two sacraments.

- **Penance**: The wide use of penance celebrations in the past seven or eight years has made it easier for us to recognize the call to faith and conversion presented in the sacrament of penance. The scripture readings lead us to a deepening of faith in God and in his forgiveness through Christ's death and resurrection.

Practical problems to be faced pastorally include when and how to celebrate first penance, the celebration of the sacrament outside the confessional, and ways of helping devout persons to see the sacrament as a greater challenge. The use of penance celebrations in Advent and Lent should be explored as the Church's method of helping many to live better lives by calling the entire community to repentance and renewal.

In preparation for the new rite for the reconciliation of an individual penitent, priests and people alike will need to take a fresh look at the sacrament, its purposes and its frequency, and at the place scripture has and should have in their lives.

- **Marriage**: In the past few years, much work has been done in arranging pre-marriage courses for those preparing to marry. There are still parishes where children receive more help before first communion than couples do in preparing for a lifelong sacramental commitment. (What is the situation in your parish?)

More work needs to be done in each community so that the entire parish begins to look on the sacrament and state of marriage as an important part of God's plan for the kingdom. Each couple needs to be guided during the months of preparation, so that their marriage will be celebrated in full faith as one further image and sign of Christ's love for his people.

The entire community could benefit from a fresh look at the Christian vision of marriage as the image of Christ's love for his Church. The community's responsibility of example, concern and prayer needs to be brought out. Parishes should insist that adequate spiritual preparation will be followed by a good liturgical celebration of the sacrament and a serious program of spiritual help available for couples and their families. (Some suggestions for such a parish program are offered in Bulletin 44 on family prayer life.)

- **Ordination**: Parishioners need help today in understanding the true and full role of their priests as spiritual leaders if they are to grasp the nature of the parish in the Church today. The Vatican Council's document on the ministry and life of priests (nos. 4-6) describes their work as teacher, priest (leader of prayer and liturgy) and shepherd. As priests and people grow in their appreciation of the priestly vocation, they can seek better spiritual leadership and work together more effectively for the coming of the kingdom.

Priestly and religious vocations: If the Christian community is to have spiritual leaders and witnesses, it must work with the Spirit who calls workers into the harvest. Prayer, penance, generosity, listening to the word in faith, promoting
good family life: these are some of the ways a parish can pave the way for vocations. In your parish, what is being done to encourage the aged and the sick to pray and suffer for vocations? (See Bulletin 33, pages 72-73.) Vocations are not the result of PR as much as of PRAYER.

- **Anointing of the sick:** The pastoral care of the sick extends beyond sacramental care. Visiting, prayer and help for the sick and aged are the concern and responsibility of the whole Christian community. Priests and liturgy committees need to help members of the parish to understand the current approach to pastoral care of the sick, an approach which stresses a fuller Christian vision of sickness and death.

Some of the questions parishes are facing today are ways of helping older people to become more familiar with scripture, and approaches to community involvement in the rites for the sick.

A full article on *Pastoral care of the sick* appeared in Bulletin 43, pages 115-125.

**Positive theology:** As the various reformed sacramental rites have appeared, a positive approach has been provided in the introductory pastoral notes with each ritual. These introductions have been carefully prepared, and provide the background for a fuller understanding of the Church's approach to their preparation and celebration.

Parish liturgy committees will find that the introduction to each of the sacramental rituals, the lectionary and the sacramentary form a valuable school of liturgical instruction and guidance for their work.

Further references on each of the sacraments will be found in the annual index of the Bulletin: see Bulletin 36, pages 301-302; no. 41, page 320.

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**TALKING ABOUT DEATH**

Have you read *Let's talk about death*, in Christopher News Notes, no. 206, May 1974? Its contents and presentation will be helpful in parishes and communities which are working for a richer celebration of the sacrament of viaticum and of funerals.

Reprints are available for $2.00 (U.S.) per hundred, post paid, from The Christophers, 12 E. 48th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017, U.S.A.

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PEOPLE IN LITURGY

OUR COMMON VOCATION

Mothers, fathers, youths, children, bachelors and spinsters, neophytes, religious, seminarians, deacons, priests, bishops, pope: wherever God has placed us in life, he has given us a common vocation. We are all called to be his children, his beloved people, followers and imitators of our brother Jesus, temples of his Spirit. He has called us to be Christians, built on the foundation of the apostles; we are fellow-citizens with the saints in the kingdom of God.

As the people of God, we are all called to praise him by our lives and by our worship, in union with others who share our faith. Our prayer life is to inspire and guide our daily works; our day-to-day activities are to be a living witness and result of the love and faith we celebrate in Sunday Mass.

When God chose each of us, before time began, to be his beloved sons and daughters in Christ, he called us to be spotless and blameless in his presence. He willed to rescue us from sin, to bring us from the kingdom of darkness to his own kingdom of light, through the saving death-resurrection of his Son Jesus.

Priesthood of the faithful: St. Peter tells us that we are a holy and chosen race, a royal priesthood, called to offer spiritual sacrifices — pleasing to God — through his Son, Jesus Christ (see 1 Peter 2:4, 9). It is in the sacraments of initiation that we are brought into this sharing in the priesthood of our high priest.

We are called to worship. Our vocation is prayer and praise. In us and through us, the Lord Jesus wants to raise up a chorus of glory from every nation and language group.

Every Christian, in virtue of his baptism, is called on to offer himself as a living sacrifice to the Father, in union with Christ, in the Spirit. By prayer, good works, suffering, each believer is able to share with Christ in dying to sin and living for God.

Diocesan and parish community: When the people of a parish gather around the altar to celebrate the eucharist, they are making the universal Church present in a special way (GI, no. 75). By their way of life, members of the parish represent the Church of God: their witness, good or bad, describes and proclaims the people of God to the world.

As part of the Christian community under the leadership of the bishop, the parish shares in the concerns and needs of the diocese; just as their bishop is co-responsible with all other bishops for the needs of the Church, they too must share in these wider concerns. An active parish will be working for the missions; it will support peace and development, papal charities and other requests for funds to help in special needs. The prayer of the faithful will be offered sincerely for pope and bishops, for persecuted and suffering people, for true peace among men, for civic leaders, as well as for local needs. The spiritual welfare of the Church and its leaders in this country, as well as for those involved in events such as an international synod will not be forgotten in prayer and good works.
Guided by their bishop and priests, the people of God offer their lives as living, spiritual sacrifices to the Father. This is the gift they bring to the community's Sunday celebration.

**Servants and leaders:** The Church is hierarchically organized, with some members called by ordination to the vocation of spiritual leaders. On the bishops, led by the pope, lies the responsibility for the people of God. Bishops call priests to be their co-workers in leading the faithful on the paths of salvation, and deacons to work as ministers to the community of faith and worship.

But Jesus made his apostles and their successors aware that leadership in his Church was to be seen as humble service. Fancy titles, stylish robes, special places of honor were not to be sought as signs of authority. He showed the example of service by his compassion for the weak and anguished and leaderless, by washing his apostles' feet, and especially by laying down his life for us, his friends.

In the liturgy, where they act as leaders of prayer and celebrants, priests are serving God's people by helping them to lift up their hearts to the Father and give him fitting thanks and praise. When preparing the Sunday celebration by prayer, meditation, study, and by working with others involved in planning liturgy, the clergy are giving service that perhaps only the Lord sees, but which leads to a more faith-filled celebration. Through such liturgies the Spirit opens the hearts of God's people to his generous gifts of grace.

**Religious** have a particular witness to give the entire people of God. By their vows and way of life, they are proclaiming that they seek the things that are above; their life is in the risen Christ, who is the goal and the way for every Christian. By their prayer, penance and dedication, they call on the Lord to have mercy on his people, and they give needed example to all members of the Church.

**Ministries:** Some members of the Christian community are called to serve the community, usually for a period of time, in one of the ministries or ways of service. Among these we can mention:

- **Readers:** called to proclaim God's word in faith to the community, especially during liturgical celebrations; their reverence for scripture should penetrate their personal way of life.

- **Servers:** usually young people, the servers are called to minister or serve the celebrant in the eucharist and other celebrations, in order that the liturgy may be performed with due dignity; in some cases, this can be a positive step toward a priestly or religious vocation.

- **Auxiliary ministers of communion:** many parishes and committees have men and women assisting the priest in distributing communion; a few communities where Mass is celebrated only occasionally have a layman who calls them together, leads them in the Sunday service of the word, and distributes communion. (An article describing such a ministry will appear in Bulletin 46.) Liturgy committees should explore local needs to see how auxiliary ministers may be of further service in their community.

- **Musicians:** given special talents by God, musicians — singers, organists, those who play other instruments, leaders of song, and composers — are called to serve the people of the Lord by leading them to greater joy and celebration.
in liturgy. By skillful choice and preparation of music for the choir, community and celebrant, musicians are able to help the liturgy become more prayerful.

- **Liturgy committee:** as they work with the celebrant and the other ministers in planning and preparing good celebrations, especially on the Lord's day, the parish or community worship committee helps the liturgy become the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit; a full issue of the Bulletin, no. 35, is devoted to the work of the liturgy committee.

- **Ministers to the sick:** concern for and care of the sick is one way of meeting Christ in his suffering members (see Mt. 25:31-46). Every Christian community and individual is called to help those who are ill: visiting and comforting the sick is the responsibility of all who believe. Parish councils will seek to incorporate the ministry to the sick as part of the spiritual work of the community, and encourage frequent — even daily — communion of the sick by the full use of ministers.

Though there are many ministries, there is one Spirit who guides them all in the work of the Lord. There are many talents and gifts distributed by God among his people, but they are given primarily for the benefit, not of the individual, but of the people of God, the Church. The highest gift or service, toward which all others lead, is love of God shown by complete love of neighbor (1 Cor. 13). Everything we do as Christians should be an exercise and deepening of this love.

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**Further reading:** A good picture of the Church as God's people who share a common vocation is given in the Constitution on the Church. Other Vatican Council documents — especially those on the laity, religious, priests, and bishops — fill out the role of each group in the Church. The Liturgy constitution describes the Church at prayer.
BIBLE AND LITURGY

RICHELNESS OF THE WORD

One of the reforms encouraged by the Vatican Council in its documents on revelation and on liturgy was the return to the fuller use of scripture. In private readings, in theological training and in liturgy, the riches of scripture were to be opened up to all members of the Church, so that a warm and living love of God’s word might lead us closer to him.

Pastoral lectionary: The lectionary now in use has been designed for a pastoral purpose, in order that the people of God may be nourished more fully with his word.

- Sunday readings: In the course of three years, all the essential passages of scripture are proclaimed from the Old and New Testaments. The main stages in the history of salvation are described in representative texts. The Sunday texts are the way God forms his people in the faith and love of his Son.

- Weekday readings: For those who take part in weekday Mass, a fuller set of semi-continuous readings back up the Sunday work of basic spiritual formation. During the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter particularly, the saving death and rising of the Lord Jesus are proclaimed and the people of God are invited to respond in faith to his love for us.

- Other readings: Special readings are provided for the feasts of the saints, for the celebrations of the other sacraments, and for particular needs of the Church or community. Since the lectionary was issued, further texts have been proposed for use in the pastoral care of the sick (see Bulletin 43, pages 122-123) and in celebrating the sacrament of penance.

Liturgy of the word: The plan and purpose of the liturgy of the word is described in A Sunday celebration, in this issue. Many suggestions for its fuller celebration are contained each year in the introductory notes in Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy. When proclaimed in faith to people who listen in faith, the word of God is active, and will carry out his work among us.

Respect for God's word: People and priests may be helped to grow in their respect for the scriptures by signs which reflect our faith in the word of God: the way the lectionary is carried solemnly in procession before and after Mass (Canada’s book of readings is deliberately decorated with a large golden cross, and should be carried with this visible to the congregation); the readings are proclaimed from the lectionary, and not from booklets or scraps of paper; the gospel procession is celebrated with dignity, including lighted candles and incense on the Lord’s day; the homily is preached from the texts already proclaimed from the lectionary, which should remain open during the homily. After Mass, the word of God may be enthroned with dignity (see Bulletin 34, page 135).

In many ways the Church is opening the rich treasures of the bible to all its members, in order that the Spirit may pour his graces lavishly on those who listen to the word of God in faith.
BIBLE AND PRAYER

Many suggestions for using the bible in prayer are given in Bulletin 44, which describes prayer in the life of the parish. Some thoughts for further exploration are outlined below:

Human experience: In the scriptures, the Spirit is speaking to us of our personal life and the life of the Church today. The Spirit, who sounds the depths of our nature, offers us consolation in time of distress, strength in weakness, light in darkness, joy in sorrow, hope in adversity. How open are we, for instance, to the vast range of human feelings expressed in the psalms? Are we ready to look at life from God's point of view?

God takes the initiative: By his grace, God attracts and invites us to read his word in a spirit of faith. As we read his word and reflect upon it prayerfully, he is leading us to know him better. He invites us to speak with him, to lay bare our souls before him, to be open to the action of his Spirit in our hearts.

Our response: In the scriptures he is calling us to believe and trust and love more fully. He wants us to be open to his invitation, and generous in our response. Like the great men and women of the bible who let God act in their lives, we should be willing to follow God's invitation to come further with him. Jesus continues to stand outside the door and knock until we open, but then he is ready to share everything with us. In response to his loving presence, we should seek to go from our time of bible reading to further action as witnesses of our faith in the God who speaks to us.

Occasion for worship: Part of our response in prayer should be praise. Aware that we are in his presence, we should accept our time of scripture reading as an opportunity for worship, for continuing to prepare and accept and give the living sacrifice of ourselves that we offer in each Mass.

Need for God's word: While the life of prayer might survive on substitutes for God's word and on various reflections of its light, strong prayer by the individual and the Christian community needs to be based on the bible. The readings and psalms are the voice of Christ speaking clearly and directly. Are we listening? Are we responding in prayer to his call?

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What place does the bible have in the personal prayer life of individual members of your parish or community? In your own life? What influence does Sunday's liturgy of the word have on the prayer life of your parish during the week? How can your liturgy committee work to start improving the situation?
BIBLE SERVICES

A bible service is celebrated when a community gathers to hear the word of God proclaimed and to pray and meditate on what God is saying. It may be formal and carefully constructed, as in the liturgy of the word at Mass or as in the liturgy of the hours; it may simply be a reading, silent meditation, and common prayer, with perhaps some sharing of personal reflections.

Values: One of the values of these scripture services is their flexibility. Although they do have a general pattern (hearing the word, reflection, response in prayer, song and action), they may be varied in many ways. An introductory rite may be added, and this may be adapted more freely than the present opening rites of the Mass. A wider choice of readings, even readings from the Fathers of the Church or other Christian authors, may be added. Less formality and even greater creativity is permitted than in the Sunday service of the word. In fact, bible services can be a school of creativity, and may help both clergy and congregation to become familiar with more flexible approaches to celebration. *Sample services* have been given in many past issues of the Bulletin, as well as in the penance celebrations described below.

Some guiding principles to be kept in mind as the bible service is being prepared are participation (see Bulletin 38, pages 100-103), relationship to the season of the year, and faithfulness to the meaning of scripture. This last point means that we must be obedient to scripture, and faithful to its entire message. We cannot choose only the sections that please us. We must be faithful to the fullness of Christ's teachings, accepting and obeying the difficult with the easy, the cross with the crown. The disturbing power of God's word must never be muzzled by false ecumenism or by attempts to softpedal the full message of Jesus.

Penance celebrations are included in the Bulletin twice each year for use during Lent and Advent. These outlines include a full introduction, suggested readings, prayers, hymns, and examination of conscience. The local community — particularly the liturgy committee — is encouraged to adapt it for their own needs. These celebration outlines have been given in Bulletin nos. 32, 36, 37, 41, 42.

Celebrated well, a bible service is never fruitless. The word of God is proclaimed and received by the believing community. The Spirit of God is active, and moves his people to deeper faith and love, so that they may express these by greater witness to the people of our time.

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What is your community doing about bible services? Further articles are listed in the annual index: see Bulletin 36, page 295, and no. 41, page 315.
TIME IS SACRED

Anointed by the Father as high priest of the human race, the Lord Jesus brings all men into his hymn of praise. In particular he associates with him his Church, the chosen people of God, so that a continual chorus of praise and glory may be offered in the name of mankind. Day and night, the Church sings this praise on behalf of all: praying for the salvation of the world, and offering thanksgiving and glory to God, Christians continue the work of Jesus Christ. In this way, the whole day and night are made holy and are used for the greater glory of God.

The Church continues to sanctify time and to consecrate it to God by the liturgical year, by the Sunday and daily liturgy, by days in honor of Mary and the other saints, and by special days of prayer and penance.

YEAR OF PRAYER AND PRAISE

The Church places its daily praise of God within the framework of the liturgical year. Gradually evolving, like the natural calendar year, the annual liturgical year leads God's people to a fuller contemplation and celebration of the Father's saving love, as shown in the death and rising of his beloved Son.

Sunday is the nucleus of the liturgical year. Each week on the Lord's day, God gathers his people to hear his word and sing his praise, to thank him solemnly in the eucharist and to be nourished by the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation. By reflecting the themes of the liturgical seasons, the rhythm of the year becomes alive, and draws believers into a fuller celebration of varying aspects of redemption by the Lord. Bulletin 43, Sunday belongs to the Lord, is devoted to the meaning and celebration of Sunday. Temptations to minimize or replace the Sunday liturgy with other celebrations should be strongly resisted.

At the center of the Church's year of prayer and praise is the solemnity of Easter. All liturgy revolves around this celebration: Lent leads up to it, and the Easter season continues it through to Pentecost. Advent and Christmas seasons celebrate the coming of the savior and his final return. Ordinary time leads us to reflect particularly on the work of the Church in living the paschal mystery — the death and rising of Jesus and our involvement in it through the sacraments — in today's world. (Some thoughts on Prayer through the year are contained in Bulletin 44, pages 160-162.)

Penitential times: Listening to Christ's call to penance, and guided by the Spirit, the Church has established days and seasons of penance and repentance. Lent is the primary time of penance and renewal, when we are led to prepare ourselves for the Easter celebration: at the Easter vigil, we renew our baptismal vows of dying to sin and living for God, and begin again to seek the things that are above (Bulletins 37 and 42 will be helpful in preparing for celebrating and living Lent with the Church). Friday continues to be a special day of penance.
and love, in memory of Christ's saving death; it should not be allowed to move any further away from its penitential character (see Bulletin 33, pages 75-76). Bulletin 42 describes Christ's Call to penance throughout the year, and each year's issue of Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy looks at the Church's penitential discipline from a pastoral point of view. Penance celebrations, especially in Advent and Lent, continue to call a particular community to repentance and renewal.

**Days of prayer:** In place of the ember and rogation days, the Church calls us to special prayer at various times of the year. Lent is a time of more ardent prayer, especially when nourished by more fervent reading of the scriptures; it is also a time of prayer by God's people for the conversion of sinners. *Prayer for unity* is encouraged during the week of prayer for Christian unity, which centers around the feast of the conversion of St. Paul, January 25. *Prayer for vocations* is encouraged on Good Shepherd Sunday, the fourth Sunday of the Easter season, and during that week. Episcopal conferences may establish other times of prayer. In Canada, for example, we have Respect for Life Week, and we are encouraged to pray on occasions such as Canada Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Remembrance Day. (Further suggestions are given in Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy for all these dates.) In these ways, the Church continues to urge us to pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17), for we are called to be people of prayer.

* * *

Throughout its liturgical year of prayer and grace, the Church invites us to enter more deeply into the chorus of praise and glory which the whole Christ — the Lord Jesus and all his members through baptism — offers to the Father. In return, our heavenly Father showers his blessings in Christ upon us, his beloved children.

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**MANY CHANGES**

"Ten years of liturgical legislation (1963-73)" is a record of Roman liturgical documents issued in the first ten years of the renewal begun at Vatican II.


Further information may be obtained from Studia Canonica, St. Paul's University, 223 Main Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 1C4.
MARY AND THE SAINTS

Prayer to Mary and the saints remains an important part of the liturgical year. Recent calendar reforms, a result of the renewal begun by the Second Vatican Council, are based on specific principles (see Liturgy constitution, nos. 102-111).

Christ has first place: In every liturgical celebration, the Church joins Christ in praising the Father. We thank him for having brought us salvation through the death and resurrection of his Son, and for enabling us to share in the effects of his paschal mystery through the sacraments of faith.

The liturgical year (sometimes called the proper of the seasons, or proper of the time, or the temporal cycle) is the basic framework of our worship, with each Sunday as the nucleus or main moment of the week. Easter is the center of the year, and all other Sundays, seasons, feasts and ferials reflect on or lead to this event (see the preceding article, Year of prayer and praise).

When Mass or the liturgy of the hours is celebrated on the feast of Mary and the saints, it still remains primarily directed through Christ to the Father. A new dimension is added, however, since we praise God for the power of his salvation as shown in the life of the saint being honored, and for giving us the help and guidance of such a model in following Christ.

Mary and the Apostles

Mary, queen of the saints: First place among the saints of God has been given to the mother of Jesus. Perfect example of cooperation with grace, model of obedience and willingness to take part in God’s plan for the world’s salvation, Mary is given a special place in the sanctoral cycle. The Church looks on her as an example for the Christian community (from family and parish to the universal Church), and as a sign of what we hope one day to be: sharing eternal joy, praising God, and — until the Lord comes — praying for other members of the Church on earth.

On February 2, 1974, Pope Paul issued an apostolic exhortation* on devotion to Mary. In it, he speaks of her place in the revised liturgy, and of her role as model of the Church in offering worship. Various guidelines are offered for renewal of devotion to Mary, and important observations are made on the Angelus and the rosary as exercises of piety. The letter concludes with the theological and pastoral basis of devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

Some past articles on Mary are listed in the annual index: see Bulletin no. 41, page 320 under the heading, Saints; see also no. 34, pages 146-147. The index in Bulletin 46 will also list 1974 references under the same heading.

Apostles: The Lord Jesus founded his Church on the apostles. Their zeal, their preaching and their suffering were his instruments in inviting many to become the people of the new covenant. Each feast of an apostle provides an opportunity for the local Church to deepen its faith. Some positive suggestions are offered in Bulletin 38, pages 84-86; see also no. 40, page 221.

* Apostolic Exhortation Marialis Cultus of his Holiness Paul VI: Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. 1974, 46 pages, CCC Publications, 60 cents per copy.
Saints of God

The holiness of God is reflected in a unique way in the life of each Christian who responds to his invitation to “be holy as I am holy.” Called to be holy and blameless in his sight, we are assisted and encouraged by the vast numbers of saints — holy men, women and children — who have walked before us, facing similar temptations and trials, and who responded to the leadership of Christ.

Models: Saints can be regarded as heroes and heroines for God, persons whose zeal and courage in living the Christian life provide us with models to imitate. Remembering the needs and circumstances of the Church in the modern world, we should choose to follow their love and perseverance; sometimes it is better to admire (but not imitate) the specific ways in which they chose to serve God, and look instead for ways which have prophetic meaning in today’s world. Careful choice of texts and hymns, introductions to the Mass and to the readings, the homily and the prayer of the faithful can help the saint of the day to become a true model for those who take part in the celebration. During the day, and perhaps over a longer period of time, they can pray to this saint for his intercession and help in following Christ.

Patrons: Choosing a saint as a patron — a heavenly friend and model — by taking his name in baptism is a good custom, one well worth preserving. Though relatives or TV and movie stars seem to be the inspiration for many current choices, a parish liturgy committee could begin encouraging a more traditional approach (see Bulletin 38, page 128). The ritual for confirmation no longer mentions the practice of choosing a further name; perhaps this would be a good occasion to consider one’s knowledge of and friendship with one’s patron saint.

Parishes which have a saint as patron might encourage reasonable devotion to him or her, especially at the annual celebration of the saint’s feast. Suggestions will be offered in the 1975 edition of Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy. One further thought: churches which support organized sports might find other names for their teams, so that we will no longer be treated to headlines which sound like a war in heaven (St. James trounces St. Aloysius) or a new form of blasphemy (Sacred Heart defeated by St. George).

In recent years, the choice of a saint as patron of a certain group of people has waned; perhaps embarrassment at such events as the naming of St. Clare as patron of TV workers and people with eye diseases (because she had a vision) and the sudden end of St. Christopher had much to do with this.

More sober devotion to the saints is gradually beginning once more as we regain a more balanced grasp of their position in God’s plan for our salvation. The communion of saints, almost unmentioned in the past few years, gains new significance now that we have a deeper understanding of the Church on earth as God’s pilgrim people. All Saints and All Souls can become days of prayer and strength once more. The litany of the saints needs to become as popular as other litanies once were — but this time, we should try to understand what we are saying, and to recognize each of the saints in the litany as a friend in heaven. A fresh look at our use of medals, statues and pictures would provide room for fruitful discussion by the liturgy committees, as would the whole question of what place — if any — novenas have in the Church today.

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Past Bulletin articles are listed in Bulletin 41, page 320; 1974 references will appear in the index in no. 46.

Calendar Reform

Recent reforms of the calendar, though done with a noble purpose in mind, seem to have achieved only part of their aims. At times one is tempted to think this was caused by timidity, as though cutting off a dog's tail an inch at a time would be less painful than a full, carefully prepared reform.

While Lent and Advent are less cluttered than before, they are still interrupted: a full reform would have given us a clean Lent and Advent, totally free of other celebrations. Sundays are still not treated as respectfully as they should be: the calendar and other documents permit a variety of miscellaneous causes to replace, interrupt or lessen the Sunday liturgy of the community.

On the positive side, however, we can point to the new calendar of saints: men and women from every Christian century, from all walks of life, and from every part of the world are now represented in the calendar, in order that the Church's universal call to holiness may become more evident in our day. Many feasts of local interest are now celebrated only where particular devotion is present.

A strong move toward authenticity is evident in the present calendar: obscure celebrations or those based more on legend than fact were removed from the general calendar.

"Birthdays" of the saints

Where possible, the day a saint died and entered eternity (or was "born into the life of heaven") is celebrated as his feast. Moving saints' celebrations to their "birthdays" accounts for many of the changes a few years ago.

* * *

Sound devotion to Mary and the saints should lead us to follow Christ more fully when we base our devotion on the nature and perspective of the Church's liturgy. Where calendar problems exist, Canada's annual Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy suggests pastoral approaches toward a solution.

With the inspiration and prayer of Mary and the saints, God is leading his people to deeper holiness, so that we may walk worthily in his sight, blameless and spotless, as the light of the world and witnesses of his beloved Son.
SPECIAL LOCAL CELEBRATIONS

The universal calendar, which arranges the liturgical celebrations of each Sunday, weekday and feast in the year, leaves room for local celebration of special events.

National occasions in Canada include:
- Solemnity of St. Joseph, primary patron of Canada. (The General Norms provide for the changing of this feast, March 19, to another date outside Lent: see no. 56f.)
- Memorial of the Canadian martyrs, secondary patrons, on October 19.
- Optional memorials of Blessed Marguerite d'Youville (October 16) and Blessed Marguerite Bourgeoys (January 12); some dioceses celebrate a memorial. One diocese commemorates Blessed Elizabeth Seton on January 4.
- Other national days of prayer or penance (such as week of prayer for unity, Canada day, Thanksgiving) are celebrated in various ways and with varying degrees of connection with liturgy. Suggestions for local observance of these occasions are included in Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy under the various dates.

Diocesan celebrations include the anniversaries of the bishop's episcopal ordination and the dedication of the cathedral church. Specific details for each diocese are given in the diocesan supplements of Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy, and in pastoral notes 19-20 of the 1974 edition.

Parish and community celebrations include the feast of the patron and the anniversary of the church's dedication (this was formerly called its consecration). Suggestions for their observance are given in Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1974, in note 18, and in Bulletin 37, page 88. Parishes are encouraged to pray for their priests on their ordination anniversary (Guidelines, note 19).

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Special celebrations enable the Church in a country, diocese or local community to give thanks to God for his particular acts of mercy, and to ask him once more for the special graces needed if they are to carry out their Christian vocation.
MUSIC IN LITURGY

FACING CHALLENGES

Music holds an important place in the celebration of the liturgy. It reinforces and deepens the impact of liturgy, and enables the worshipping community to express its praise more fully.

To make sure that music and singing are effective in your community celebrations, a number of areas need to be explored:

Musicians: A person needs to be a good Christian as well as a good musician if he is to carry out his part in the ministry of music. Grace does not make up for a tin ear, poor workmanship or lack of musical skill; but on the other hand, musical talent in a life lived away from God's will is not pleasing to God. The combination of grace and talent is the best one for a church musician.

In your parish, what is being done to help musicians develop their talents and their knowledge of religious music? What guidance are they receiving about the values of liturgy and its varying needs throughout the year? What opportunities are provided to help musicians grow spiritually? (See Singing is prayer in Bulletin 44, pages 143-144.)

When new people move into the community, are they invited to share their talents? Are they welcomed into the choir? What efforts are being made to recruit younger people to serve the community with their musical talents?

Sunday liturgy: As the nucleus of the liturgical year, the Lord's day is the highlight of each week's worship. Each Sunday Mass should be the best possible celebration, and nothing should encourage silent, musicless Masses (see But we can't sing! in Bulletin 43, pages 89-91). Some suggestions for a good use of music are contained in A Sunday celebration in this issue, and in the other references given in that article. How much preparation goes into selecting music in coordination with the liturgy committee? Is adequate preparation and practice given to each Sunday's Mass music?

Other liturgical events: Due proportion should be observed in preparing and celebrating liturgical feasts. Easter, for example, is the greatest solemnity of the year; in your parish, is more effort and concern shown for Christmas? Are you satisfied with the musical aspects of last Holy Week? Does the preparation for Christmas midnight Mass overshadow proper celebration of Advent Sundays, or leave Christmas morning Masses breathless and silent?

Sacramental celebrations: Each of the sacraments may be celebrated with singing. The sacrament of anointing of the sick has a place for music (see Bulletin 43, pages 114-125). What sort of music is being used (or perpetrated) at weddings? Is solemn baptism enhanced with music? How pleased are you with the music used at your last penance celebration?

Parishioners: Members of the congregation need to learn about changes and developments in religious music. Do they understand why we sing? Is good use being made of the parish bulletin as a teaching instrument? What is the
parishioners' repertoire of good psalms and hymns? How well are they introduced to new hymns? How often? Do they feel left out at any celebrations? What are the plans for steady development in the coming year?

**Bible services**, which can be short or long, formal or informal, are often a good opportunity to grow in our grasp of some aspect of our faith. An annual service by and for choir members and other parishioners interested in music could be the culmination of a day of prayer and recollection, or lead into a picnic or outing. During other parish scripture services, the musicians can contribute to the celebration by their choice of suitable music.

**Resources:** Five years of preparation by the National Council for Liturgy went into *Catholic Book of Worship*, Canada's national hymnal. Available in choir and pew editions, it provides the community with all texts and music needed throughout the year. LP records — *O sing a new song*, and *Music for Holy Week* — contain many of these hymns, and are useful for both the choir and the congregation.

In the past few years, other recordings based on the hymnal include *Music Tapes*, containing portions of some 125 hymns and chants (reels or cassettes — Novalis), and records produced in Winnipeg and London.

An index of articles on music is found in Bulletin 36, pages 299-300, for 1972; no. 41, page 318 for 1973; earlier issues of the Bulletin (see nos. 7, 8, 9, 25) also contain articles on liturgical music.

Singing at Mass and at sacramental celebrations will not solve all the religious problems of the Church today. But good music, carefully chosen and practised in a spirit of striving for excellence, will lead to a deepening of the religious experience of liturgy, and help priests, ministers and people to be more ready to offer their lives to the honor and service of God.
LEARNING ABOUT LITURGY

GUIDED COURSE

A few persons are privileged to go to the major liturgical centers in Europe for a year or two of study; others are able to take summer courses at Notre Dame or San Francisco. But what about the rest of us? How can we grow in our liturgical knowledge?

A simple outline of a basic course in liturgy is offered in this article. It requires much study and discussion on your part, but it will give you a good foundation for understanding the importance and place of liturgy in today's Church.

1. **Basic documents**: The first text to study is the Second Vatican Council's *Constitution on the liturgy* (CSL). It is contained in *Documents of Vatican II* (America Press), and in a number of pamphlets with study guides and questions for discussion.

   Another important text in the liturgical renewal is the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GI), contained in the opening pages of Canada's permanent sacramentary (pages 11-54); references are given in most of the subjects for further study. Each of the reformed sacramental rites contains an introduction or pastoral notes, by which a broader vision of the sacrament may be acquired.

2. **History of liturgy**: In order to arrive at a balanced view of renewal and liturgy in the Church today, it is necessary to see it as a part of the Church's life by taking a brief look at the history of the Church's worship. A simple yet concise one-volume work is one of our needs today. In *Missarum Solemnia*, Father Jungmann provides a fuller history of the Mass in the Roman rite; though now out of print, this book may sometimes be obtained from religious or university libraries. Background material on many aspects of liturgy are found in back issues of *Worship* * and its predecessor *Orate Fratres*.

3. **What is liturgy?** This question is discussed in the Liturgy constitution, nos. 5-13; see also Clifford Howell, *Of Sacraments and Sacrifice*, pages 3-11, 139-150.

   In considering the meaning of liturgy, we must bear in mind that it is worship and prayer, an expression of God's teaching and of the Church's thanksgiving, the action of man and God, of Christ and his people — **all at the same time**. These aspects are mentioned in the sections below.

   Liturgy is the action of Christ, who is present in his Church. It is Christ who offers worship to the Father in the liturgy (CSL, no. 7; GI, no. 7).

4. **People of God**: Liturgy is not the sole preserve of the clergy, for it is the action of the entire people of God. The Church as the people of God is described well in the Vatican Council's *Constitution on the Church*, which forms a good foundation for understanding the place of liturgy as the source and summit of all the Church's actions (CSL, no. 10), and as the primary and indispensable source of the true spirit of Christ (CSL, no. 14).

* Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn. 56321, USA.
Other Council documents on laity, religious, priests and bishops should be studied to see the ways in which the Church works. The mission of the Church today is clearly outlined in Vatican II's *Church in the modern world*.

It is in this larger picture that the parish and its liturgy committee must fit: see section 8, below.

5. **Prayer**: Followers of Jesus are called to be people of prayer: this is one of the main aspects of the Christian vocation. Bulletin 44, which is devoted entirely to prayer, contains a list of past articles on this topic, articles which will reward deeper study. Normally, each issue of the Bulletin contains several articles on prayer. The role of the priest as the teacher of prayer continues to be stressed, as is the prayer life of the parish community.

6. **Mass and eucharist**: The eucharist is the center of Christian life and worship. The Constitution on the liturgy has a good section on the Mass, nos. 47-58, but most of the document is connected in some way with the eucharist. At the beginning of the sacramentary, the *General Instruction* gives a detailed outline of the Mass liturgy.

In the Mass, the liturgy of the word leads into the liturgy of the eucharist; introductory and concluding rites surround the main part of the celebration. The Sunday celebration is the highlight of the community's liturgy each week. Several past articles have described the celebration in fuller detail: see *Checklist for Sunday liturgy* (Bulletin 35, pages 207-213); *Need for serious preparation* (no. 43, pages 84-87); *Making the Mass more prayerful* (no. 44, pages 135-142). *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy* (notes 6-9) suggests many helps for better celebrations.

The reasons why participation is essential are described in CSL, nos. 14-19. Preparation and creativity are required to make the liturgy truly a celebration of this particular community in the universal Church. (See index in Bulletin 36, page 296, and no. 41, page 315, for articles on *Creativity*; *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1974* contains practical suggestions in pastoral notes 3-5.)

Some thoughts on weekday Masses are discussed in Bulletin 35, pages 199-200.

7. **Other sacraments**: An outline, with reference to other sources and articles, is given in *Sacraments of faith*, in this issue. The introduction to each of the new sacramental rituals provides a good theological and pastoral setting, following from the first stages laid down in CSL, nos. 59-82.

Celebrations for the dead are discussed in detail in the introduction to *Catholic Funeral Rite*, and in note 17 of the 1974 edition of *Guidelines*.

8. **People in the liturgy**: The liturgy is offered by the entire Church, Christ and his members, to the Father, in the Spirit. We have to see the Church as God's beloved people (see Eph. 1:3-15), called by him to praise him by our lives and our worship.

In its Constitution on the Church, the Second Vatican Council redirected the way we look at the Church in order to redirect the way we live as Church. In its simplest form, we could summarize the document on the Church by saying,
"The Church is people, God's people! We must not be shortsighted and see only organization or authority or structures. The Church is the family of God: we are the Church. We are the beloved children of the Father, the brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus, the temples of the Spirit, who lives in us."

A different view of bishop and diocese, priests and parish begins to emerge as we explore the true role of God's people: see Bulletin 35, pages 177-182; no. 44, pages 132-134.

Vatican Council documents provide thorough introductory studies on bishops, priests, seminarians, religious, and laity. The way we learn, understand and apply these ideas will determine the direction of the life and worship of the people of God in the coming century.

One area of development in the last few years is that of ministries. One of the 1975 issues of the Bulletin will be devoted to this subject.

9. Bible and liturgy: The important place of the bible in the life and worship of the people of God is described briefly by Vatican II in its Constitution on divine revelation, as well as in some paragraphs of the Liturgy constitution (nos. 16, 30, 33, 35, 51, 92a, 109, 121).

Articles in this issue on the Bible and prayer and on Bible services help you toward a fuller understanding of the place of the bible in Catholic worship. A full outline of the liturgy of the word is contained in the pastoral notes (no. 7, pages 17-25) of Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1974.

Personal reading of the scriptures each day in a spirit of prayerful listening gives each Christian a way of preparing for and living the Sunday liturgy: see Bulletin 34, page 170; no. 36, page 247.

Helps for readers who proclaim the word of God at Mass and in other celebrations is offered in many issues of the Bulletin. See the annual index under People in liturgy — no. 36, page 300, lay readers; no. 41, page 319, readers; Bulletin 46 will also contain references to the work of readers.

10. Sacred times: Man makes sense out of the time by recognizing its rhythm and by imposing rhythm where it seems to be lacking: he celebrates the coming of spring, for example, and insists that the clock says tick, tock, tick, tock, instead of tick tock tick tock.

The liturgical year is a formalized recognition of these tendencies in the human community. Just as the civic community recognizes the seasons (especially for those who are conscious of fashions) and various festivities, the Church celebrates certain seasons and festivities.

Easter is the main feast of the year, and every Sunday is a little Easter, proclaiming that the paschal mystery is active in our midst. Lent leads up to the celebration of the resurrection, and the Easter season, ending on Pentecost Sunday, is a period of reflection and celebration.

The other major solemnity of the year is Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of our savior, and thank our heavenly Father for sending us his Son (Jn. 3:16). During Advent, we prepare for the Christmas festivities and also for the second
coming of our Lord in judgment. Throughout the Christmas season, we praise the Father for saving us in Christ, and strive to live up to his commandments of love.

During the rest of the year — called ordinary time or “season of the year” — we praise God for his gift of salvation in Christ, and we ask his help in living out the message of the Lord in our daily lives, both as individuals and as a community.

Feasts of Mary and the saints are subordinate to the temporal cycle (CSL, no. 108) and lead us to a more complete understanding of the work of sanctification that the Lord is carrying on in us and through us each day of the year.

Sunday, the Lord’s day, is the original feast day, when Christians are called together to hear God’s word and take part in the eucharistic celebration; in this way they recall the death, resurrection and glorification of Jesus our Lord, and thank the Father for giving us new life through his Son (CSL, no. 106). Bulletin 43 is on Sunday as the day of the Lord.

Penitential times are discussed at full length in Bulletin 42.

Local churches are encouraged to celebrate the liturgy in a way adapted to the needs of the believing community, while recognizing that it is a constituent part of the universal Church. When the parish community celebrates the Sunday eucharist, the Church is made present in a unique way (GI, nos. 7, 75).

11. Music: The importance of music in the liturgy is discussed in the Liturgy constitution, nos. 112-121. In laying down broad guidelines toward renewal, the Vatican Council has built on the sound foundation of St. Pius X and his successors.

Music united to words is a “necessary or integral part” of the solemn liturgy, and helps the liturgical celebration to give greater praise to the Lord. When in tune with the action of the liturgy, music leads the community to fuller worship. Active participation by the members of the congregation is promoted by acclamations, psalms, antiphons and hymns (Liturgy, nos. 112-113, 30).

Five years of work by the hymnal committee of the National Council for Liturgy have given us a national hymnal, Catholic Book of Worship. This book provides a means toward better singing in the liturgy. In the choir edition, parish musicians and liturgists have a useful assistant in planning liturgical celebrations.

Each issue of the Bulletin contains a number of references or articles on music in the liturgy. These may be located easily in the index at the end of each year’s issues (see nos. 36, 41, 46). See also Facing Challenges in this issue.

Musicians perform a ministry or service to the Lord and his people when they use their talents in the liturgy. When these gifts of the Spirit are employed with love for God, the entire celebration is enhanced and made holier.

In communities where music is not used each Sunday, the liturgy committee should be quite concerned over this serious lack. Where only some Masses are celebrated with music, committee members should be looking for ways of improving the situation.
As a worshipping community grows in faith, it will want to express its joy and thanksgiving in psalms and hymns. Parish musicians help the people of God to give him glory by their song.

**12. Some resources** which are useful for anyone interested in liturgy are described in the next article, *Resources for liturgy*.

**13. Problems:** Many problems can face a liturgical committee and others involved in preparing and celebrating liturgy. We mention a few:

- *No diocesan liturgical commission,* or one that is not active. See *Dear diocesan commission* in Bulletin 39, pages 179, 184; see also no. 44, page 143 (paragraph in italics).

- *No liturgy committee* in the parish or community: Bulletin 35 is filled with practical ideas for setting up a liturgy committee and helping it to thrive: this issue, which provides many suggestions on the responsibilities and work of the committee, is a useful resource book for each member of the committee.

- *Failure to understand underlying principles* is often a cause of misguided initiatives and confused priorities. Read over *Underlying principles* in this issue: these ideas form the basis of sound liturgical planning and celebration.

- *“Same old thing every week”* is sometimes heard as a complaint about Sunday liturgy. While each eucharist is essentially the same as the next, the circumstances vary tremendously. Learning why we celebrate and how to celebrate is important if we are to be creative and flexible. Good planning and a wise selection among the many options will help to adapt each celebration to the needs of this community.

- *Search for novelty:* At times, some people carry creativity to an extreme by changing things which should not be touched (the eucharistic prayer, for example), or by “way out” music, strange lyrics, psychedelic lighting, secular readings and so on. The standard Roman Sunday liturgy, when properly explored, provides adequate room for variety and freshness without any need of novelty seeking. (See *Eucharistic prayers* in Bulletin 40, pages 197-203.)

- *Lack of prayer and preparation:* Often this lack is the cause of many liturgical problems. The cure: pray and prepare!

**14. Liturgy and life:** Liturgy must flow out of the life of the community and of the individual believers who form it. At the same time, the liturgy — especially the eucharist — is the center and source of their spiritual vitality, and the summit toward which all their actions are directed. Read over nos. 9-12 of the Liturgy constitution again.

The intimate relationship between liturgy and life is explored in *Living the liturgy* in this issue.

There are many other areas of liturgy and aspects of the Church’s life which influence our worship. Among these we could name vocations, missions, Eastern rites, church design, art, and many others. In future issues we will add some of these to our basic course in liturgy. But what is outlined here is a sufficient beginning to lead you to a deeper appreciation of the wealth God has given his beloved people in the liturgy of his Church.
RESOURCES FOR LITURGY

Many books and publications are available these days, and more seem to be issued each season. Some essential books and useful aids are described below for those who wish to grow in their understanding of liturgy.

Liturgical Books

Liturgical books are official books, approved by the country's bishops for use by celebrants and ministers in liturgical celebrations.

In Canada, through the National Liturgical Office, the bishops are using a pastoral approach by providing:

- a family of liturgical books which are interrelated, and which support one another;
- full pastoral notes for their best use in the liturgy;
- aids to help develop better preparation, celebration and participation in each parish and community liturgy.

Canadian books for celebration have been planned in order to promote good liturgy:

- **A book for each function**: A “one book liturgy” is no longer desirable or possible. Now there are separate books for the celebrant, for the readers, and for the congregation, emphasizing their distinct roles in the celebration of the liturgy.

- **Sign value**: Books used by celebrants and ministers are dignified. Carried in procession by the reader, the lectionary is a vivid sign of the respect God's people have for his word.

- **Options**: Clear presentation of the many options is made readily available, and guidance is given for their effective use.

Liturgical books presently available in Canada:

a) **Sacramentary**: The book used by the priest as he celebrates Mass with his community of faith. It contains mainly the texts he uses or adapts as presiding celebrant at the eucharist. The introductory pages contain the General Instruction, Notes on Children’s Masses, and the General Norms for the liturgical year.

b) **Lectionary for Mass**: The book from which the word of God is proclaimed to his people during liturgical celebrations. It contains all the readings and psalms used in the liturgy of the word. The introduction, found after page 928, provides a clear understanding of the way the readings have been chosen for the year.

- **Sunday Lectionary — Study Edition**: a copy of the Sunday section of the lectionary for the reader to use at home as he prepares for proclaiming the word on the Lord's day. Identical pagination and numbering system to those in the large lectionary. Pronunciation guide, Sunday calendars, introductory notes for readers. May be used for personal and family prayer.

- **Weekday Lectionary — Study Edition**: the weekday section of the lectionary for prayerful reading and study by those who take part in weekday Mass. It also provides a useful book for those who wish to read scripture with the
Church, and for catechists and others preparing for sacramental celebrations. This book uses the same numbering system as the large lectionary.

c) **Rite of Baptism for Children**: the full text of the ritual, including pastoral notes and many options. For use by priests and deacons, liturgy committees, catechists and others who help prepare for the parish celebration of the sacrament of baptism.

d) **Adult Baptism**: an interim translation of the rite has just been released. This is useful for everyone involved in preparing adults and older children for baptism or for reception into full union with the Church. Many pastoral notes and guidelines throughout the book.

e) **Rite of Confirmation**: the ritual text used by the bishop (and sometimes priests) in celebrating this sacrament. The full text of the ritual and extensive pastoral notes make this useful for priests, catechists, musicians, liturgy committees, and all others involved in preparing and celebrating confirmation.

- **Confirmation**: A booklet for people in parishes not yet using *Catholic Book of Worship*. Contains outline of the service, with psalms, responses and a selection of hymns from the hymnal.

f) **Rite for Celebrating Marriage**: The complete texts for celebrating this sacrament, including pastoral notes and many options. For use as a ritual by priests, and for couples while preparing to celebrate their marriage.

g) **Holy Orders**: The ritual for the ordination of deacons, priests and bishops. A study of these texts helps every member of the Church to appreciate more fully the important role of the clergy as servant-leaders of the people of God.

- Rites for installing readers and acolytes, and for admission into the clerical state: an interim translation is to be released soon by ICEL, the International Commission for English in the Liturgy.

h) **Pastoral Care of the Sick and Rite of Anointing**: the renewed rites for the sick and the dying, with extensive pastoral notes, and many scripture readings, psalms and other prayers for the sick. The book is useful for clergy, auxiliary ministers of communion, sick persons, hospital personnel and all who visit or care for the sick.

i) **Catholic Funeral Rite**: the ritual book for priests, deacons and others who may celebrate funerals: a complete ritual for wakes, services of commendation and farewell, and prayers in the cemetery for adults and children. Contains many options and a full appendix of prayers.

- **Rite for a Catholic Wake**: booklet for those who assemble for the prayers for the dead. Contains outlines of the four wakes in the ritual, with psalms, people’s responses, and music from *Catholic Book of Worship*.

j) **Prayer of the Church**: the interim form of the liturgy of the hours, in use in Canada until the definitive English-language edition is published. A source of guided prayer for all who wish to pray with Christ and the Church.

k) **Catholic Book of Worship**: the national hymnal and response book, containing everything needed for participation in the Sunday eucharist. Music comes
from many of Canada's national backgrounds, and includes hymns in French, English and Latin; guitar chords are provided for many of the selections. Available in choir edition (for organists, singers, other musicians, liturgy committees) and pew edition (for members of the congregation).

- **O Sing a New Song**: two LP records introducing some of the music in our national hymnal.

- **Music for Holy Week**: an LP record containing many examples of psalms and hymns for the main celebrations of Holy Week, to help choirs and congregations, especially in smaller communities. All music is found in *CBW*.

  *A list describing these and other CCC publications may be obtained by writing to CCC Publications Service (address on inside front cover). Ask for the free booklet, *Resources for Liturgy.*

### Books about Liturgy

Books about liturgy are not official texts; they are publications which provide background and explanations for the better use of the liturgical books, so that improved celebrations will result.

**CCC books about liturgy** include:

a) **Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy**: a practical guide to the liturgical year, coordinating the Canadian family of books of worship. Prepared each year by the National Liturgical Office for clergy, religious, parish worship committees and others active in the apostolate of the liturgy. Full information on the Mass and liturgy of the hours for each day. Pastoral suggestions for celebrating many events within the liturgy. Extensive pastoral notes. Daily starters provide suggestions for prayer and preaching. Diocesan supplements indicate local celebrations.

b) **National Bulletin on Liturgy**: Canada's liturgical bulletin is primarily pastoral in scope. It 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. Five 64-page issues a year (every two months except July and August). Most back issues are still available.

c) **Your Child's Baptism**: a leaflet for parents, explaining parish celebration of baptism and the spiritual preparations needed.

d) **First Days of Human Life**: a reverent presentation of God's creative masterpiece, the development and birth of a child. Illustrated in color. Valuable for all who worship God as the author of life.

e) **Pastoral Ministry of Bishops**: a full study of the pastoral office of the bishop, including his role as high priest and chief liturgist of the diocese. For all members of the diocese.

f) **My Mass Book**: a simple booklet of Mass responses and simple explanations of the various parts of the Mass, with emphasis on living the liturgy. Illustrated. For children from 7 to 9 years.
g) **Visual kits**: prepared for pastoral use among Indians and Métis people, these kits are readily useful in parishes, communities and schools across the country.

- **The Beatitude People**: by Margaret Denis, SOS. 200 slides, printed commentaries, detailed indices, scriptural and liturgical references, samples of developed catechesis.

- **Come, Lord Jesus**: by Rev. Roger Vandersteene, OMI. The story of the Church, told in 56 poster pictures, with an illustrated, color-coded guide book with related scripture and commentary, and four sets of small reproductions of the posters. Illustrations cover the entire liturgical year.

h) **Statement on the Formation of Conscience** by the Catholic bishops of Canada. Useful for parents, catechists, teachers, clergy and all who work with young people.

i) **Devotion to Mary**: by Pope Paul. A clear statement of Mary’s place among the people of God, and the devotion we should give her. Liturgical devotion to Mary is discussed in these pages.

> A free booklet, Resources for Liturgy, describes these and other CCC publications. Write to CCC Publications Service (address on the inside front cover) for your copy.

**Other books about liturgy**: Among the many books about liturgy which are available today, we recommend:

a) **The Documents of Vatican II** (America Press): a paperback edition of the Council documents, including the liturgy constitution. Other publishers have issued the liturgy document in annotated pamphlets. Everyone interested in liturgy should have his personal copy, in order to grow in his understanding of the why behind the renewal.


c) **Worship** and **The Bible Today**: helpful reviews from the Benedictine monks of St. John’s Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota (reviewed in Bulletin 35, pages 224-225).


e) A series of catechetical and liturgical aids, fully illustrated, is issued by The Catholic Pastoral Center, 788 Wolseley Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 1C6:

- The Baptism of Your Child
- Come Celebrate the Mass
- Celebrating Your Love in Marriage
- Celebrate the Spirit as Gift.

Other publications and resources are reviewed in each issue of the Bulletin.
Publications about liturgy should be aids, not crutches. They provide many insights into different times of the liturgical year, and can be most helpful to celebrants and liturgy committees as they prepare their local celebrations. But personal creativity and initiative are needed too, so that the celebration truly becomes the worship of this particular community within the universal Church of Christ.

IN PREPARATION

I ask one favor of you: each of you should take the section of the gospels which is to be read among you on the first day of the week, ... and before that day arrives, sit down at home and read it through.

St. John Chrysostom
*Homilies on the gospel of St. John, no. 11*
LITURGY AND LIFE

LIVING THE LITURGY

Liturgy and life go together. To separate them, or to try to make one reject the other leads to bad theology and worship. But when we keep life and liturgy together in harmony, each benefits, and so does the entire Church of God.

Throughout our lifetime: Liturgy and life meet at the high points of each individual Christian’s life. Not long after birth, he is born into the kingdom through baptism. Later he is confirmed as a witness to Christ. Nourished by the bread of life, and reconciled with God and his people in the sacrament of penance, he is encouraged to pray daily with the Church.

When entering into a major vocation in life, he is given sacramental assistance in marriage or holy orders, or his religious profession is made in the midst of the eucharistic liturgy.

In serious sickness, he is anointed with the oil of the sick, and at the end of his life, viaticum is his food for his journey into eternity. After death, he is laid to rest with the funeral rites and prayers of the Church. Through the communion of the saints, he continues to be part of the worship and praise offered by all the people of God on earth.

Liturgy sanctifies life: Centered around the eucharist, the liturgy brings God’s grace and guidance into the life of each individual Christian and believing community. This is particularly so in the Sunday assembly, when God calls his people together to form them with his word and nourish them with the bread of life and the cup of salvation. During the liturgy of the eucharist, they unite with Christ and the priest in offering themselves to God, especially their readiness to do his will. As they bring him their joys and sorrows, their efforts for the kingdom, their eagerness to do good, they ask for help for themselves and for the whole world.

In the sacrament of penance, the people of God seek reconciliation with the Father and with one another in Christ. By personal and liturgical prayer, they continue to ask for the blessings throughout the week that they need to die to sin and to live for God.

Life leads to liturgy: During the week, Christians strive to live out the covenant by love of God and neighbor. Guided by the Spirit, they are led to put God’s will first, to seek the kingdom and bring it about in their milieu. The normal events of daily living, the crosses and joys and temptations and trials of each day, the misunderstandings and difficulties of earning one’s daily bread — these are all accepted as God’s will for us, and are used in his service. By exercising and developing the talents and gifts given to us, we seek to build up the body of Christ. By example, prayer and suffering, we strive to follow Christ in our day-to-day living.
Sincerity is the key to this relationship between liturgy and life. Daily living for God leads us to a better celebration of the eucharist on the Lord's day; from the liturgy we go back to live out the next week a little better. There is no room for lip service in the life or worship of the true Christian.

We have the spirit of the Lord within us. Christ is present among us, bringing us his hope and joy, helping us to work with him toward his goals, until we come with him into glory.

Then, free at last from sin and death, we shall join him and all God's people in offering true worship to the Father in the Spirit.

A FRESH LOOK

Does the entrance rite of the Mass still need further reform? This question is answered in the affirmative in an instructive article in Worship (vol. 48, no. 5, May 1974, pages 270-277). Written by Dr. Ralph A. Keifer, Our cluttered vestibule: the unreformed entrance rite provides a sound critique and positive suggestions for improvement.
BOOK REVIEWS

BISHOPS IN ACTION

Directory on the pastoral ministry of bishops, prepared by the Congregation of Bishops, Rome. C.C.C. Publications Service, Ottawa, 1974. 6¾ by 10 inches, 116 pages, paper. $2.00. (A parallel edition is also available in French from the CCC at the same price.)

* * *

Consciously or instinctively, the people of God expect much from their bishops. In this book, Rome outlines the apostolate of the bishop in the local and universal Church, with particular attention to the guidelines given by the Second Vatican Council. A positive tone is maintained throughout.

After discussing the bishop's mission in the light of the Church's own mission, the directory looks at his collaboration with the pope and the episcopal college. Most of the book speaks of the bishop's relationship with the local church, where he is seen as teacher in the faith community, high priest in the community of worship, father and shepherd, and guardian of the communion of charity. He is leader and minister of the community's apostolate.

The directory goes on to discuss diocesan structure, and the role of all who work with the bishop, from laity to religious to clergy. The final pages speak of episcopal conferences.

Eight pages are devoted to the liturgical role of the bishop. Fostering continual prayer and the liturgical instruction of the faithful are mentioned as part of the bishop's task. Here and there throughout the book, further sections speak of other aspects of the liturgy, such as preaching and homilies.

Value: The directory is of value to everyone who is concerned with the coming of God's kingdom. As people grow in their understanding of the real work of their bishops, they will be better able to work with them; they will also begin to appreciate more fully the way God works through the local bishop, and be more ready to work with him in his apostolate. The only negative comment one can make is that the book is necessarily general in spots, since it is trying to speak to a worldwide audience. Each country — and each area in our nation, for example — will have to adapt general comments to particular situations. But this universality is good because it draws attention to concerns of the Church that we may not have seen or felt.

The directory is recommended for all who cooperate with the bishops in their work: priests, religious, laity. Members of parish councils and liturgy committees can use it as a guide to make sure their community is playing its full part in the broader work of the Church.

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This is the word of the Lord, 34 liturgies of the word for Holy Week, major feasts and selected Sundays arranged in dialogue form for three readers, arranged by Rev. William J. Freburger. Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, Indiana 46556, 1974. 8 by 10 inches, 152 pages. $2.25.

Authors and publishers are still trying to improve the Mass in the wrong way! By tampering with what should be left as handed down instead of working on the parts that are legitimately open to local and personal adaptation, they are promoting poor liturgy (see Bulletin 43, page 126) instead of sound celebration.

This is the word of the Lord presents various mixtures of Sunday and Holy Week texts arranged for three readers — a method that is acceptable for the passion readings and occasionally for children’s Masses. But a closer look reveals that the editor has made arrangements that begin to undermine the benefits of the new lectionary:

• The Church has given us a three-year cycle of readings; this book combines two years into one, or two distinct celebrations into one.

• The new lectionary provides three separate readings from scripture; the arranger chooses to weave two or three of them into one on several Sundays.

• The normal order of readings leads to the gospel proclamation; this book sometimes places the Old Testament or New Testament reading at the end of the series, or concludes with the responsorial psalm.

• The passion narrative does not close with the usual gospel ending, though this book includes it.

Is the book entirely without value? No, it does make an effort at presenting the major scripture readings in a more dramatic light, but its use is best confined to bible services and to preparation for Sunday. It would be an excellent way for a class to dramatize the texts during the week, either before or after they are used on Sunday. Readers might be able to benefit in their preparation as they realize a little more the need to bring out the fact that different persons are speaking in some dialogue passages.

The lectionary — carefully designed, prepared with clear, bold type in sense-lines, and decorated to show our respect for God’s word — is the book for proclamation of the word to the people of God. This book of arrangements is not suited at all for this.
NEXT ISSUE

The November-December issue, Bulletin 46, will be available by All Saints day. Entitled Celebration and Proclamation, it will present many practical ideas for celebrants, readers, musicians, other ministers, liturgy committees, and for the celebrations they take part in.

An Advent penance celebration on the theme of God's chosen people is included as a resource for preparing your own community celebrations.

Extra copies of Bulletin 46 may be ordered now at $1.50 ($1.75 outside Canada, because of postage), by writing to CCC Publications Service, at the address on the inside front cover.

ADVENT HELPS

Two past issues of the Bulletin concentrate on the seasons of Advent and Christmas. They can be of use in your parish, community or family as you prepare to celebrate these seasons this year.

- **Advent and Christmas**: Bulletin 36 presents 68 pages of ideas, questions, celebrations and concerns. It takes more than one year to use up all the ideas provided.

- **Advent Unlimited**: Bulletin 41, prepared with the cooperation of the Montreal liturgical commission, contains 64 pages of thoughts and practical suggestions. Illustrated.

Each issue contains an Advent penance celebration.

Copies may be ordered now at $1.50 each ($1.75 outside Canada, because of postage) from CCC Publications, at the address on the inside front cover.

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*Le Bulletin National de Liturgie, numéro 37, pour l'Avent et Noël, 1972, est disponible en français. “Où allons-nous?” peut être commandé du Service des Editions à la même adresse: $1.50 (à l'étranger, $1.75).*
LITURGY IN IRELAND

The Church in Ireland is moving gradually ahead in the liturgical apostolate. Some current signs:

- The bishops are working to build a strong and vibrant Sunday liturgy as the main way of deepening faith; this is based on Mass attendance by more than 90% of the Catholic population (as determined by an independent survey in the spring of 1974).

- The 21st annual liturgical congress, organized by the monks of Glenstal Abbey, has continued to provide sound leadership in the Benedictine tradition.

- A national liturgical center has been established at Portarlington with a fulltime secretary to the episcopal commission. Father Sean Swayne has begun a one-year institute to train liturgists. New Liturgy is published quarterly (Mount St. Anne’s Liturgy Center, Portarlington, Co. Laois, Ireland; airmail, $2.50).

- A national hymnal has been published, containing hymns in English and Irish, and is now in use in all parts of the country.

- Intercom, a monthly magazine for clergy, continues to give leadership in pastoral theology; frequent articles promote sound liturgy and good homily preparation (Imelda Bagnall, CCil, 7-8 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1; 3 pounds a year — about $7.00).
A PRAYER

God our Father,
by the work of your Spirit, living in our hearts,
you lead men to desire your perfection,
to seek for truth and to rejoice for beauty.
Enlighten and inspire
all thinkers, writers, artists and craftsmen,
so that in all things which are true and pure and beautiful,
your name may be made holy
and your kingdom come on earth.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

From a prayer displayed in St. Anselm’s Chapel, Canterbury Cathedral.