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CELEBRATION AND PROCLAMATION
This issue of the Bulletin has a double purpose:

• *Celebration:* To help the people of God — congregations, ministers, clergy — grow in their awareness of the importance of celebration, and to present some areas in which they may work to improve their community liturgies;

• *Proclamation:* To point out some of the ways in which the prayers and readings may be proclaimed in faith, so that all may benefit more fully from them.

This Bulletin is not a book of recipes, but a call to reflection on the meaning of what we are handling. In this way, your liturgical celebrations may truly become the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit in your community.
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WHY SHOULD WE CELEBRATE?

Often our celebrations are routine, unvarying, even humdrum. Priests, ministers and people faithfully go through their actions, words and responses, and everything is carried out as the books tell us to do. And all too often, we have to admit, our liturgical celebrations are lifeless, monotonous, boring — they are anything but celebrations.

What is the matter? Is it because we don’t really appreciate what we are celebrating, and do not know how to express our spirit of celebration? There are two areas in which we can all improve, in which we can never be too good:

Understanding why we celebrate: Some of the reasons for our being a rejoicing, celebrating, 

1. We are God’s beloved people!
2. He has freed us from darkness and sin!
3. He has raised us to new life in Christ!
4. He saves the world and gives it hope through us!
5. We are called to be people of prayer and praise!

We need to read the scriptures on these thoughts, to reflect on them, to pray over them. We must lift up our hearts, and give thanks and praise to the Lord our God. We need to prepare every liturgy well — especially each Sunday celebration — so that these joys are evident, reflected in each part of the event: in our songs and readings, in our adaptations and choice of options, in our processions and introductions and invitations. We have to be open also to the spirit of the liturgy, and to its changing moods and occasions through the year. As well, the liturgy committee needs to help all members of the community to prepare for the liturgy, so that they too will be more receptive to the spirit of the day and season, and ready to join in a true celebration.

Learning how to express our celebration: Celebration is the responsibility of the whole community, not just of the priest and liturgy committee. Good celebration is an art based on belief, forms founded on faith. Considering what we believe (why we celebrate), we then have to apply it in our community’s liturgy. This means we have to take a fresh look at our community situation, its positive and negative aspects, and move on from there. Doing this will involve everyone interested in liturgy, and should mean we take a fresh look at many things:

1. Community understanding of why we celebrate
2. Training and formation of all involved in proclamation and celebration
3. Weekly preparation by clergy, ministers, people
4. Church building, structures, arrangements, equipment
• Timetable
• Dignity of celebration (in every detail: words, actions, gestures)
• Music
• Use of liturgical books, pastoral aids

These are only a few of the elements of good celebration, but they can have a strong influence for better or poorer liturgy, depending on the way they are used.

What are you doing in your community to promote good celebration? What changes and developments can you work for to bring about better liturgy?

YEAR OF JUBILEE

A sound article entitled Holy Year 1975 and Its Origins in the Jewish Jubilee Year has been written by Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, national interreligious affairs director of the American Jewish Committee. Interesting and scholarly, yet not too difficult for ordinary readers, the 21-page article describes the origins and meaning of the Jubilee Year. Its Christian application is left to the reader, but is easily made. Accompanying comment by bishops from Rome and the United States suggest some of the ways this article may be useful to Catholics during the Holy Year.

This paper could be of value for your liturgy committee and others as 1975 opens. Copies may be obtained at a minimal cost (to cover mimeographing, postage and handling): 6 to 99 copies at 25¢ a copy; 100 copies and over, 20% discount.

They are available from:
Interreligious Affairs
American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th Street
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022
U.S.A.
CELEBRATION

SHARING THE WORK

When we were growing up, Sunday Mass was mainly the work of one man. Father read and said and did everything of importance. Servers brought cruets, rang bells and turned up the communion cloth, ushers took up the collection, and choirs sang — but Father did the things that really counted. Though we did not realize it at the time, the Sunday liturgy was treated as a one-man band.

Then the Vatican Council (Liturgy, no. 28) spoke of the division of roles: everyone — priest, minister, and person in the pew — was to carry out his role by doing all that he should do, and only what he should do. “All and only” means that the priest does not proclaim the reader’s parts, that the servers do not take the people’s responses, that the congregation does not say the texts reserved to the celebrant.

Separate Roles

First, a look at the role of each person and group involved in the Sunday assembly, and then the way in which the celebrant brings all these diverse elements into one harmonious celebration.

Bishop: The bishop is the high priest and the chief liturgist for the diocesan community of faith. For a eucharistic celebration to be authentic and legitimate, it must be directed by the bishop in person, or by the priests who are his helpers and co-workers: see Vatican II’s Constitution on the Church, nos. 26 and 28, and Liturgy, nos. 41-42. It is evident why underground liturgies and communities are not authentic manifestations of the Church.

When the bishop is present, he should preside, and have other priests concelebrate with him. Such a Mass — when the congregation is present, of course — is a clear sign of the Church as the sacrament of unity. The bishop’s role as celebrant is basically as described on page 265.

If the bishop does not celebrate, he may preside during the liturgy of the word and the rite of dismissal (GI, no. 59).

The diocesan liturgy commission is one of the ways in which the bishop carries out his liturgical responsibilities, but he himself must continue to strive to celebrate well, to preach the word of God in season and out, and to encourage his priests to do so too.

Celebrant: His work of unifying the celebration is the second section of this article.

Deacon: The deacon’s role is important in the liturgical celebration:

- He proclaims the gospel pericope
- At times, he may preach the homily
- He presents the intentions for the prayer of the faithful

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• He assists the celebrant during the liturgy of the eucharist
• He gives communion, especially by ministering the chalice
• He gives directions to the assembled congregation (such as the invitation to share the sign of peace and to receive the solemn blessing; the dismissal; some would add the invitation to the memorial acclamation).

These functions are described in greater detail in the General Instruction (GI) at the beginning of the sacramentary (pages 11-54), especially in nos. 35, 61, 127-141.

When no deacon is present, it is desirable that another priest read the gospel (the celebrant is the last choice for this task — GI, no. 34). A reader or other minister may read the petitions for the prayer of the faithful.

Reader: The reader is officially called (instituted) by the Church to proclaim the scripture readings before the gospel. When no deacon is present, he may read the petitions in the prayer of the faithful. If no cantor is available, the reader may sing or read the responsorial psalm, while the congregation sings or reads the refrain (singing is always preferred). On Sundays, it is proper for separate readers to proclaim the first two readings.

Even when ministers of higher rank (for example, a deacon) are present, the reader — even a lay reader — exercises his proper liturgical function: no one else is to usurp it. Further directions for the reader are contained in GI, nos. 34 and 66, as well as in special notes on page 54 of the sacramentary.

Preparation: The reader should be trained to read well, in a spirit of faith; he should realize too that his personal life must also proclaim what he reads in church. Sunday Lectionary — Study Edition has been prepared by the CCC to help readers as they prepare their texts.

Acolyte: A person who has been instituted as an acolyte assists the celebrant and the deacon during Mass. He prepares the altar and the chalice and other vessels. As an auxiliary minister of the eucharist, he gives communion to the members of the congregation. His responsibilities are outlined in more detail in GI, no. 65 and on page 54, at the end of the General Instruction.

Cantor: The cantor or leader of song has a double role: he sings the psalm and certain other chants, alternating with the people; he may also lead them in other hymns (GI, nos. 64, 78, 90). The importance of singing in the liturgy is described in nos. 17 and 19.

At the entrance song (GI, nos. 25-26), responsorial psalm (no. 36), gospel acclamation (no. 37), Lamb of God (no. 56e), and communion song (no. 56i), the cantor fulfills this role.

During the prayer of the faithful, he may propose the petitions when there is no deacon (GI, no. 47 — though one might wonder if this is the best division of roles: unless the petitions are sung, they might better be left to the reader, as in no. 66).

The General Instruction (no. 272) notes that it is not really suitable for the cantor to use the permanent lectern, which is to be reserved for the readings, homily, prayer of the faithful, and the Easter proclamation of praise (Exsultet).
But then, seeming to confuse matters, the same paragraph says that the responsorial psalm — the responsibility of the cantor — is proclaimed from the lectern.

What is really being said is this: the reader’s lectern is to be reserved for proclamation, rather than becoming a place for every word and announcement directed to the people. The cantor (and commentator or choirmaster) should work from a portable lectern or microphone somewhere else. The cantor may lead the responsorial psalm from the reader’s lectern or from his own place, but all the rest of his work is done at his portable lectern.

Preparation: The cantor should understand the way the responsorial psalm and its antiphon fit in with the readings of the day’s Mass, and work together with the choir and organist in selecting and practising the other music for the celebration. They should consider using the common psalms and refrains as a way of enabling the people to sing them each week (compare the choir and pew editions of Catholic Book of Worship, nos. 175-200; see also lectionary, nos. 174-175, pages 405-412).

Choir and musicians: By leading and sustaining the community singing, and by singing at other times in the Mass while the people listen, the choir and musicians make an important contribution to the spirit of the Sunday celebration. Singing and music increase the sense of unity and celebration among the members of the assembly. Using their God-given talent in his service, singers and musicians help the community to give greater and more beautiful praise to God, and deepen the impact of the celebration on the faith and lives of the believers who take part.

Preparation: Good musicians and singers consider a number of important points as they prepare for a Sunday celebration:

- The spirit and mood of the Sunday, depending on its place in the liturgical year, the spirit of the season, and the message of the Mass texts.
- Sensitivity to the nature of the various parts and feelings of the Mass: differing types of music are needed for an opening hymn, a meditative responsorial psalm, a joyful gospel acclamation, a quiet hymn during the preparation of the gifts, the acclamation after the preface, the memorial acclamation, the great Amen, Lamb of God, a hymn of praise after communion, and for the recessional chant.
- Concern that sufficient scope is given to helping the community to sing. A good celebration will include singing by a cantor with the people responding (responsorial psalm and refrain, gospel acclamation and alleluia), singing by the choir and community together, and possibly a psalm or hymn by the choir alone, as well as instrumental music alone at an appropriate time.
- Variety is desirable, both in the pieces chosen and in the variations in the singing of hymns (one verse by all, one by the choir only, possibly one in harmony, or alternating by sides, or men and women alternating). Choirs and people should learn new music occasionally, while retaining a basic repertoire. Seasonal music needs to be learned and used at various times of the liturgical year.

Auxiliary ministers of communion help the celebration to be more effective by their assistance during the time of communion, helping to distribute communion under either form. A sufficient number of ministers should be on hand so that communion with dignity is not unduly long. A community which is concerned about its sick, aged and shut-in members will enable them to share in communion.
on the Lord’s day through the ministry of auxiliary ministers. Their service should be considered as normal as part of the Sunday celebration as is that of readers or servers.

In Can I go too? in this issue, an auxiliary minister describes his work in the service of a Northern Ontario parish.

**Preparation:** Auxiliary ministers should prepare themselves for their service to the believing community by a sincere effort to live as devout followers of the Lord Jesus. Fervent, daily prayer, frequent and meditative reading of the word of God, and true devotion for the eucharist in its fullness will lead auxiliary ministries to a more fervent participation in the Sunday celebration.

Servers also exercise a genuine liturgical ministry (Liturgy, no. 29). Since they lost their position of being the only ones to make the responses, servers have seemed to occupy a liturgical vacuum. The past few years have seen their ministry become a stage for haberdashery, women’s lib and be-kind-to-pensioners spirit, almost to the point of losing sight of what the servers do.

The servers minister to the celebrant and aid the dignity of the celebration by adding solemnity. In processions, they carry the cross, candles and incense. A server may hold the sacramentary for the celebrant while he is at the chair. Servers assist him bringing bread, wine and water to the altar, when this is not done by other members of the congregation.

A good number of well trained and neatly dressed servers lends dignity to the celebration. The Lord is able to use the devotion and sincerity of servers in preparing them to serve him and his people in adult life.

**Preparation:** A parish liturgy committee should consider the value of a good group of servers of varying ages. Rather than leaving recruiting, vesting, training and scheduling to the priest — especially in a one-man parish or in a mission church — committee members might take on this responsibility, or invite another parishioner to do so.

Together, priest and liturgy committee should work to help servers appreciate the nature and importance of the worship they offer to God and of the service they are giving to his beloved people. Some way of helping them to prepare for each particular celebration, and perhaps an encouragement to pray quietly for a few moments after Mass (especially encouraged by the celebrant’s example), would help them to make a more effective contribution to the community celebration.

**Formation and training:** The Vatican Council urges that all who fulfill liturgical ministries should be given help to carry out their office well, with sincere piety, and in a manner expected of them by God’s people.

All ministers need to be filled with the spirit of the liturgy, so that they may understand the rites and take part in them with zeal. They need to be trained so that they may carry out their functions correctly and with dignity (Liturgy, no. 29).

This training is the responsibility of the priest with his liturgy committee. Diocesan commissions should consider it their duty to be of aid to parishes in helping them to organize and carry out such training.
But One Celebration

One of the celebrant’s works is to unify the celebration so that it becomes the praise and prayer of a single assembly of the Lord’s people, rather than a disjointed collection of prayers and rites performed by individuals without regard to the rest.

Some of the ways in which the presiding celebrant brings this unity to the Sunday celebration:

- **Helping individuals** to carry out their roles as well as they can: the celebrant is the one who should seek to inspire readers and servers and musicians and all the others mentioned above to do their task well by sincere preparation and celebration. He needs to be filled with the spirit and the power of the liturgy, so that he might lead all his people to live the liturgical life more fully. (Read the Council’s teaching in the Constitution on the liturgy, nos. 14, 18-19.)

- **Helping groups** to work together in harmony: Neither servers nor musicians nor readers carry the whole celebration. It is only when each ministry is able to work with others that the resulting symphony of liturgical praise gives greater praise to God and leads his people to deeper faith in action.

- **Keeping a sense of prayer:** The liturgy is not merely a dramatic presentation or an exercise in human relations. It is worship, offered by Christ through and with this community to the Father. Each Sunday, God is calling together this part of his family to hear his word and to respond to it in prayer and song and thanks, to eat the bread of life and to go forth to live the risen life of his beloved Son. The celebrant has to help all involved in liturgy to keep a sense of faith throughout their preparations and activities: this is best accomplished by prayer — his prayer, the prayer of all who have a liturgical ministry, the prayer of the sick and shut-in members of the community, and the prayer of all, young and old. Calling his parish back to the liturgy of the hours (Liturgy constitution, no. 100) is another important way of deepening the community’s spirit of prayer.

- **In tune with the liturgical year:** A good celebrant will be sensitive to the changing rhythm of the Church’s year of prayer and praise, and will help his people to live and pray in harmony with it. The lectionary and sacramentary, notes in Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy, and frequent Bulletin articles, helpful books, and other publications can help him and the ministers of the community to remain in tune with this spirit. The next Bulletin, no. 47, will be on the origins, development and celebration of the liturgical year.

There is no magic path or easy road to good celebration in a community. But when all share the work, under the leadership and inspiration of a sincere celebrant, God will work wonders, and share the true Christian spirit with such a believing and worshipping community.

SEASON TO BE JOLLY?

How many observe Christ’s birthday! How few, his precepts. It is easier to keep holidays than commandments.  

*Benjamin Franklin*
OF CHALICES AND THINGS

How little we know of our past! We need to know a great deal more, for traditions afford strength once they are understood. *Fiddler on the Roof* portrayed this with much impact.

The *signs* in the bread and wine liturgy of the Roman rite have had good centuries and bad: without our realizing it, we are at the end of the most extraordinary ten years in our 2,000 year liturgical history.

A long glance backwards is always a delight to a tired climber: its richness calls him to greater efforts. Father L.L. Sullivan, director of the National Office for Liturgy, invites readers to look back and see where our traditions come from, so we can gather where we are, and move ahead together.

Passover meal: During the Passover, Jesus took bread, and having blessed the Father, he shared it with those at table: instead of the familiar words, “See the bread of misery which our fathers ate as they departed from Egypt,” Jesus said to his disciplines, “This is my body which is given for you.” Near the close of the meal, the cup (the “common cup,” the third of four cups of wine consumed at the Passover) was offered to all, with the words of Jesus, “This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant: this blood will be shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin.”

The institution of the Lord’s supper concluded with the words, “Do this in memory of me.”

The shape of the liturgy: By this simple but intensely significant rite, Jesus determined the general outline of Christian worship for all the ages to come: all who awaited him “in joyful hope” continued to do as he had commanded. In eating and drinking these holy elements of bread and wine, the followers of Jesus entered into and shared the new covenant. They knew themselves to be filled with the bread come down from heaven: they rejoiced to receive the holy wine of love, and recall God’s magnificent intervention in their lives.

From Many Tables to One Altar

As the infant Church grew and the parable of the mustard seed was verified, the holy banquet of the Lord slowly lost its connection with a common meal: one must say slowly, because there were still traces of a full course meal connected to the eucharist for hundreds of years after Christ: the domestic nature of home-liturgy favored this conjunction of celebrations. Yet it is a fact that as the numbers of the baptized increased, the logistics of large banquets asserted themselves: all the tables disappeared except the president’s.

House liturgies and mission activities: Paul’s witness in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 is proof enough that eucharist and meals often collided, and the exigencies of the latter cut into the deeply spiritual significance of the prayer of thanks. Nonetheless, the Pauline communities continue to “eat the bread and drink the cup,” their gaze anxiously turned to the east, searching the skies for the master’s return.
The church grew: Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome and Alexandria, being major commercial centers of the Empire, became the great missionary centers as well. These cities had the personnel, and the money, for missionary undertakings: wherever the community gathered, bread and wine was brought to a table, the president praised the Father for the gift of his servant, Jesus, and recalled the Lord's saving descent into death, and his glorification. The Lord's very words were repeated, the holy food was eaten, and the chalice was shared by everyone.

Enter the Emperor

In 313, Constantine, the Emperor of Rome, turned toward Christianity and the Catholic Church found itself mightily changed. The Church no longer had to beg for a place in the sun, and rarely had to bail her adherents out of jail or search out their tortured bodies. Instead, Catholicism was the religion of the empire: real estate of magnificent proportions was hers for the taking; indeed, a goodly amount seems to have been forced upon her by the life-long catechumen-emperor.

Liturgists vs. Gnostics: The pope, no longer hiding in some domestic closet, had a fine church of his own, on the Lateran hill. Shortly, he had dozens of churches, and seven bishops associated with him in governing the outlying areas surrounding the city of Rome. Despite the greatly increased number of communicants, the table signs of unity and rejoicing held strong: if more bread was needed, more hands did the baking and more fingers did the breaking; if more wine was needed, more vessels were brought out, more jugs offered by the faithful. There was no better sign of Rome's rejection of Gnosticism than the pope's deacons and presbyters diligently pulling loaves apart for the communion rite. If the Gnostics felt that salvation would follow only when abstruse theories were adequately understood, the ancient faith had other ideas, as loaves and jugs of wine were gathered near the altar and were shared from the community's one great focal point. One does not read of bishops or presbyters bemoaning how much time it took: one can hardly sustain a three-hour Roman dinner and decry a dozen minutes at the communion rite. One would do well to read the detailed account of the pope's stational Mass in the seventh century, as described in Dix, Baumstark, Jungmann, and other books of liturgical lore. A few uncomplicated facts emerge:

- The community was ordered, i.e., the deacon was not a priest, and the president was not one among many; each man or woman did his own proper thing or "liturgy," and there was no overlapping;
- the community had gathered to hear the word: there were no hymnals, no disposable tracts, no overhead projectors — as the Spirit willed, people were gathered by the hundreds to hear the word announced to them, and to respond to it in simple, litanical fashion;
- drawn together by the same Spirit, and following the Lord's own command, the members of the community had gathered to pray their thanks to the

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1 A curious and dreary heresy, which promised salvation to all who could master pious syllogisms and abstract reasoning. The last thing this crowd wanted to do was get its hands dirty, or have any truck with material things. (Further information is contained in "Gnosticism and New Testament Studies," by George W. McRae, S.J., in The Bible Today Reader, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn., 1973, pages 67-74.)
Father for the gift of his only Son: their gratitude would sound forth from the president's lips, and all would affirm it by a resounding Amen, a greeting of peace, and a sharing in holy food and drink.

• all the while, the heart of each follower of Jesus was intent on good works, so that the heroic sacrifice of Calvary might be shared in the most local of all churches, the family home and the neighborhood street.

No vernacular problem, at first: The Church has gone through several linguistic adjustments, which we have come to call the "vernacular problem." Aramaic was almost immediately displaced by Greek, and Greek was the master in Rome for over two hundred years. Latin stood alongside, and was used wherever it made more sense to do so: finally, as the third century gave way to the fourth, Latin submerged Greek forms practically everywhere in the west. (Though the Catholic Church once had consistently changed her linguistic garb to suit the needs of the praying community, this principle ceased to obtain until the 1960's, when the Latin language suddenly lost its halo and people began to hear the word in the language of their marketplace. Unhappily, many of the translations belong in the marketplace.)

What happened? The "free Church" of the post-Constantinian centuries blossomed numerically, but once it had chosen to take in anyone who wanted to join — with no catechumenate — the handwriting was on the wall. Quickly, almost too quickly for our grasp, the inner core of the parish liturgical assembly deteriorated. By the eighth century, people had well nigh ceased to go to the altar area and eat the holy food or drink from the cup. Councils great and small called on them to frequent the Lord's supper, but to no avail. What had happened? Where had the signs been torn down?

A couple of answers make sense: the long term effects of Arianism were now beginning to tell, and clerical wealth attracted entrepreneurs instead of apostles. The day of "automatic religion" had arrived.

First, Arianism. The most widespread heresy ever to assault the body of Christ denied his divinity; in reaction, the body of the faithful affirmed Christ's royal Lordship, his total equality with the Father, his imperial rights as judge and Pantocrator. Both sides shouted loudly, and the net result was an eclipse of Jesus' humanity: he came to be seen much more as the powerful God than as the faithful servant, the puer of the Father, the bridge over fear. People stayed away from communion for many reasons, no doubt, but one of those reasons was that they were afraid of this powerful Lord. Bishops and priests still celebrated Mass, of course, but they apologized throughout the whole ceremony. Confiteors were found in a dozen places of the Roman rite. It was a cheerless assembly.

Second, clergy left a lot to be desired in their daily lives. Chrysostom had commented sadly some three hundred years earlier, "once we had priests of gold and chalices of wood: now we have chalices of gold and priests of wood." The wood was further weakened as Masses were multiplied, and commerce entered the sacristy. Mass was celebrated by well-meaning clergy as often as nine times a day: "Altar-thanes" or Massing priests filled European establishments, and, quantitatively, Masses were never more frequent. Hardly anyone ever went to communion: it was enough to see the host, and it didn't take long for monstrances and expositions to multiply.
Medieval changes: Yet withal, the communion rite survived: bread was still broken and shared (though it became unleavened in the eighth century, and generally appeared as precut wafers in the eleventh century): the one cup still was passed around by the bishop to his priests, and by the priests to the few faithful who braved the altar area.

From the twelfth century on, people began to kneel for communion, though from the ninth century, the host was no longer placed in their hand but was inserted into their mouths. A hyper-reverence for the species of wine arose simultaneously in the East and West: the East decided for intinction, by which a particle of the bread was immersed in the wine, and then was placed (via a spoon) directly into the communicant's mouth. The West opted for a hollow tube, a metal straw called a fistula; intinction was "violently opposed by Rome as not in conformity with the proper form of this sacrament. Christ had prescribed 'eat' and 'drink' and the reception of the species of bread merely dipped in the species of wine did not seem to fulfill the latter directive."

Concomitance and One Species

The Church has always accepted the fact that the Lord is totally present under either form, bread or wine. When one wanted to give communion to a sick person, or to travellers, hermits, infants or those confined to their homes, communion under one form was the norm. The ancient Eastern tradition which instructed the priest to dip his finger into the consecrated wine and then place his finger into the newly-baptized infant's mouth, witnesses to communion under one species only. A little-heralded theologian, Richard Fishacre, gave a name to the doctrine; concomitance; thanks to this doctrine, the way was found to remove the chalice from the faithful without, at the same time, removing grace. Since the Lord was fully present in the consecrated bread, there was no need to use straws, spoons, cups, scyphi or any other wine appointments.

"After more than a thousand years of the common practice of distributing both the species in communion, the practice of communion under the one species of bread became, without fanfare, the practically universal custom throughout the West before the century saw its close. The last exceptions toppled during the thirteenth century, at the end of which we encounter for the first time legislation against receiving both species in particular areas and orders."

Despite Rome's protests, intinction continued. But by the fourteenth century, communion under one form was the norm in the West. The chalice, with rare exceptions, belonged to the celebrant alone.

The Reformers

The reformers decried the removal of the chalice as clerical presumption and proclaimed the Lord's commands had been abandoned in favor of short range liturgical facility and long range theological two-timing.

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3 Extra vessels for wine.
4 McGivern, op. cit., page 241.
There was more heat than light, as the sects contested with Rome over the chalice issue. The Protestant factions of the Czech areas put the chalice symbol on fence posts and church peaks: it became their symbol of the reformation. Certain Spanish and Italian bishops battled back, leaning too heavily on concumittance and all but forgetting the Catholic Church’s thousand years before the Council of Lyons; today we are aghast to hear these things from the records of Trent: “Cardinal Hosius at the Council of Trent went so far as to say: ‘Initium secessionis ab Ecclesia Dei sumptum est a calice.’ The bishop of Segovia called the very desire for the chalice heretical, while the bishops of Leon, Spain, and Capua, Italy, both affirmed that to permit the chalice would be like permitting houses of prostitution.” Pope, Pius IV cut the Spanish Church down to size, temporarily restored the chalice to Bavaria, only to have the bewildered Catholics there classify him as a semi-Lutheran! Yet the majority of the Council bishops wanted no part in banning the chalice; they turned the pastoral decision over to Pope Pius IV, who personally favored the laity’s free access to the two species. But the waves of controversy were too high for such delicacies of reform.

It was not the time to restore the cup, quite evidently. One could only hope for calmer seas. While accepting chalice communion as the ideal, Rome bided her time, and let the reformers’ fury tire itself out.

Vatican II

The Council bishops wanted the chalice restored, at least as an option, and their first major document did so. In the Constitution on the Liturgy, a few obvious cases were considered: ordination, religious profession and adult baptism. As signs of the conservative times, only those who were actually ordained, professed or baptized were to receive under both forms, according to the terms of the Constitution.

Gradually, the door opened wider, and more cases were considered: adults at their confirmation Mass, and those being received into full communion; the bride and groom as well as guests at a marriage; departure ceremony principals; all at home Masses; all who minister at the altar during solemn rites; seminarians at all Masses in their chapel; retreatants; jubilarians, married or professed; those at Holy Thursday evening Masses. In addition, the chalice list approved by the Canadian bishops in late 1970 included other persons and events, as the bishops tried to show priests and people what the ideal occasions were for making special efforts on behalf of communion under both forms. The bishops’ final approval, “On all other occasions which the Ordinary judges (to be) appropriate,” made it possible for chalice communion for all to be the norm, and no longer the exception. With the flexibility and facility afforded by auxiliary ministers, the problem of chalice communion for all, on all occasions, ceases to exist. All that is lacking now is goodwill, and a serious appreciation of the fullness of sign obtained by doing as the Lord asked, “Take and eat; take and drink.”

Bread: What is to be done about the sign of bread? Our bread tradition in Canada is as old as our first settlements: what a gracious satisfaction to stop and buy a loaf of homemade bread in Québec! Our flour is the world’s best. Our hosts are among the world’s worst. Kids call them “host chips,” and deservedly

5 McGivern, op. cit., page 246.
so. It seems to me that much needs be done here, both in the leavened and unleavened forms of bread.

There is nothing more soundly human than the father of a householder “breaking bread” for his family and guests. It would do our hearts — and eyes — a lot of good to see the celebrant (and deacons or auxiliary ministers) breaking bread for the congregation during the Lamb of God.

**The Acceptable Moment, But Are We Up to It?**

It was my hope, as this article unwound, to lead the reader into a realization that chalices and bread, as well as history and geography, have played a large part in our sacramental lives, whether we realize it or not.

The Church has never shied away from the truth, though she carefully picks her moments to change her ways. As far as full participation is concerned — in signs of holy food, in full use of sacramentary and lectionary, in popular music and psalmody — now is a rich moment, an exceptionally acceptable time. Are we up to it?

Good liturgy — with full signs of grace — is hard work, and minimalism is so much easier. The Lord himself sets us a good example to follow: knowing the value of signs, of a sense of history, of full participation, he sent the two disciples into Jerusalem a few days in advance of Passover, told them to search out a certain friend of his: “and he will show you a large room furnished and ready: there, prepare for us.” 6

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**CEREMONY**

*A letter from one of our readers explains the need for a sound understanding of ritual or ceremonial in the Church today. This issue of the Bulletin in one step toward this goal.*

May I suggest for a sometime article in your Bulletin one on ceremony.

Probably because I feel a need to understand better this whole area of human behavior, I sense others may have the same need. I sense it more deeply when I hear others equate “ceremony” with “formalism” and “empty form.”

Perhaps we shall have to surrender the word and find another that is more expressive of what is in the mind of the Church when she uses the word with fondness and even love; or perhaps we need to retain it but rediscover the wealth of meaning it had for those who used it with a sense of the sacred.

I sense here another aspect of the renewal, another instance of the need to probe rather than simply live with or cast away.

Peter A. Nearing
Madonna House
Combermere, Ontario

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6 Mk. 14:16.
WORDS OF CONSECRATION ARE COMMUNICATION

Father Billy Fitzgerald, assistant director of the Communications Centre, the national communications office of the episcopal conference in Ireland, discusses some of the ways in which the celebrant can better proclaim the eucharistic prayer.

From time to time the Communications Centre in Booterstown Avenue, Dublin, holds week-long seminars for priests. One of the standard workshops is concerned with improving the way in which a priest celebrates the eucharist. Participants doing the course 'celebrate Mass' before the television cameras and the resulting videorecordings are played back and analysed for the benefit of the participants. One of the questions that often gives rise to prolonged discussion is that of the intention or direction of the words of institution. In days gone by, these words were secret and hieratic in the extreme. The celebrant leaned over the sacred species, his elbows on the altar table and spoke the words in an intense whisper. (One of the approved textbooks insisted that the precise intensity of that whisper be measured by whether or not the altar boy could hear the words. They should be heard by him, but not, apparently, by the people kneeling in the front row of benches.) Things are different now. The words of the celebrant should certainly be audible and intelligible even to those in the back row.

To be proclaimed: The words of institution are the pivotal point of the Mass. Far from being whispered, they must be spoken, proclaimed, celebrated and even sung, at least on special occasions. This immediately poses a problem of teleology. To whom are these words spoken? For what purpose are they spoken?

First and foremost, they are addressed to the Father, they are a prayer. He gave you thanks: The word 'you' here is addressed to the Father. The consecration therefore is a commemorative telling to the Father, a thanking the Father, for what his Son has done. This commemorative telling is done through, with and in the Son, in union with the Holy Spirit. It is done on behalf of and with those celebrating here and now.

As well as being addressed to the Father, however, the words are certainly also addressed to those present. This is a celebration, a memorial, a reminder of the action of Christ, and a reminder of his instructions to his apostles and their followers to do this in memory of him.

Therefore the words are addressed first to the Father and then to those present, but there is another direction as well. The words are orientated to the species themselves. We are after all concerned here with what the books used to call the 'confection' of the sacrament: the words actually effecting the change. While this interpretation might be some present day standards be considered narrow, it would be allowed, even by those who see the entire eucharistic prayer as consecratory, that the words of institution themselves still hold in some way a special place. It would hardly be held, for instance, that under particularly straitened circumstances, a priest who spoke simply the words of institution over the bread and wine with the intention of effecting the eucharistic change, would fail in his intention simply for want of completing the eucharistic prayer.

Certain pastoral consequences follow from this. If for instance there is to take place a commemorative telling to those present of what Christ himself had done and is doing, then it would seem anomalous that the congregation should adopt the former position of faces buried in hands. Bowed heads, either on the
part of the congregation or of the celebrant himself at this time, would seem to pose enormous problems for meaningful communication. It also follows that the speed with which the words themselves are spoken must be geared to the effect to be produced; during the recitation of the words themselves, pauses must be allowed in order to allow changes of emphasis and direction to be recognized and appreciated by those concerned.

Eyes: It is difficult, even in ordinary conversation, to express yourself well to someone who will not look at you. Eyes have a primary role to play in person-to-person communications. It follows from this that in order for the words of consecration to be spoken to the congregation, the celebrant's eyes must be free of the text. In other words, any scrupulous fear of error must be overcome and the words learned off by heart. It's strange how some priests find this notion hard to take. Yet they have no difficulty in reciting the Lord's prayer from memory. The Our Father contains fifty-seven words, yet the consecration of the bread in the second eucharistic prayer, for example, contains only fifty.

Tone and gestures: Besides the eyes, there are other important indications as to the intention and direction of the priest's words. These are the way in which the words themselves are spoken and also the accompanying gestures made by the celebrant. We could take a look at the words of institution themselves and suggest the way in which they might be recited in order to make the best impact on those present.

Before he was given up to death: Clearly we are here recounting both to the people present and to the Father what our Lord did. This sentence is a straight telling of something. Therefore, I suggest that the celebrant look at and maintain eye contact with those around the altar. He took bread: For this, we can look down at the host and then pick it up, our eyes following the action.

And gave you thanks: As noted above, the 'you' is directed specifically to the Father. It is not unreasonable therefore that the eyes of the celebrant should at least momentarily look upwards. Purists might object that to our enlightened minds God is neither up nor down; nevertheless, in adopting such a convention as looking upward, we are doing no more than, apparently, our savior did himself on many occasions.

And gave it to his disciples: Here the recounting might become in part a re-enactment. In other words, what is to prevent the celebrant from holding out the host in his hand in an offering gesture toward the congregation?

And said, This is my body: Little doubt here as to where we should be looking — directly at the host. At the same time, perhaps there is a case to be made for stressing the word this.

Given up for you: He certainly gave up his body for the congregation here present. When spoken by Christ, the word 'you' applied to the apostles around him at the table at the last supper, but now applies to the congregation present. For this reason, the eyes of the celebrant should once again be on those of his congregation.

There follows immediately what we used to call the elevation. This is essentially a showing of the consecrated species. It used to have to be lifted high in the air, simply to allow it to be seen above the head of the celebrant who was
standing with his back to the congregation. Today however, the action should be rather an extending forward of the sacred host rather than an elevation, as there now is no obstacle to its being seen by all present.

Precisely the same exercise can be carried out on the words for the consecration of the chalice. When supper was ended: Recounting, eyes on the congregation. He took the cup: Eyes and hands to chalice. Again he gave you thanks and praise: Eyes upwards, as to the Father. He gave the cup to his disciples and said: Chalice held out toward the congregation; the words, Take this are said to the congregation with the appropriate eye contact. Then for This is the cup of my blood, the eyes and attention of the celebrant are back on the cup and its contents. He lets his eyes rise again to meet those of the congregation for It will be shed for you right through to in memory of me.

Final command: It is an interesting study to take the final word of instruction, Do this in memory of me, and to decide what word or words in that sentence ought to be emphasized. Apart from the two particles in and of, the sentence can be spoken with stress on any one of the other words: the meaning will always be the same. The nuances however will change depending on the stress chosen. This being the case, the choice of which word to stress should in fact differ from celebration to celebration, depending on the choice of the celebrant.

Memorial acclamation: After the consecration, the priest invites the community to proclaim its belief in the paschal mystery. During the invitation, he looks directly at the people to whom he is speaking. When they join him in the words of the acclamation, preferably by singing it, he may look at the sacred species or retain eye contact with the congregation.

Gestures: Finally, a word about the gestures and other movements of the celebrant during the eucharistic prayer. It is the whole man who speaks through his whole body; even without adverting to it, we use ‘body language’ every day to communicate with other people. For example, reverence is shown by our words and the manner with which we speak them, and applies even to such things as the way we stand. It is worthwhile, therefore, to pay attention to the way in which we stand, sit, rise, and gesture. No movement is too insignificant to deserve our special attention.

Genuflections pose a real problem, particularly when celebrating as we do now, facing the congregation across the eucharistic table. If the altar is a solid one, (in which the space beneath the table is blocked so that the congregation cannot see the legs and feet of the celebrant), then a genuflection, particularly one which is ‘reverent’ and slow, may give the effect of being a kind of vanishing trick, the celebrant simply disappearing from view for a moment. This in itself can be a distraction. With this kind of altar, the genuflection should be as swift as is possible while continuing to be reverent.

It is interesting to note that the genuflection between the consecration of the bread and the chalice is considered an interruption by some experts. Dr. Balthasar Fischer, addressing the Glenstal Liturgical Congress some years ago, said that certain of the experts involved in the preparation of the new Roman sacramentary had advocated the omission of this genuflection, in favor of having just one when both the host and the chalice had been consecrated. This proved to be a minority view, however, and was not carried.
Apart from the danger of disappearing from view, another hazard to be avoided by the celebrant is the obscuring of his face, either by his own hands or by the host or chalice held in front of him. The lips and the eyes are what convey the meaning; the priest should not allow them to become obscured at any stage. This situation arises particularly during the speaking of the words of consecration, but also during the preparation of the gifts (*Blessed are you, Lord God*), and during the great doxology. In none of these cases should it be necessary to lift anything higher than shoulder level, if even that high.

**Toward fuller meaning:** In these days when we have thankfully retreated from the old hyper-rubrical approach to celebration (when every moment and every gesture appeared to be legislated with mathematical precision), is it not a pity to have to make these observations? Is it not perhaps a return to the old rubricism in a new form?

I think not. The purpose after all is somewhat different. We are concerned now not with mathematical precision for its own sake, but rather with ensuring that every nuance of the liturgical celebration is adequately expressed, and every shade of meaning contained in the Mass itself gets across to those who are participating. By paying attention to details such as these, we can in fact help to avoid slipping back into the old errors of automatic formalism whose memories are too close for comfort’s sake.

Rev. William FitzGerald  
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**PREPARING FOR LENT**

This is the time of year that your parish council should be deciding on the lenten projects your community will undertake in Lent of 1975.

The 1974 Labor Day statement of the Canadian bishops is entitled *Sharing daily bread*. It is a forthright call to Christians in America to take a serious look at the effects of our way of life on other parts of the world. Only by a prayerful study of the food crisis in the light of Jesus’ gospel can we begin to find means of changing economic and marketing patterns by an alternative way of living.

The statement is available for bulk distribution at 20 cents a copy (enclosing payment with order if under $1.00) from CCC Publications, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1.

The National Liturgical Office recommends this statement as a document for study, prayer and action during Lent in your parish or community.
CAN I GO TOO?

This article is based on notes by Leon Landry, an auxiliary minister of the eucharist in Espanola, Ontario, in the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie. Since the article was first written in 1973, the number and acceptance of auxiliary ministers has been continuing to grow.

"Can I go too?"

"Don't forget me! When I am well, I go to communion every Sunday. I don't want to miss just because I happen to be in the hospital."

"Yes! I'd like to receive communion tomorrow. I was asleep when he came around last Sunday. If I'm sleeping tomorrow, wake me up. Don't forget."

"We'll see you again next Sunday."

"I don't know! I haven't been near a church for a long, long time."

"The last time I went to church was thirty years ago and that was for a funeral. Yes! Okay!"

"I'd like to talk to a priest!"

"Thanks!"

It is with words such as these with which I am greeted when I visit the sick at the hospital and the shut-ins at home and bring them communion. I am one of six men of the Parish of the Good Shepherd, Espanola, who have been asked to be auxiliary ministers of holy communion. Obviously these remarks express the thanks and appreciation of the sick and the shut-ins for the service which is offered to them as part of our parish community — we share with them and they with us.

Pastoral Concern

How did this happen? When did it begin?

Shortly after the document allowing the host to be placed in the palm of the hand rather than on the tongue, we read another document allowing lay people to assist the priest in the distribution of communion. This document was contained in no. 31 of the National Bulletin on Liturgy, published by the Canadian Catholic Conference in December, 1970.

Preparing the community: Putting this into practice would be quite a step! Obviously the parishioners had to be prepared for this change.

Or is it such a change? Wasn't this the custom in the early Church?

Isn't the need for this once again being felt? What does the future hold in the number of ordained priests? Didn't St. Peter tell us that through the sacraments of baptism and confirmation we belong to a royal priesthood? Isn't there a special role for the layman in the Church?

After December of 1970 this was discussed by our pastor, Father Orendorff, with the parish council, with church groups and from the pulpit; excerpts from the document were regularly included in the Sunday bulletin. By April 1971 our parishioners were asking, "Father, when is this going to start?" The parishioners were ready!
Choosing the ministers: Bishop Alexander Carter sent a letter to the shut-ins. Getting a letter from their bishop made them very happy. In the meantime, a number of parishioners were approached for names of suitable candidates and about fifty or sixty names were given. The parish council then approached twelve men on the list and asked if they would accept this responsibility. Five of us accepted and took a short course (as recommended by the document). This involved a series of talks on the sacraments, the eucharist, the priesthood of the laity, the liturgy, the liturgy of the lay ministry, and pointers from nursing sisters and a doctor on an approach to the sick.

When this was completed, four of us took part in the rite of appointment. Bishop Despatie, our auxiliary bishop at that time, officiated, and we received a special liturgical blessing along with the official appointment by Bishop Carter. This was in May, 1971.

Even prior to this, I had assisted in giving communion at Christmas Midnight Mass; there was an overflowing congregation. The document states that a priest may appoint someone for a particular occasion, such as when the number of communicants may cause unduly long delays at communion time. I believe that, even at that early stage in the parish, the congregation felt very positively about the idea of a layman assisting the priest.

In December of 1972, three more men received the appointment. It was Msgr. Bernard Pappin, our vicar general, who officiated at that rite.

Communion for the sick: Since our appointment, we assist the celebrant in distributing communion at Sunday Masses and on feast days. We bring the eucharist to the sick in the hospital every Sunday and also to the shut-ins at their homes. As well as being able to receive communion every Sunday (the main reason for our going to visit them), they obviously appreciate the friendly visit by one who belongs to their parish. We find this very pleasant and enjoyable.

On Saturdays we visit the sick at the hospital, inquiring if they wish to go to communion on Sunday. Here, also, we are well received. Some ask us to have a priest visit them just for a chat; others ask us to have a priest come to hear their confessions. The priests of the surrounding parishes have informed their people about this service — they also are happy to see us come. After due explanation, visitors who happen to fall sick and are admitted to hospital, also receive communion. I've given communion to one person from Toronto and another from Ottawa. It doesn't matter where they are from or whether it's a priest or a layman who visits them: when they are sick, they are happy to have the opportunity of receiving communion.

Normally, we have had four to six shut-ins, and at the hospital we have given communion to any number of patients up to seventeen.

Sunday in the mission: One of the missions in our parish is Nairn. Father Orendorff goes there on one Saturday night of the month to say Sunday Mass. For the other Sundays, one of us goes to celebrate a communion service with the people of the mission. Actually we have this service in the Anglican church, not having a church of our own. On these Sundays we bring the eucharist with us for the communion of the people of the mission. In Nairn we began with a small group of parishioners; this group has grown and grown. There are times when 40 or 50 people receive holy communion.
When the parish council member from Nairn made her last report, she left no doubt in anyone’s mind that they appreciated the service at Nairn and wanted to see it continue.

During this communion service, as well as saying the prayers, reading God’s word, the epistle and gospel, we do read from a text of prepared homilies — this is somewhat of a challenge, but again, quite pleasant.

Who Are We?

Who are the lay ministers in our parish?

The six of us are married men, with families. Two are insurance agents; four of us happen to be teachers. We have been asked if this disturbs our family life. Very little!

With six of us, except for assisting at Sunday Mass, we are governed by a flexible timetable — one weekend out of six. If we are preoccupied with the family, we switch Sundays to suit ourselves. (We can switch, but priests can’t.)

As for our wives, I feel they may be a bit proud that we are auxiliary ministers. In fact if we happen to be busy on Saturdays for the first visit to the hospital, some of the wives go to visit the patients.

Generally accepted: How do people accept us? Very well. Some hesitated at first. Actually even in our own case, we hesitated, we had to be convinced. I think, perhaps, the biggest problem was us — we know we’re not worthy, but we feel a call to be of service.

On occasion, when not one of us happens to be at Mass, parishioners now criticize us for not being there to help Father at communion time.

Holy Week: During Holy Week we had some other services to perform. While our parish priest was officiating in the church at Espanola, two of us went to the mission churches.

On Good Friday we had the three o’clock service in our mission churches at Webbwood and Nairn. We did the same on Holy Thursday and Easter Saturday. On Easter Sunday, Father went to say extra Masses there as well.

Some Incidents

There was another occurrence which, perhaps, is worthy of mention. This could only happen very rarely. It doesn’t happen very often that in a town of two priests there isn’t one that is available. However, in August I received a telephone call from the hospital. The nurse said that they couldn’t locate a priest — they had my phone number so they called me.

I asked if it was a case for administering the last rites. They said “No, the patient had already expired.” It seemed that there had been a sudden death. I rushed to the hospital, went to the sick-room, and said appropriate prayers for the dead.

I then left a note at the rectory, telling the priest what I had done. When he returned home, about an hour later, he saw the note and went to the hospital to offer the prayers for the dead.
**Two lines:** At Mass, when two of us are giving communion, there are naturally two lines of communicants.

We have often been asked, "Do people switch from the layman's line to the priest's?" This may be being done, but if some do switch there are very few.

I remember when we first started — at communion time, at a Sunday Mass, my line ran out and Father's line was still long. "Did they switch?" I asked myself. I wondered about this until the following Sunday and felt relieved when Father's line ran out and I had the long line left to finish. No! They weren't switching over!

**A large gathering:** On another occasion, there was a special meeting at Marymount. Here again, there was a large number of communicants — it was a meeting of the members of the parish councils. There were many communicants, so the officiating priest asked me to assist at communion.

After Mass one of the sisters came up to me and said that this was a first time for her. She did say she was considering going over to the priest's side but she didn't. "After all," she said, "it's the same Lord, whether he is received from a priest or a layman."

**A little old lady:** I keep thinking about a little old lady who was admitted to the hospital but was not on our list as yet. After speaking to the others in the ward, I was walking out of the room when this soft but clear voice said, "Can I go too?" I stopped, turned around and there was a little hand motioning me to her bedside.

She told me who she was and the parish she came from, and said she wanted to receive communion. I apologized because her name had been left out, and assured her that I would bring her communion on Sunday.

* * *

Does this perhaps help to answer the question: are we accepted? I keep wondering, but I do feel that it was probably easier for her to say to a layman than to a priest, "Can I go too?"

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**PRAYER**

*by those who visit the sick*

Lord Jesus,  
you told us that we are ministering to you  
whenever we help one of your sick brothers and sisters.  
Grant that we may have the faith to see you  
and the strength to minister to you in others.

As we share in your healing ministry,  
teach us to be patient with those who suffer,  
and understanding in their time of trial.  
Guide us in our words and actions  
so that we may lead others to you,  
Son of God and Lord of life. Amen.
A BOOK FOR CELEBRATION

The sacramentary is a major book in the liturgy. Its full benefits will be felt when those who use it are thoroughly familiar with the purposes, design, and built-in helps of this important liturgical book.

Purpose: The sacramentary is the book used by the priest and deacon as they prepare for and celebrate the sacrifice of the Mass. As in all official liturgical books issued since the Second Vatican Council, the sacramentary stresses the separation of roles and full participation by all. Each section of the sacramentary has been designed for a specific purpose, and contributes to the full celebration of the eucharist, especially in the Lord’s day assembly.

The sacramentary is not a compilation of all the readings and prayers (as was the former Missale plenum, or “missal”); rather, it is the celebrant’s book, just as the lectionary is the book for those who proclaim God’s word to the people. The practical fact that the celebrant often has to read the gospel text in one-man parishes should not obscure our awareness that this is only by default: the lectionary clearly states that the gospel is to be read by a deacon or another priest, whenever this is possible.

Nor is the sacramentary a hymnal, or people’s response book. It is the celebrant’s book for the times when he is acting as celebrant. Other books, such as Catholic Book of Worship, may be used at those times when he acts as a member of the congregation — singing the psalm refrain, or a hymn.

Carefully made: From the outset, those who arranged Canada’s sacramentary insisted that the book should be dignified, sturdily bound, easy to follow, with good clear type.

- Binding: The solid binding, in red cloth, is of the same style and quality as the Canadian lectionary. The book is Smyth-sewn, and has five colored ribbons and eight tabs to facilitate its use. There are 1104 pages in the sacramentary.

- Paper is Oxford Book Antique. It is strong (50 lb. weight basis), and “show through” is reduced to a minimum. Pages are 11½ by 7½ inches, and are printed in the traditional red (rubrics, running heads, references, page numbers) and black (texts, major headings).

- Print: The entire book is printed in Times Roman. Eucharistic prayers are printed in 18 point boldface; the opening prayer, prayer over the gifts, and prayer after communion of each Mass, as well as other prayers and introductions used by the celebrant, are in 14 point. Senselines are used for all texts which are to be proclaimed; silent prayers, in 12 point, are printed margin to margin. Texts to be sung by the priest or deacon are in bold 14 point for greater clarity.

- Spacing: Pages are deliberately designed to be open, with sufficient white space for easy reading. Because the Masses follow a similar pattern, location of specific prayers is simple. Headings are large and clear, and cross-references are rarely used.

1 Constitution on the Liturgy, nos. 28 and 14.
Section by Section Description

**Contents of the book** are under the following general headings; they are described in greater detail in the paragraphs that follow. In general, Masses are arranged in order of importance. A complete list of contents is given on pages 3-4 of the sacramentary.

- **Order of contents:**
  - Introductory pages
  - Temporal cycle
  - Order of Mass
  - Saints' feasts
  - Commons
  - Ritual Masses
  - Masses for the dead
  - Masses for various needs and occasions
  - Votive Masses
  - Appendix

**Introductory pages** (pages 1-82): The first 82 pages of the sacramentary are of paramount importance. All who are involved in preparing and celebrating the community's liturgy — readers, musicians, auxiliary ministers, liturgy committee members, catechists, deacons, priests, bishops — will benefit from a careful reading of these pages. Through frequent references in the Bulletin and in *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy*, these texts and their import will gradually become more familiar; as a result, it is hoped, celebrations will continue to improve gradually.

After the title and copyright pages, the opening section contains a decree from the Congregation for Divine Worship, and the Congregation's approval of this book for Canada; this is followed by a letter from Pope Paul, in the form of an Apostolic Constitution which promulgates the new sacramentary (pages 7-9); then follows a detailed General Instruction on the celebration of Mass (pages 11-54); the directory for Masses with children (pages 55-64); the General Norms for the liturgical year and calendar (65-81); and a list of movable feasts from 1974 to 1999 (page 82).

**Temporal cycle** (pages 83-411): In first place, the sacramentary presents the texts for the seasonal Masses of the liturgical year. Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter seasons are followed by the 34 Sundays in ordinary time, and by the solemnities of the Lord.

The lectionary and sacramentary differ when it comes to the sequence of formularies: the lectionary gives all the Sundays and solemnities first, followed by all the ferials; the sacramentary weaves the two sets of formularies together.
One special feature of the ICEL 2 translation is the format for Sunday and ferial Mass texts. ICEL's arrangement affords a clear and distinctive presentation of the prayers, the noble simplicity desired by the Vatican Council.3

Sundays: These texts are presented on two facing pages. The left hand page gives the entrance antiphon, opening prayer, lectionary reference, prayer over the gifts, and preface reference. The right hand page has the communion antiphon, prayer after communion, and — divided from the rest by a hairline — the alternative opening prayer.4 Necessary or useful rubrics are added as required. At the top of the two pages is found the name of the day being celebrated, printed in large type. The formulary number, at the top left of the first page, makes the day's proper texts easy to locate when one prepares the book for use at Mass; this number is referred to in the liturgical calendar, Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy.

Weekdays: These texts are presented on one page. After the name of the day and its formulary number, the page gives the entrance antiphon, opening prayer, lectionary reference, prayer over the gifts, preface reference, communion antiphon, and prayer after communion.

For both Sundays and weekdays, rubrics are added wherever needed.

In all Masses, a larger (14 point) type is used for the prayers, since they are the celebrant's proper parts; the entrance and communion antiphons, which belong to the people and the choir, are given less prominence.

All texts and major titles are in black, rubrics in red.

Order of Mass (pages 412-640): As the heart of the sacramentary, this section has been prepared and presented with special care. Large, clear type, distinctive layout, and permanent tabs set this section apart.

- Introductory rites (pages 412-421): The rite of blessing and sprinkling holy water is printed just before the order of Mass.5

A number of invitations to the penitential rite, and of formulas for the third form of the rite are given as examples of how the penance rite may be adapted in any celebration. A tab is provided for these rites, which are used at each Mass.

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2 ICEL: The International Committee on English in the Liturgy, formed of representatives from the main English-speaking nations. Bishop G. Emmett Carter of London, Ontario, is its current president. In cooperation with each country's hierarchy, ICEL helps achieve the liturgical unity desired by Rome in the field of translating texts.

3 Constitution on the Liturgy, no. 34.

4 The alternative opening prayers are part of the Mass formulary for each Sunday and major feast. They are not part of the Roman Missal, however: they were prepared by ICEL, approved for use in Canada by the CCC, and subsequently confirmed by the Holy See.

5 The use of holy water is a reminder of our baptism, of our escape from the bondage of sin, of our burial with Christ. It is a good, strong symbol — but like any symbol, it can become worn out and routine. Its use during paschaltide is recommended; during the rest of the year, it would be well to use this rite about once a month. As the rubrics indicate, the penance rite is omitted when holy water is used.
• **Liturgy of the word** (pages 421-423): Several options for this section are suggested in the rubrics. Both the Apostles' and Nicene creeds are presented, and a tab marks their place.

The appendix (nos. 578-588) provides samples and models of the prayer of the faithful throughout the year.

• **Liturgy of the eucharist** (pages 424-617):

  — **Preparation of the gifts** (pages 424-425): The prayers, rubrics and suggestions for a more meaningful celebration are presented.

  — **Prefaces** (pages 426-587): Each of the 83 prefaces to the eucharistic prayers is presented in a two-page format, with music and words on the left, and words alone on the right.

  — **Eucharistic prayers** (pages 588-617): The four prayers are printed in 18 point boldface type. Tabs indicate the beginning of each prayer. In each case, the narrative of institution is presented on a right hand page, without interruption or page turn: optional invitatories are given for the four memorial acclamations (see page 592). As in former Canadian editions of the sacramentary, simple directions are indicated for concelebrants, as well as the much neglected instruction for them on pages 425 and 598. Two pieces of art, taken from the *editio typica* of *Missale Romanum*, are included in the eucharistic prayer section.

  — **Communion rite** (pages 618-622): Two musical settings are given for the Lord's prayer, and three new sample introductions are provided. The full rubrics, which suggest many useful alternatives for the celebration of the rite of communion, make worthwhile reading for all celebrants. A tab marks the beginning of the communion rite.

• **Concluding rites** (pages 623-624): Music is given for three forms of the dismissal (the solemn paschal dismissal, with its *alleluias*, is printed with the Easter vigil Mass). Detailed rubrics describe options and possible variations in the concluding rites.

• **Solemn blessing or prayer over the people** (pages 625-640): These pages, marked by a tab, provide 20 solemn blessings and 26 prayers over the people. All conclude with the same formula, the simple blessing used at any Mass.

• **Proper of the saints** (pages 641-801): The revised calendar now includes saints from every century, from every walk of life, and from every part of the

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6 The four memorial acclamations have had a rough time of it. Since they all had the same introduction, it has always been difficult to indicate which of the four was to be used, except by the lead-in words of the celebrant, or by a sign on the hymn board, or by an announcement. Spontaneity and announcements continued to trip over each other. The *editio typica* of the Roman Missal buried all but the first acclamation in the appendix. The French missal combined two, and gave separate introductions to the others. ICEL retrieved the other acclamations from the Latin appendix, but did not come up with any system of differing invitatories.

In an effort to solve this problem, the CCC sacramentary affixes a new introduction to each of the second, third and fourth acclamations, leaving *Let us proclaim the mystery of faith* to the first acclamation. As the footnote on each of the memorial acclamation pages indicates, the three new invitatories are optional.

Many will be delighted and satisfied to see the magnificent Pauline praise of Jesus, *firstborn from the dead*, inserted into the heart of the memorial; similarly, the ancient Roman economy of words stands out in the final invitation, *Christ is Lord of all ages!*
world. Each saint’s celebration in the universal and Canadian calendar has its proper texts printed under its title, formulary number and rank. Lectionary references and proper prefaces are indicated. Where the *Missale Romanum* refers only vaguely to the common, specific references have been filled in.

**Commons** (pages 802-866): The commons provide Mass formularies for many celebrations. Normally, as noted on pages 642 and 802, the various texts may be ‘mixed or matched’ to provide a good celebration. (An example of this may be seen in the Mass for the Canadian martyrs, page 772: only the opening prayer is proper, while the other texts were chosen, for the convenience of celebrants, from various commons; further choices may be made from these commons.) Proper prefaces are indicated for feasts and solemnities.

**Ritual Masses** (pages 867-906): These are Masses used when sacraments and other rites are celebrated. Three complete formulas are provided for weddings. The Canadian edition provides a fuller and much clearer format for ordination and scrutiny Masses than is found in the Latin text.

**Masses for the dead** (pages 907-948): In Canada’s sacramentary, funeral Masses follow immediately after the ritual Masses, as the lectionary. This avoids the awkwardness of using texts from the last few pages of the book. Many formulas and prayers for the dead are given, and these may be mixed or matched, according to instructions on page 908.

**Masses and prayers for various needs and occasions** (pages 949-1019): Many formularies formerly classified as votive Masses are now included in this section. A complete list is contained in the table of contents. Many headings have two or more formulas. These prayers may be used on ferial days in ordinary time, as well as on special occasions (see page 950).

**Votive Masses** (pages 1021-1038) are few in number, and are really not encouraged to any great extent.

**Appendix** (pages 1039-1104): The appendix contains an interesting collection of texts: good sample formulas for the general intercessions (nos. 578-588); a set of medieval-type prayers for optional use before and after Mass (nos. 589-598); rubrics for Mass celebrated without a congregation (no. 599); Mass texts for Canada day (no. 600), and space for diocesan and patronal celebrations (nos. 605-606). Music is provided for the order of Mass (no. 601), for eucharistic prayer II (no. 602), and for the shorter form of the Easter vigil proclamation of praise (*Exsultet*, no. 603). Recent ICET texts (no. 604) and a new text for the enrollment of names in the Christian initiation of adults (no. 607) complete the appendix.

In the appendix, there are seventeen blank sheets (pages 1088-1104). These are set aside for future Masses, and for any other material which may be forthcoming from the Holy See, or from the several regions of Canada or local dioceses. If the next few decades of liturgical renewal are anything like the past, these blank pages will be of considerable value in preserving good order at the altar.

There are several other pages which have been left blank (for example, pages 107 and 161) because no formulary is assigned for the day, or because the formulary which follows requires two facing pages.

**Indices**: An index of prefaces and an index of celebrations complete the text of the sacramentary.
Special Notes

Music: Two sources have been used for the music in the sacramentary. The music for the preface dialogues, Holy week texts, and the order of Mass is the same as has appeared in the CCC's temporary sacramentaries in the past few years. Developed in Canada, and proven in parishes, this music complements the congregation's parts in Catholic Book of Worship. ICEL music has been used for the body of the prefaces. The appendix also contains optional ICEL music for singing other parts of the order of Mass (no. 601).

Two-line music is used for the order of Mass and the prefaces. Five-line music is used for the Lord's prayer and for the Holy Week texts. More than one hundred pages of music are provided in the sacramentary.

Cover design: The cover design, printed in gold on red, is explained by the artist in these terms:

Elements of the design: Two mystical symbols, known and used all over the world from ancient times, make up this design. The first element, a cross with arms of equal length, is based on the Greek form in common use up to the Carolingian era. This specific form, the urdée, is one of the many variations that appeared on the arms and insignia of the Crusaders and the knights of the Middle Ages.

The other element, the circle, a purely abstract form with no beginning and no end, has been used from antiquity to symbolize the sun, eternity, the earth, and the psyche or psychic wholeness. Circles are used by all the religions of the world. In the history of Christian art, the circle is used in many ways, usually in ways less abstract than in the East; applications range from haloes to the great rose windows of the Gothic cathedrals.

Symbolism: The arms of the cross reach out to the four corners of the universe indicated by the tip of each arm. In this way, the cross becomes a compass, with everything in its reach made equal; unlike the compass, however, the cross unites everything at its center: Christ, the Lord of the universe. Within this divine framework, the circle is repeated four times, showing Christ in his unlimited variety filling up the universe.

The design is meant to show the real structure of the universe, and to reflect divine order and harmony. It is, therefore, a statement of joy and a model for each part of the universe which Christ has redeemed.

The four Greek initials indicate "Jesus Christ, the Alpha and the Omega."

Creativity: The Church encourages the presiding priest to be creative in adapting certain Mass texts to the needs of the particular congregation with whom he is celebrating (see GI, no. 11). In preparing the Sunday liturgy, he should work with the parish worship committee, deacon, other priests, musicians and others, to make each celebration the best possible for their community.

The new sacramentary promotes creativity in several ways:

- Alternative opening prayer: At the end of each Sunday Mass, an alternative form of the opening prayer (collect) is presented. This may be used in place of the ordinary opening prayer. On other occasions, the celebrant may adapt the opening prayer in a similar manner. The structure should be noted carefully, since it is an enlarged model of what each opening prayer should be:
— **Invitation to pray**: This may be changed by the celebrant to reflect the theme of the season or celebration. A similar invitation may be developed to replace the simple *let us pray* for the opening prayer in any Mass.

— **Pause for silent prayer**: The General Instruction (no. 32) states that, after the invitation to pray, priest and people should spend some moments in silent prayer, realizing that they are in the presence of God, and making their petitions. Anything less than 30 seconds of quiet is a poor use of time. People will gradually become used to the silence, and depend on it. *Only after a meaningful pause* does the priest continue the opening prayer.

— **Body of the prayer**: The Roman collect is arranged simply: addressed to the Father, with a statement or clause recalling his wonderful works among us, it presents a simple petition, and then concludes. The tidiness and precision of the Latin collects is simply admirable. The alternative opening prayer has followed the same format, but has expanded it somewhat.

Where the title *Lord* is used to address God the Father, the priest may change this to *Father* if he feels the prayer will be ambiguous when heard by the congregation. The inconsistent and vague use of *Lord* to address the Father is one of the unfortunate points of the Roman text.

— **Prayer ending**: The normal prayer ending offers the prayer to the Father, *through* Christ our mediator, *in* the Spirit; this is the traditional and normal way for the Christian community to pray. Varying endings (long for the opening prayer, short for the prayers over the gifts and after communion, and usually short for the alternative opening prayer) are given in each Mass, but the celebrant may feel free to use others (see GI, no. 32). Provision of this wider range of endings is a particular advantage of the ICEL translation.

The wide choice of prayers on ferials and memorials is described in GI, nos. 323 and 334.

*Lectionary references*: In every Mass, the sacramentary gives references to the readings in *Lectionary for Mass* by a simple rubric, such as: *Lectionary: nos. 10-12.* The only exception is found in some Masses for various needs and occasions which lack proper readings: in such a case, ferial readings are used (GI, no. 328).

— **Sundays**: Because of the three-year cycle of readings, the lectionary reference is given as *nos. 10-12* (fourth Sunday in Advent). Canada's liturgical calendar, *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy*, gives the specific reference or choice for each day of the year.

— **Weekdays**: The specific reference is given. In ordinary time, the choice between cycles I and II is governed by the note in *Guidelines* at the beginning of Advent, January and ordinary time in May or June.

— **Saints' days**: On solemnities and feasts, the proper readings are chosen. On memorials and optional memorials, the reference is given in sacramentary and calendar as *ferial; or no. 576* (this example is taken from June 3, St. Charles Lwanga). The reason behind this is that the semi-continuous ferial readings are normally to be preferred (GI, nos. 319-320). If readings are being chosen for the Mass of a particular saint, texts from appropriate commons may also be used (see sacramentary, no. 205, page 651 for an example of such references).
• **Introductions and instructions:** In general, the text given in the sacramentary is to be considered as a model in length and quality of what the celebrant may do (GI, no. 11). The rubric, *in these or similar words*, is used frequently. On some occasions, other sample models are included in the ICEL text to be of further help to the celebrant (see the penitential rite and introductions to the Lord's prayer, for example).

• **Prayer of the faithful:** The general intercessions should be composed by the celebrant and his community; practical guidance is offered by the Bulletin and by Guidelines. Good examples of this prayer are also given in the appendix of the sacramentary (nos. 578-588, pages 1040-1052); these should not remain unused, especially in weekday celebrations.

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**Too many choices?** The question is sometimes asked: Do we have too many options in today's liturgy? Will overchoice lead to the paralysis of decision described in *Future Shock*?

Perhaps we have too soon forgotten the days we sang the theologically convoluted *Praefatio de Sanctissima Trinitate* some twenty-five Sundays a year: or when we had one epistle for funerals, and one gospel. This was the situation until six years ago.

So, rather than looking at options as a burden, the priest and others involved in liturgical planning and celebration should welcome them as **opportunities** for creativity and growth. In this way they are able to adapt the celebration to the needs and circumstances of the community without losing sight of their membership of the universal Church, which is made present each time the local Church celebrates the liturgy.

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**Translation:** The text of the sacramentary has been translated by ICEL over the past three years, with the cooperation of all the English-speaking countries where it will be used. The text is certainly adequate, an excellent beginning. As with all liturgical texts, the years to come will gradually provide more poetic forms, but what we now have is a good and dignified base on which to build.

**Canadian bonus:** Some specific improvements have been made in the Canadian edition:

• **A numbering system** affords easy location of Mass formularies and options. Beginning in 1975, these will be indicated for each day in the liturgical calendar, *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy*.

• **Holy Thursday evening:** The three short variants specific to Holy Thursday evening Mass are incorporated into the text of the first eucharistic prayer and are printed in the proper for this day (on pages 221-223).

• **Ordinations and scrutinies** (nos. 444, 436-438): The arrangement for these formularies will afford much more convenience than is found in either the Roman or ICEL version.

• **Canada Day:** A special celebration is included for July 1 (no. 600).

• **Music:** As noted above, the celebrant's music is in harmony with the congregation's music in *Catholic Book of Worship*.
• **Tabs and ribbons**: Five colored ribbons and eight tabs will help the celebrant use the book with ease; he will be able to take advantage of the options open to him for the benefit of the community.

**Drawbacks**: The present edition of the sacramentary is not perfect. Like the Latin text it is based on, it presents some material which really does not belong in a sacramentary, and some which is of little help to good liturgy and prayer:

- *Silent prayer texts* are still included within Mass texts, probably as a compromise for other positive gains. Quite evidently, not everyone agrees that such private prayers are better suited to other times and other places. These silent texts are printed in smaller type and from margin to margin, indicating that they are *not intended* for proclamation. (Celebrants who proclaim their hand-washing at full volume really don't help the celebration: they are, in fact, diluting the dramatic pause and deliberate restfulness of the moments of preparation: still, they may be nonetheless proclaiming their lack of awareness and “feel” for celebration, as well as their hesitancy to read the rubrics.)

- The texts for *entrance and communion antiphons*, and certain other processional chants, are included at the Sacred Congregation’s insistence, though these chants are quite clearly not part of the celebrant’s role. The practice of reciting them when there is no singing, though required, makes very little liturgical sense. (Occasionally, these tiny remnants of scripture can be of help in mediation and preparation, and they also serve as a source of ideas for the celebrant’s brief interventions.)

- **Various needs and occasions**: The prayers and Masses for various needs and occasions — Church, civil, public and personal — are given in nos. 496-558, pages 949-1019. Some texts are modern, some ancient; some represent community needs, some personal. The strange rubric on page 1013 is true enough; the problem is, however, that more private needs are included among the public ones, and several public ones are interwoven with the private needs (compare nos. 509 and 555, for example).

- **Prayers before and after Mass**: The Church would be better served if these particular texts remain buried. They ignore the guidelines of Vatican II (see Constitution on the Liturgy, no. 13, for a start), and generally promote spiritual isolation of the “God-and-me” style. Somewhere along the line, community concern got a very short shift.

Despite these few drawbacks, the present edition is truly the best edition of the sacramentary the Church has had in its entire lifetime. Pope Paul’s *Missale Romanum* is a superb aid to good celebration, a genuine encouragement to celebrants who take time to fulfill their role well, both for the glory of God and the edification of the people. We are back to the generous days of the Leonine and Gelasian sacramentaries, and we are grateful for such a large storehouse of excellent prefaces.

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Where Does the Sacramentary Belong?

- **At the chair**: Before Mass, it is placed on the credence table, or may be left near the celebrant’s chair (perhaps on a server’s chair — certainly not on the floor). Only the lectionary is carried in the procession.

  A server may hold the sacramentary for the celebrant during the introductory rites, although gradually, it is to be hoped, celebrants will become less dependent upon it at this part of the Mass. (It was encouraging to see the celebrant, at a Mass recently televised over the CBC network, referring to the sacramentary for the collects and eucharistic prayer only. All the rest he had carefully committed to memory.)

  After the opening prayer (or before Mass), the book is placed on the credence. The celebrant may lead the creed and prayer of the faithful from the chair or lectern; if he needs the book, it should be available for his use. (The celebrant’s parts for the prayer of the faithful are better prepared beforehand and clipped into the book, rather than being read from flimsy bits of paper.)

- **On the altar**: After the liturgy of the word is completed, the celebrant goes to the altar to prepare the gifts. Then the server brings the book and vessels to the altar. Celebrants might consider whether they really need a bookstand: is it a help or a distraction? Would something smaller do? What about the traditional cushion?

- **After communion**: The celebrant may say the prayer after communion and the dismissal rite at the chair or altar. At the altar, the book is in the center; at the chair, a server holds the book as before. The book is then left on the altar or credence, and the lectionary is carried out in the final procession from the sanctuary.
CELEBRATING RECONCILIATION

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

A priest shares his pastoral experiences in this personal letter to the editor:

There is much concern in the Canadian Church about the sacrament of penance. The numbers of Catholics who are celebrating this sacrament has definitely been on the decrease. The recent introduction of communal celebrations of penance has not answered the question of diminishing numbers, even when the social aspects of sin are stressed. Nor does the observation that penitents are celebrating more maturely than in the past really speak to the question, which remains essentially the same: Catholics are not making use of this means of growth in holiness as they once did.

Perhaps the real solution lies in the fact that confession has not been effectively probed in its deepest meaning; perhaps the transforming effectiveness of this sacrament has not been fully realized in pastoral practice. Once effectiveness is not that apparent, people tend to cease being involved. Personal sincerity and desire to be free of sin must actually be realized or people will turn away from that which does not satisfy their deepest desires. Routine, of itself a type of life-robbing cancer, easily produces spiritual hopelessness and a lack of spiritual fight. If celebration of reconciliation is not effective in practical and concrete ways, clearly evident in daily life where it truly matters, its regular practice will most certainly dwindle among God's people.

Jesus died for our sins. He took them upon himself and defeated them in his total faithfulness to the Father's will. His glorious resurrection is a sign to all that the greatest effect of sin, death, and sin itself have been vanquished. He is concerned about the roots of sin which hold and bind his people. He desires to cut these roots from man's heart that man might enjoy the freedom of the sons of God.

The sacrament of reconciliation must reach and destroy these roots of sin in the Christian's life if true reconciliation is to be effected. As long as we mistake the expressions of sin for sin itself there will be no radical change in our lives, for we will be fighting a false enemy. Both priest and penitent must pray for the grace of discernment if the true nature of sin is to be exposed to the healing mercy of Jesus.

Power of Prayer

Every priest has received great spiritual powers from the Lord Jesus Christ through his Church. One of these is the power of prayer in and through which he calls down upon God's people the Father's healing and freeing love. That power of prayer is meant to be used in the face of sin: indeed, it must be used or sin will abound, for the only power we possess against spiritual evil is that of Christ, in whom all things have been brought into submission.

As well as proclaiming the official words of absolution, the confessor can pray for the penitent in a simple but precise manner as guided by his discernment and insight regarding the deepest dimension of sin in the penitent's life. In the confessional, this prayer would necessarily be short and incisive, directed at sin's
roots as they are made known. The prayer would be one of petition, asking the Lord to cut these roots away so that his brother or sister might enter more fully into sonship and freedom as Christ promised and realizes for his followers. Outside the confessional, the priest may certainly take more time with this ministry, praying firstly that the Lord will grant him discernment and wisdom for this situation, this particular person.

Examples frequently are not that clarifying but one known to approach an actual experience might be helpful. A person confesses anger and impatience, freely mentioning that these are a constant source of concern and have been for some years. Before pronouncing sacramental absolution, the priest prays quietly for the person in an audible voice in the following manner.

Lord Jesus Christ, you are a God of light, truth and peace. You have promised peace to all your disciples. Where you are, Lord, darkness cannot be. You have promised to hear the prayers of your faithful, to lift their burdens, to give them new life, to free them from the binding power of sin.

Lord, hear the prayer of your servant here present. Light up with your shining truth all experiences of rejection and fear, of harsh criticism and inferiority, of failure and shame. Make them known, Lord, in your truth and pour into your servant the healing light of your understanding. Speak your healing truth to them, Lord, and free your servant from the roots of anger and impatience. Continue, Lord Jesus, to increase your peace in your servant's heart. Thank you, Lord, for hearing this prayer and pouring your mercy into your servant's life as you have promised.

Experience has shown that the more precisely discernment leads the confessor to pray toward the center of sin's roots, the deeper one experiences release from sin's bondage. Having used such prayers consistently over a two-year period and having shared experiences with two other priests who do the same, I can testify to the dynamic effectiveness of such prayer before giving absolution. Many people have been freed from habits of sin which have been part of their lives for years. For us as priests the sacrament of reconciliation has come alive in a very powerful manner. We see positive and concrete changes in the lives of God's people to whom we minister. These changes they quickly recognize and attribute to the power of the sacrament. More than one has been brought through this experience to a more faithful celebration of both penance and eucharist.

LITURGICAL YEAR

In the liturgical year, the people of God continue the celebration of the paschal mystery of the Lord Jesus, and of our present sharing in it. As the rhythms of the year change, we are able to reflect on the Lord's life-giving death and resurrection from different aspects.

Bulletin 47 will look at the origins and developments of each of the parts of the Church's liturgical year, in order that each believing community may be able to celebrate more fully throughout the year of prayer. This issue, the first for 1975, will be available early in January.
PENANCE IS A JOYFUL CELEBRATION

A letter describing how the sacrament of penance can become a true celebration:

In an Okanagan Valley parish in British Columbia, a sign was seen gleaming through the grade five penance celebration. It was Advent. Both the pastor and the religious education coordinator were new, but the Canadian catechism's call to celebrate confession during Advent was not new. Twenty-one boys and girls, tow-headed and lively had started in September “to build the new earth” in regular classes. Now they sat around on a rug before an open bible, with their pastor; their parents formed the outer circle. It was their first penance celebration for the term.

The scriptures were read, but the children, all from the city's public schools, were evidently timid. Quiet dialogue about the reading continued, cued in by the pastor: “What did Jesus say about the man who saw himself in the mirror and forgot what he looked like?” “How does this compare with our listening when we hear God's word and forget it?” After a song, hearts were opened to his word. Then parents and children looked inwardly at themselves, and prayed the litany of forgiveness together.

But the atmosphere stayed strained: ease was not there. When confession time came, suddenly the sign became clear: the children were scared — of Father, of the church building, of what they were to be doing!

It took further analysing. In the next month’s classes, Father was there often, making friends with the children, talking with them, even asking if they'd like him to have a special Good News scripture sharing time with him each week.

Well, the barriers broke down, and he could talk to the children about penance. He was gentle. He listened. He talked of Christ, the healer and friend, and the children opened up.

When Lent came, and it was time for the penance celebration, it was markedly different. Eager children scrambled to get close to their pastor as they walked over to the church for confession. They wanted to patch up their friendship with Jesus, and they showed the gladness of being reconciled again — not just as individuals but as a whole group — healed and happy in the family of God's people.

The mothers who worked as catechists, and the sister who worked with them also learned with the children. They changed the manner of preparing for the penance celebrations: now they felt the spirit of being accepted back in brotherly love with Jesus and with his people.

In his homilies and in the parish bulletin, the pastor encouraged this new gladness to grow. Now everyone knew that Saturday afternoon and evening were reconciliation time in that city, the time for restoring broken friendships with God our Father.

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Penance Celebration — Advent

Introductory Notes

a) **Purpose:** Bible services are encouraged in a special way during Advent and Lent as one way of promoting a warm and living love for scripture among God's people. (Liturgy constitution, nos. 24; 35:4)

Many members of a spiritual community may benefit from a bible service celebrating God's gift of forgiveness. This service may be used at any time during Advent, but it is recommended for the final ten days of the season. Preparations should begin well in advance of the date chosen.

During the final days of Advent, the Christian community is preparing for the celebration of Christmas. This penance celebration should help them in making straight the way of the Lord.

b) **Personal attention:** When celebrating the sacrament of penance, the priest should help it become a personal meeting of the penitent with Christ. Individual attention in the form of instruction, advice, encouragement, should be given to each penitent by the priest. When the sacrament is celebrated after the bible service, as suggested in this outline, more time will be available for giving each penitent the individual attention he or she needs and desires.

c) The following outline is a guide, with suggested texts. While these may be used as printed, it is usually better to adapt them to the needs of the local congregation. Other suitable readings and psalms may be found in the lectionary for Advent (nos. 1-12 and 176-202; nos. 174-175, page 405), or in the liturgy of the hours for this season. The liturgical index of the choir edition of Catholic Book of Worship suggests appropriate hymns.

The parish liturgy committee should be encouraged to develop this service as required to meet the spiritual needs of the community.

d) **Proclamation:** The readings suggested are contained in the lectionary, and should be proclaimed from it or from a dignified bible. Canada's lectionary is richly bound in red and gold to signify our respect for the scriptures and to emphasize the place of God's word in our spiritual growth.

Scripture references are to the Jerusalem Bible; in the case of the psalms, the second number refers to the Vulgate.

e) **Participation:** The Vatican Council suggests many ways of promoting active participation in the liturgy: "The people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, as well as by actions, gestures, and bodily attitudes. And at the proper times all should observe a reverent silence." (Liturgy, no. 30) An effort should be made to include some of these methods in this celebration.

f) **Music** should help the celebration to achieve its purpose. Hymns and songs are suggested from Catholic Book of Worship, the Canadian hymnal. Other ideas are given in the liturgical index of the choir edition (pages i-iv at the back of the book) under Advent, Christian vocation, community, penance celebrations, word of God.
g) **Full celebration:** There should be a celebrant, a number of confessors, the reader carrying the lectionary, servers, choir, and thurifer. The celebrant presides from the chair, leads the prayers and preaches the message of conversion. His work will stand out more clearly when he encourages others to assume their proper roles.

h) **Team work:** A number of smaller or scattered parishes may wish to pool their efforts in celebrating penitential services in each place. A team of priests going from parish to parish on several different days will bring the benefits of this celebration to more people.

i) **People's leaflet:** Some parishes may prefer to encourage the people to use the Canadian hymnal as their response book; others may wish to prepare leaflets to help their people take a full part in the psalms and responses.

j) **Prayer for sinners:** The people of God are called to be people of prayer. The entire Church prays for sinners, asking God to bring them back in his mercy to full life in his family. During the penance celebration, the celebrant should invite and encourage the congregation to pray for sinners: for themselves, for members of the community, and for sinners throughout the world (see 1 Jn. 5:16).

k) **Banners and posters** based on the theme, or reflecting the theme of Advent, may help to set the mood for this celebration.

l) **Prayer and fasting:** During the week before the penance celebration, members of the parish may be invited to prepare for it by prayer, fasting and penance on one or more Advent weekdays. By their communal prayer and fasting they will plead for God's mercy on sinners and help for all his people in this community. (See Bulletin 42, pages 16-18.)

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**CELEBRATION OUTLINE**

**Theme**

"God's chosen people." The theme may be explained in a few sentences before the service begins, after the book of the word is enthroned, or in any leaflet distributed to the congregation.

**Entrance Rite**

**1. Song**

Father, see thy children  
Psalm 85 (84)  
or another seasonal hymn

**2. Enthroning the word of God**

The lectionary, the book of God's word, is carried in procession by the reader, accompanied by servers with lighted candles, and the others mentioned in (g) above. He places the book in a place of honor (reading stand or lectern; on the altar, if necessary), and the candles are placed nearby. The celebrant may incense the book after it has been enthroned.
3. Celebrant’s greeting

Sign of cross, and one of the following, adapted as necessary:

1 Tim. 1:2
Rev. 1:4-6
Jude 1-2

The celebrant or one of his assistants may explain the theme briefly.

4. Opening prayer

The celebrant may chose a suitable prayer from the Advent liturgy; he is encouraged to compose his own, based on the theme as developed in the readings chosen for this celebration. One example of this prayer:

Let us pray for the grace
to live as God’s holy people,
chosen to do his work on earth:

All pause for silent prayer

Loving Father,
listen to the prayers of your people.

We praise you for having chosen us in Jesus
to sing your praises by our words and works:
help us to live lives worthy of our Christian vocation.

We ask this grace
in the name of Jesus the Lord.

Liturgy of the Word

5. Readings from the word of God

The first reading is Eph. 1:3-14 (longer form: Lectionary no. 105) or Col. 1:9-14 (no. 434, year I).

If a second reading is used, it may be taken from Titus 2:11-14 (Lectionary, no. 14), or Col. 3:12-17 (no. 440, year I).

6. Meditative silence

A few moments of silence should follow the reading, allowing all to reflect and pray in response to the word they have heard in faith.

7. Psalm

After silent prayer, a psalm (or hymn) is sung:

Ps. 126(125) Lectionary, p. 405
Ps. 25(24) Lectionary, p. 405

CBW, no. 243
CBW, no. 172

8. Gospel acclamation

An acclamation may be sung in preparation for the gospel as a greeting to Christ the Lord:

Second Sunday of Advent
Fourth Sunday of Advent

The people respond with CBW, nos. 201-207.

CBW, choir edition, page 19
CBW, choir edition, page 21
9. Gospel reading

Mt. 5:13-16  
Mt. 5:1-12  
Jn. 15:1-9

The deacon (or a priest, but not the celebrant) takes the gospel book and prays for God's help. After receiving the celebrant's blessing, he goes in solemn procession with candles and incense to the lectern. He incenses the book solemnly, and then proclaims the gospel.

10. Homily

In a brief homily based on the readings, the celebrant leads the assembly to pray for sinners and to make a reflective examination of conscience.

11. Prayer for sinners

The celebrant introduces this prayer; he may use ideas from introductory note (j). Then he invites all to pray:

Let us pray for sinners
and ask God to forgive them:

All pause for silent prayer

Heavenly Father,
you do not want sinners to die,
but to live in grace and serve you in love.
Look upon the people of the world
and draw them back to Christ.
With him we pray:
Father, forgive them,
for they know not what they do!
Send your Spirit to soften hard hearts,
to bend rigid wills
and to warm those who are indifferent to you.
Forgive us our sins
and listen to our prayers for all sinners.
Bring them back to your love through our example,
so that with them we may praise you
and celebrate our thanks
through Christ our Lord.

Responsory

Reader  Christians, remember your dignity:
you are the chosen people of God!

All  Christians, remember your dignity:
you are the chosen people of God!

Reader  God our Father has blessed us with every spiritual gift,
choosing us in Christ to be his people,
holy and without sin in his sight. P
Reader  He called us to be his sons and daughters.  
He set us free by the death and rising of Christ,  
and forgives our sins.  
He has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness  
and allowed us to share the joy of the saints in light.  

Reader  Our Father has chosen us to be his own people  
in order to carry out his plan:  
to bring all creation together with Christ as head.  

Reader  He has marked us as his own by the seal of the Holy Spirit,  
to assure us that he will make us free  
with the freedom of the children of God.  

Another antiphon from Wis. 18:8 may be chosen:  
You have made us glorious  
by calling us to you.

12. Hymn  
If desired, a hymn may be sung:  
The Lord has done marvels  
We will walk with Christ  
In Christ there is no east or west  

Examination of Our Christian Living  
The points below are suggestions. The liturgy committee may work on developing others. Care should be taken, however, not to omit the ones that disturb you or the community: these are probably the questions that most need to be asked.

A pause is made for reflection after each consideration, as noted in the text below the first point.

13. Examination of conscience  

Celebrant  Father,  
for the times we have failed to give you first place,  
when we did not seek your kingdom first,  
when we failed to pray and sing your praises;  
for neglecting to read your word:  
Pause for silent reflection  

Celebrant  Lord, forgive us:  
All  Have mercy on us, Lord, for we have sinned.  

Celebrant  For our failure to show respect for your holy name,  
for our misuse of our power of speech:  
The pause for reflection and the responses are made after each point.

For our careless attitude toward Sunday,  
the day of the Lord Jesus,  
for our poor preparation and celebration of Sunday Mass:
For our slowness in recognizing your voice speaking to us through our pope, bishops and pastors, through our parents, teachers and leaders:

For the ways we have made others' lives harder, for our failure to work for justice and peace, for our silence in the face of crimes against life:

For our sins against purity, by which we defile the temples of your Spirit; for accepting the world's standards instead of yours:

For making property and wealth more important than people, and for piling up treasure here instead of heaven; for our envy of other people's talents and property; for our destructive pollution of the world you have given us:

For the times we have refused to love our neighbor or to serve your Son in those in need; for the times we have loved ourselves more than you:

Celebrant The time has come; God's kingdom is near, it is in our midst.

Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News of our salvation, for Jesus has come to save his people!

14. Silent prayer

For about five minutes, all remain in silence. Sitting or kneeling as they wish, they discuss their way of life with the Lord.

For those who wish it, the sacrament of penance will be celebrated after this bible service.

15. Community act of sorrow

The “Lord, have mercy” may be sung from CBW, nos. 165-169.

Leader Lord, you have called us to be the children of light: forgive us for choosing the darkness of sin.

Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

Leader Christ, you have chosen us to do good and help others in your spirit of love: forgive us for preferring to serve ourselves.

Christ, have mercy.

All Christ, have mercy.

Leader Lord, you have taught us to be the light of the world; forgive us for bringing darkness into the lives of others.

Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.
16. Acclamation

_A hymn may be sung:_

Prayer of St. Francis  
From the depths of sin and sadness  
Awake, awake, fling off the night  
Or a brief prayer of the faithful may be based on the theme, ending with the Lord's prayer, no. 17.

**Conclusion of the Rite**

17. Lord's Prayer

_This prayer should be sung by all, as at Mass (CBW, nos. 221-223). The celebrant may prepare an introduction to this prayer, based on the theme of the service. For example:_

Lord Jesus,  
remember us in your kingdom  
and teach us to join you in saying:  
Our Father . . .

18. Sacred action

_The celebrant invites all to share the peace of Christ with one another. This may be done as at Sunday Mass, or less formally. He may introduce the rite in this way:_

Jesus gives his forgiveness and peace  
to all the people of God.  
Let us share his peace and love with one another.

19. Invitation to the sacrament

_The celebrant invites all to receive the peace of Christ in the sacrament of penance, and to be reconciled fully with God and his people. A number of priests will be available for confession and spiritual guidance after the closing hymn._

20. Blessing

_The celebrant may conclude with a simple blessing, or use this form:_

_**One priest**_  
May the Father who has called us to be his people  
continue to shower his blessings upon us.

_All_  
Amen.

_Another priest_  
May the Son who died and rose to save us  
forgive us our sins  
and lead us in his footsteps.

_All_  
Amen.

_Another priest_  
May the Holy Spirit of God,  
who makes us his temples of love and praise,  
give us unending joy and peace.

_All_  
Amen.
Celebrant  May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, † and the Holy Spirit.

All    Amen.

21. Concluding hymn
The king of glory
or another Advent hymn may be chosen

Sacrament of Penance

Those who wish to receive individual guidance and sacramental absolution
are encouraged to take the opportunity provided by the presence of a number of
confessors. The choir might sing meditative or seasonal hymns or psalms in a
quiet manner for the first five or ten minutes after the service.

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HOMILY PREPARATION

Some ideas for getting help in preparing homilies are described here. These
are being carried out in various Canadian communities now, and all involved are
pleased because of the improved preaching that has resulted.

Area priests meet each Tuesday morning from ten to noon. They come
prepared, having read, studied, and prayed over next Sunday's readings. After a
prayer, especially one based on a Sunday text, they listen as the scriptures are
read solemnly, as at Mass. They discuss the exegesis of the passages, using suitable
resources they have already studied. They share their thoughts and reactions for
life, for their pastoral concern for their people, and for the homily next week.
Those who take part in these weekly gatherings feel that they all benefit, but
especially their parishioners.

Priests and sisters working in one parish meet each Wednesday, and pray
and discuss the Sunday scriptures, as described above.

A pastor and some of his people meet each week to pray and read the Sunday
texts, and to discuss the needs of the parish and the world in the light of God's
word. They share their ideas for next Sunday's homily, and sometimes offer
feedback on last week's preaching.

What about your parish or community?
PREPARING FOR THE NEW RITE

As the text of the new rite for the sacrament of reconciliation moves toward its final translation, Catholic communities need to prepare for its celebration. The new rite demands a change of attitudes much more than a change of rubrics. This article outlines some of the situations, dynamics, questions and problems to be faced in a parish when preparing to introduce the rite of individual reconciliation according to the 1974 Rite of Penance. They are suggested as points of discussion by the liturgy committee, priests and members of the believing community.

The answers to these questions will necessarily vary somewhat, depending on the circumstances of place, occasion and attitudes. The liturgical maturity of the community and the pastoral zeal of its clergy will also influence the approach to be followed.

Priests and liturgy committee should consider the needs of their parish, and look at the implications of the rite for this community at this time. The following questions are some that ought to be studied; the parish liturgy committee will no doubt come up with many more local situations to be considered.

No exact formula can be prepared for all communities: each parish has to prepare itself for the introduction of this rite. The following ideas may be of some value in these preparatory discussions.

Serious effort, prayer and even suffering will be needed in order to introduce this manner of celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation. It is not a question of new ceremonies, but rather of a definitive step forward in our approach to this sacrament. A serious change is asked of us, but the spiritual rewards for people and priest — for all the people of God — are well worth every moment of preparation.

Outline of Rite

A number of elements in the rite for reconciling individual penitents (Rite, nos. 41-47) need strong catechesis both for priests and for people. In this way the new and positive approach of the renewed rite may become part of their lives, and will not be lost in the natural embarrassment or awkwardness of learning to carry out emotion-laden acts in a different manner and setting.

Welcome and greeting (Rite, no. 41): To many people who have associated confession with miserable discomfort — instead of with the Easter peace of the risen Lord — a warm welcome and kind greeting will be a surprise at first. Approaching this sacrament with dread should become as unthinkable as the post-Nicene theology of the terrible table.

The love and concern of Christ and his Church for all need to be expressed sincerely by the priest. A more brotherly and human attitude should replace the image of judge or stern father; the warm concern of the good shepherd should move aside the clinical precision and objectivity of moral theology manuals. The priest has to work on this personal change of attitude in all his pastoral work: it is not a character mask to be put on only for ceremonial purposes.

If the priest and penitent are looking each other in the face, the greetings and other dialogue will seem reasonable and natural. But if the penitent prefers
anonymity as in the present confessional, warmth and friendliness will be less realistic and much harder to express.

**Invitation to trust in God** (Rite, no. 42): The sign of the cross is made by the penitent, and maybe by the priest. From its position in the rite, it might seem as though the penitent were trying to draw the priest away from distractions (warm welcome and greeting), and to get him down to business. This attempt would seem to succeed, for then the priest goes to work. (While this paragraph is written tongue in cheek, that is the general impression given by the location of the sign of the cross at this moment of the rite.)

Six examples of the invitation to trust in God are provided in the ritual (nos. 42, 67-71). These words are addressed directly to the penitent, and sometimes contain a prayer as well. The warmth of the greeting should continue here, and the penitent should find this invitation one to which he can respond throughout the celebration. Because the sacrament will probably not be celebrated by an individual as often as in the past (see **Time Element**, below), a great variety of these texts is not needed, but the celebrant is free to use other formulas.

The rite presumes that the penitent is going to be silent at this point, and does not call for his petition or “Bless me, Father” at the beginning. (This may be good, insofar as it allows for a fresh way of opening the rite; on the other hand, it may be contributing to an almost totally clerical service of words. If any formula is used, it would seem more in keeping with the spirit of the rite that the penitent should be free to express himself in his own words at this time.)

**Reading of the word of God** (Rite, no. 43): The ritual proposes the use of scripture (in line with the liturgical constitution, no. 24), and then tends to torpedo it by placing a big ‘optional’ right in the heading, and by mentioning only the priest’s role in the rubric. A reference at least to the introductory notes (no. 17), where both priest and penitent are mentioned, or some expansion of the rubric here would do much to present this aspect of the rite in a better light: listening to God’s word is really the only new part of the rite, and the one which can make it a true celebration of God’s reconciling love. Some detailed considerations on this reading are discussed below (see **Scriptures**, below).

**Confession of sins** (Rite, no. 44): The rite mentions four points under this heading:

* **Formula of general confession**: The ritual suggests that this formula is said where customary. Since this custom has begun to die out in Canada in the past ten years, we should ask about its need and value. Is its purpose sufficiently achieved by the fact of coming in to celebrate the sacrament? What benefits does the general formula add? Will it add confusion about the purpose, need and text of the penitential rite at the beginning of Mass?

* **Confession of sins**: The ritual simply mentions the fact of confession, and does not elaborate. An appendix provides some ideas for a more up-to-date examination of conscience. The parish liturgy committee might consider ways of making such an aid available to penitents and of helping them as they prepare to celebrate the renewed rite.

* **Help and advice**: As has been the practice, the priest is ready to help the penitent make an integral confession, and gives him suitable advice. A frank discussion on the value of the advice presently being asked and given might help
the community to deepen its commitment to Christ. Are people really aware of the purpose of the sacrament? Do they come in a spirit of conversion? Is the priest encouraging them to grow in Christ by offering them more than spiritual pablum and milk? Are they reaching for their full stature in Christ? The implications for catechesis also need to be discussed.

* Call to sorrow: The celebrant is to urge the penitent to be sorry for his failings, and to remind him that a Christian dies and rises with Christ through this sacrament, and so is renewed in the paschal mystery. A meaningful pause for silent prayer might be of value at this moment in the celebration.

Three simple questions need discussion. In this parish, does anyone understand dying and rising with Christ? Does anyone know what the paschal mystery is? Who realizes what it has to do with this sacrament and their lives? Then the committee and priest can discuss what they should be doing to remedy the situation they are uncovering.

This rite may be carried out with the accustomed anonymity of current practice, if the penitent so desires. The committee should discuss frankly the spiritual opportunities and benefits of face-to-face celebration of the sacrament, and ways of making it possible in their community, without imposing undue burdens on those wishing to remain unknown.

Acceptance of satisfaction (Rite, no. 44): Following the call to sorrow, the priest is to suggest an act of penance by which the penitent may make satisfaction for sin and improve his life.

• **Purpose:** How well is the purpose of this act of penance understood? Do people grasp its double import, both of making up for sin and of making improvement in our way of life? What understanding do parishioners have of vicarious suffering, of offering their lives as a living sacrifice in union with Christ? (See General Instruction of the Roman Missal, no. 55f; Redemptive value, Bulletin 42, pages 9-10.) What catechesis needs to be given to help them strengthen their prayer and penance for sinners? Ideas should be shared for helping all in the parish to deepen their understanding of this part of the rite, and for moving away from thoughtless or automatic forms of penance.

• **Suggested acts of penance:** At the request of the National Council for Liturgy, a serious call to penance was given to the Church in Canada by Bulletin 42. Many practical ways of doing penance — mostly biblical in inspiration — are described in that issue: see The top ten, pages 20-33. These ways may also be discussed as penitential acts in relationship to this sacrament.

• **Acceptance:** Would some penitents wish to express their acceptance of the satisfaction in a positive way? It would seem better to leave such an option to the person, and not prepare a formula for this. The more free the rite is from such laid down texts, the more people will be free to celebrate it without fear of forgetting lines that don't really matter.

Prayer of the penitent (Rite, no. 45): In the past decade, the Church in Canada has moved the act of contrition out of the confessional, so that it has become part of the penitent’s preparation. Would it be wiser to continue this practice, or will this contribute to over-clericalization of the rite? Will a change cause confusion? Which method gives better benefits, especially when we consider
that talking is not the only way of participation? (See Constitution on the liturgy, no. 30.) Are we able to have both methods continue side by side?

- Formula: The proposed texts (Rite, nos. 45, 85-92) present an interesting variety, and are mainly scriptural in their inspiration. For practical use, it would seem better to have them all available for penitents as they prepare for the sacrament. The penitent may adapt them if he wishes.

The positive thoughts contained in these prayers can be part of the continuing parish catechesis on God's merciful forgiveness in Christ — for which we give him thanks in the eucharist.

Absolution (Rite, no. 45): After — not during — the penitent's prayer expressing his sorrow, the priest gives absolution.

- Words: The words are to be proclaimed to the penitent as befits a sacrament of faith (Liturgy constitution, no. 59), and the penitent should listen. Where possible, the absolution should be said aloud, not whispered. Solemnity and reverence need not hide the warmth and meaning of the Church's prayer that God will forgive, and his assurance that he does forgive the penitent.

- Hands: The rite tells the priest to extend his hands over the penitent's head, or at least that he should extend his right hand during absolution. Unless introduced with a catechesis and manner that is sensitive to people's feelings, this part of the celebration is guaranteed quick failure. When seen as a gesture symbolic of God's healing and forgiving love, as restoring the penitent to full communion with the people of God, it begins to be more acceptable to the "untouchable" people that we seem to be.

Perhaps the gesture would be more meaningful if the priest were to lay his hands on the person's head, as may be done in any blessing. If the priest remembers the way his bishop imposed hands solemnly at his ordination, he may be less shy of using such a gesture. Its biblical background cannot be ignored.

The less significant extension of one hand (as done presently) would seem best reserved for times when full extension or imposition is impossible, as in current confessional.

Need the parish catechesis cope with ladies' hats, hairdos and curlers as obstacles to this rite? Or would these provide occasions for an extension of hands without imposition?

Proclamation of praise (Rite, no. 47): In a brief versicle and response, priest and penitent praise and thank God for his forgiving love. Care needs to be taken that this may remain a meaningful act, and not descend to the automatic vacuum of words recited without thought or care.

Catechesis might help to connect this proclamation with the eucharistic praise for God's forgiveness. In some cases, penitent and priest may wish to offer a longer prayer of thanksgiving; singing a hymn at this point might better be reserved for community celebrations of reconciliation.

Dismissal (Rite, no. 47): A positive reassurance of forgiveness ends the celebration on a warm note, similar to its beginning. Five texts are proposed (nos. 47 and 93) to guide the celebrant as he dismisses the penitent who has been reconciled with God and his Church.
**Scriptures**

**Purpose:** A reading from God’s word has been deliberately placed in the sacramental rite in order to call people to repent and to change their lives. As at Mass, word and sacrament are closely interwoven.

If the use of scripture is to have meaning and effect in the celebration, however, both priest and penitent will have to become more familiar with the bible as the word of God than most are at present. Some questions for serious discussion in each spiritual community:

- *What respect* is now being shown for God’s word in parish worship? What about the manner in which readings are prepared, proclaimed and listened to? the way readers are chosen, formed and trained? the way readings are introduced, where necessary, and the time of prayerful silence that follows them? the dignity of the lectern as the place from which only God’s word is proclaimed? the manner of carrying the lectionary or gospel book in the processions? the reverence given to the enthroned word?

- *Prayer life of the people:* What encouragement and help are provided by the parish so that parishioners are guided in using the bible in their personal and family prayer? Is the liturgy of the hours regularly encouraged as a community celebration, at least on special occasions in the year? Where are the psalms in the prayer life of the people, in the repertoire of the choir? What is the priority placed on prayer in the life of the parish?

- *Prayer life of the priest:* Does he pray? Does he nourish his spirit with the word of God daily? Do his people give him time to pray, to be their leader and man of prayer in their midst? Does he read the word of God with the same respect, affection, eagerness, devotion and expenditure of time that he gives each day or week to papers and magazines?

- *Availability of the word of God:* What efforts are made in the parish to provide suitable bibles, testaments and psalters to families and individuals? Are such books available to those who wish to use them for personal prayer during visits to the church? Are family bibles still gathering dust, and brought out only to impress Father on his occasional visits to homes? Are children in the parish school and in catechetical classes encouraged to have and use the word of God at home and in their personal prayer?

- *Association:* Do people associate the bible with the living word of God, able to carry out his will in the lives of those open to his action? Or do they look on the bible only as a musty collection of ancient texts which have nothing to do with real life in today’s world? What is being done to help the members of this parish community to develop a warm and living love for God’s holy word?

*If these conditions are true or are being promoted in the parish, then the use of scripture will have a chance of being significant in the celebration of reconciliation.*

**In the celebration** of this part of the rite, several points needs discussion in each community:

- *Choice:* Readings may be chosen by the penitent or priest; penitents could be encouraged to come with their text already chosen, one that truly speaks to them in their personal situation, at this particular moment of their spiritual devel-
operation. The reading chosen may be a psalm, a pericope, or sometimes just a few meaningful verses. If chosen some days in advance, the readings could be part of the penitent's serious preparation for celebrating this sacrament of forgiveness.

- An enthroned bible? This may be a sign of the community's respect for God's word, and the source of readings — but this will depend to some extent on where the parish is in regard to the use of the scriptures. If it would be only an empty sign, it would seem that the bible should not be placed in the area of reconciliation; in a seminary or religious house, however, its use may enhance the celebration.

- Source of texts: Penitents may wish to bring their personal bible or testament, with the reading marked. It may be useful to have several copies of the many suitable readings and psalms provided in the new rite (nos. 101-201), so that penitents may select from these in the church before the celebration; in the years to come, priests and people will undoubtedly add further selections.

The priest will always be ready to suggest and find an appropriate reading if the penitent has not chosen one. (This will mean that the celebrant needs a dignified bible nearby — on a table, and preferably not on the floor. His way of handling the book, the care with which he has selected and marked appropriate passages, and his general attitude toward God's word will not be lost on his people.) In a bilingual parish, he will need a book of readings in each language.

- Proclaimed: The chosen text may be read by the penitent or priest. Both listen carefully, letting God speak to them, letting God call them, this parish community and the entire Church to turn back to him and repent. Signs of reverence during the reading need not cause a stiff or stilted attitude. A pause for silent, prayerful reflection after the reading will give both priest and penitent time to meditate on the word and to be open to the action of the Spirit throughout the rest of this celebration.

Time Element

A number of questions should be discussed under this general heading:

Length: The new rite is obviously not set up for a 60-second in-and-out routine. A reasonable amount of time needs to be spent with each person who comes seeking reconciliation. Sufficient time is required to celebrate the distinct stages of the rite with meaning, so that the ritual may have its intended effect.

If the penitent comes to celebrate the sacrament two or three times a year, it would be reasonable for him to expect to spend at least ten minutes with the priest in prayer, reading, discussion, listening, and giving praise, as well as whatever time he wishes to spend privately before and after the sacrament.

Frequency and regularity: If the sacrament is going to be looked at as a means of serious conversion, it will not be repeated too often. While points such as frequency will no doubt be worked out in practice in the next few years, perhaps one could venture to suggest two to three times a year for the committed adult Christian. What about people who are seeking greater holiness? What about persons struggling to overcome temptations and habits contrary to the gospel? (An "Easter-duty-and-don't-bother-the-rest-of-the-time" person would be better off
to stay away from the sacrament until he is sincerely ready for *metanoia* — a real conversion, a real change in his way of living.)

The suggestion of two or three times a year for a committed adult Christian will probably mean that these celebrations will take place in relation to the times of the liturgical year when the Church is being called to conversion, that is, in preparation for Easter and Christmas. The manner in which Lent and Advent are kept in the parish as times of change of heart in preparation for the feasts will have an influence in the celebration of the sacrament, both within penance celebrations and in individual reconciliation. Parishes might also consider a third occasion in the year when the sacrament may be celebrated communally with meaning for those who wish to take advantage of it; perhaps some days of recollection and retreat or renewal in June or September might serve this need. This could be a good time for the solemn annual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

**Scheduling**: At the major times suggested above, a greater amount of time and a reasonable number of confessors will be needed. Throughout the rest of the year, the present schedule should be looked at once more in regard to the new rite: is a longer time period desirable? Should opportunities be made available more often during the week? What times of day would be more beneficial to more people? Perhaps a confessor could be available after evening prayer once or twice a week, or during midday shopping hours. What else do local circumstances suggest? Some experimenting will be necessary to work toward the schedule that best suits each parish community.

**Notification**: The availability of confessors — who, when, where, how long — should be made known, especially when changes are being made. By having such information in the parish bulletin each week, people would be able to keep track of the situation, especially in the beginning. (If there is no room in the bulletin, surely such information is of more value in advancing the kingdom of God than much of what is being printed each week?)

**Never on Sunday?** The ritual (introduction, no. 13) specifically recommends that the sacrament of penance should not be celebrated during Sunday Mass. A fresh look at current schedules and practices is part of the preparation for the introduction of the new rite. (In parishes with mission churches, for example, an evening Mass during the week, with ample time for the sacrament of penance before and after Mass, encourages people to move away from the attitude of considering confession only before Sunday Mass.)

**Other questions** that need to be discussed in light of the new rite and the attitudes it involves:

- Age for first celebration of this sacrament.
- Relationship of this sacrament to others, especially in the case of frequent communicants.
- Adults received into full communion with the Church, or those baptized after their catechumenate: when should they become involved with the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation?
- Availability of the sacrament at particular moments of grace, such as at wakes (see *Catholic Funeral Rite*, no. 6g); celebration of the sacrament on the occasion of a wedding practice: considerations pro and con, desirability of having another confessor available, questions of freedom.
• Catechesis should include traditional Catholic teaching about other ways of seeking forgiveness: through prayer, good works, sincere sorrow (yes, Virginia, Augustine and Aquinas are still good Catholics!); a person taking part in a communal penance celebration need not always receive the sacrament on that occasion.

Other Questions for Discussion

Other matters for serious discussion would include:

The place and its attributes:
- **Place**: location in Church; findability; accessibility (beware of steps, dark passages); relationship to font? in or near the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament?

- **Lighting**: adequate; variable? ventilation, heating, cooling; decoration: warm, welcoming, comforting, not forbidding or over-formal; living-room atmosphere, carpet, comfortable chairs? art: good shepherd, prodigal son, symbolism; Easter candle?

- **Privacy**: soundproof; lineup problem (see Time Element, above); not an atmosphere of being trapped; freedom from having people blunder in when another penitent is there.

- **Furnishings**: furnished for options: anonymity, with kneeler and screen(?); face-to-face, with chairs; room for two persons — if a couple with problems wishes to come together (reconciliation of several); table for scriptures; books: bible, ritual.

Vesture: degree of formality: vestments — which? cassock only? surplice or alb; white stole (it is the paschal mystery we are celebrating). The priest is involved in a sacramental celebration: he is not a football coach.

Vocabulary: A careful study of the terms used and avoided in the new ritual will help people and priests to approach this sacrament in a renewed, paschal spirit. This vocabulary should carry over into catechesis, homilies, and all references to the sacrament.

Outside the church: considerations on how to take some values of the new rite into other situations: sick bed at home or in hospital, homes for the aged, emergencies; the time element should, please God, spell the end of the horror of school confessions.

Catechesis: Beyond the elements already mentioned, catechesis needs to include:

- **Presence** of the Lord in this celebration: “two or three” together; in word; in power of sacrament; in person of minister (Constitution on the liturgy, no. 7);

- **Ecclesial element** to be kept to the fore: individual reconciliation is still public worship — by public place in church, priest as representative of community, vesture, solemnity and ritual;

- **Unity and freedom**: While the penitent is free to choose any confessor, the ideal is to return to one who can come to know him, thus providing unity of direction.
• Drama and ritual: The values of drama and ritualization of forgiveness should not become lost in a new chumminess seeking to overcome the fear often experienced in the past.

• Bulletin 52 concentrates on Reconciliation and Forgiveness.

* * *

If a parish community begins to approach the renewed sacramental rite for individual reconciliation in this way, it will be able to enter the celebration of the paschal mystery as the Church wishes us to do.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

We can solve your Christmas shopping problems and save you from running around throughout Advent.

Send subscriptions to Canada’s National Bulletin on Liturgy to friends and relatives who are interested in the renewal of the Church through the liturgy.

The National Bulletin on Liturgy 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.

In 1975, the Bulletin will continue to serve the pastoral needs of parishes and communities, with particular attention to all involved in preparing and celebrating liturgy. Special treatment will be given to these topics:

• The liturgical year as the continuing celebration of the Lord’s death and resurrection and our sharing in it.

• The new rites for the sacrament of penance.

• Approaches to adult initiation, and what this rite will mean for the entire Church in our country.

• Helps for better celebration of the liturgy and for further activity by liturgy committees.

The subscription for 1975 is $6.00 for five issues (nos. 47-51) ($7.00 outside Canada); single issues are available at $1.50 ($1.75 outside Canada).

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PROCLAMATION

BOOK OF THE WORD

Some parishes seem to be blessed with inventive readers. Faced with the responsibility of carrying the lectionary in the opening and closing processions, they have added some new holds to the tradition of the Church. We describe some of them here before they are included in the next edition of Wapelhorst and Haegy-Stercky:

- The football carry: The lectionary is tucked under the reader's arm, and his hands are joined, or hold his hymnal open as he joins in the processional song.

- The platter: The reader carries the lectionary in a horizontal position, ideal for supporting the hymnal.

- The bashful book: Holding the decorated front cover close to his chest, the reader succeeds in hiding the book from all, lest they should find out what he is carrying. No preaching from the rooftops here!

Positive Recommendations

In a more serious vein, we offer some thoughts on the Sunday celebration for discussion by your readers and liturgy committee.

Book of the word: The lectionary is the book of God's word. From it the word of the Lord will be proclaimed; the people of God will be nourished at the table of his word. The reverence shown to it — bearing it in solemn procession, and by incensing and kissing the book — is reverence shown to the Son of God, for it is he who speaks to his people when God's word is read in church.

For this awareness to grow in a community, a faith-filled approach is necessary. As priests and people develop a warm and living love for the scriptures, as daily reading in God's word becomes a normal part of each person's devotions and prayers, the respect of the community will grow.

At the same time, a solemn and respectful way of handling the book will enable all members of the congregation to grasp visually the innate reverence that all should show toward God's living message.

Preparation: It is always sad to see a reader pop into the sacristy at the last minute, and run through his text quickly, for the first time. The word of God and the people to whom it is addressed — to whom Jesus is speaking through this reader — deserve better than that. Preparation needs to be made carefully, slowly, over a period of several days, accompanied by prayer. A petition that the community will listen in faith would be an appropriate part of each reader's daily prayer, especially during the week before he is to proclaim the word.

To help readers prepare their texts well, the National Liturgical Office has issued the Sunday Lectionary — Study edition for home use. In a convenient 5 by 7¾ inch format, this book presents the Sunday readings clearly: pages, paragraphing, page turns, notes, colors and texts are the same as in the larger lectionary used at Mass. The book also contains a pronunciation guide of all the proper names in the Sunday texts.
In Procession

Visible sign: The lectionary itself is intended to signify our respect for the scriptures. The rich red binding and the cross in gold on the cover add a note of dignity. Christian tradition has decorated the gospel book with gold and jewels, proclaiming for all that this is the word of the Lord.

Like the processional cross, the lectionary is a symbol of Christ's presence among his people: when his word is read in church, it is indeed the Lord Jesus who is speaking to us.

It should go without saying that the reader does not carry a hymnal or anything: like the cross-bearer and acolytes, he bears only one symbol.

Held with dignity: The reader may carry the book of the word in several proper ways:

• Against his chest: Carried with the gold design on the front cover facing out, the book is supported by his hands at the bottom of the book. If his fingers touch the front cover, they will not mark the gold cross, which was moved higher on the cover to avoid this problem.

• Held out in front, with arms extended: The book is held with the cross facing forward. The right hand is on the bottom corner (where the "CCC" and gold maple leaf are on the spine), and the left hand holds on the top outside corner. Again, the hands do not touch the gold cross. The elbows may rest against the body for better balance.

• Before the face: The reader holds the book as described above, but carries the lectionary, cross facing forward, about 18 to 24 inches in front of his face. (This method is a little more solemn, and could become the normal practice on Sundays.)

• Held on high: On particularly solemn occasions (Easter, Christmas, or when a deacon reads the gospel), the book may be held at arms' length above the head, with the cross facing the back, and visible to all as the procession moves through the congregation. The reader holds the lower corners of the book.

When the procession reaches the sanctuary, the reader places the book on the lectern, and goes to his place.

If a separate gospel book (evangeliary) is carried by the deacon, it takes the place of the lectionary in the procession: the greater replaces the lesser. (The lectionary is placed on the lectern before Mass, and the reader takes part in the procession without his book.) The deacon lays the gospel book on the altar when the procession comes to the sanctuary.

Embodied Faith

During the past few centuries, our liturgy had one glory: it expressed and taught the faith in a tangible, sensible way, through use of color, music, incense, action, vesture and silence. In the past few years, however, much of this was quietly put aside, leaving us with little more than a service of words. Now we are coming back to a more balanced position, to a more human approach to liturgy.
Our human nature is *incarnate*. We cannot express our thoughts unless we do so in words or actions. And at the same time as such expressions clothe our thoughts in perceptible form, they are making these thoughts more a part of us and of others who perceive them.

An example will help us to see this more clearly. Because we respect God, we express this on entering the church by making a bow or genuflection. If we think about what we are doing, or strive to do it well, this will in turn reinforce our attitude of respect for God. Others can benefit from seeing us, and in turn move toward more personal reverence.

In a similar way, of course, the opposite is also true: sloppy actions betray and deepen our lack of conviction.

Signs of respect for the book of God’s word can express and deepen the faith of the Christian community. Adequate and prayerful preparation, a solemn carrying of the book in procession, the use of incense and candles at the gospel, preaching on and from the readings — these are some of the ways of expressing reverence. To these we might add the use of a dignified lectionary and proper lectern for respectful proclamation.

When done in a spirit of faith, these actions are not sham. We must not let shyness hold us back. Good celebration builds up the faith of the believing community, and praises God whose word we read.

Why not start talking about these ideas with readers and liturgy committee now? Can we wait any longer to deepen the faith and love we should all have for the word of the Lord?

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**CHILDREN’S MASSES**

The Roman directory describing positive approaches to Masses celebrated with a group of children has been included in Canada’s permanent sacramentary (see pages 55-64).

Like most Roman documents, careful reading and study will be necessary to benefit from the many good ideas and suggestions it contains. It would be a useful experience for the catechists, teachers and priests of a parish to spend a few hours of study together. For every member of the believing community, the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit is full and active participation in the liturgy — of which the center is the eucharist (see St. Pius X, and Constitution on the liturgy, no. 14).

DESIGNING TRAINING FOR READERS

Diocesan or regional commissions may help to raise the quality and impact of the reading in each parish by offering training and guidance to readers. Though there are a number of courses on the market at present, we present some thoughts on designing your own training.

Doing it this way may seem a little more difficult, but it enables you to meet the specific needs of readers in your area by tailoring the course for them.

These notes are based on a particular course designed by a small team. While following the steps they took, you will benefit more if you work out the details to meet your local needs instead of copying theirs.

Preliminary Steps

Most of us are tempted to begin by planning the actual sessions we intend to give. Better training will be achieved, however, by taking several preliminary steps to clarify the goals of the course. This should be done by the diocesan or regional commission.

1. Purpose: The first question to be asked is *What do we want to achieve?* By discussion, members of the commission come to an agreement on a simple general sentence which tells them and the training team what they are trying to do.

   **Value:** By working together to develop this statement of purpose, the commission clarifies its own ideas and knows exactly what it wants this course to achieve. Throughout the planning and training stages, the team can keep this statement before them, and will be able to work together toward a clearly defined goal, the same goal the commission wants reached.

   One group developed this statement of purpose:

   *To educate readers and priests in correct and fruitful proclamation of the word of God in the liturgy.*

2. Objectives: The commission needs to take this general statement of purpose, and then point out the specific areas in which the instruction will endeavor to help the people being trained. During the discussion which formulates these objectives of the course, the commission members will be able to clarify their vision of the training, and be able to make sure it does what they want it to achieve.

   One group agreed on these objectives after several drafts:

   - *To help readers understand the place of scripture in Christian living and in the liturgy.*
   - *To help readers prepare and proclaim scripture in the liturgy of the word.*
   - *To help priests understand the pastoral values of good reading and trained readers.*
   - *To help readers and priests become aware of the need for continuing training.*

3. Training team: Many advances have been made in adult education in the past decade or two, and these should be used for more effective training of readers. Because most universities and seminaries concentrated in the past almost exclusively
on the one-man lecture method, this is often the first and only way that we tend to think of when preparing a course.

Good training today requires a team of persons who will share their enthusiasm and skills by working together, using methods based on up-to-date understanding of the way adults learn.

The diocesan commission should ask someone to be responsible for choosing the team which will design and carry out the training, and perhaps may suggest other names for the team. Designing a course to meet the purpose and objectives will be the responsibility of the team; the commission should look after administration, publicity, recruiting, and preparation of a suitable place.

The team should not be too large. Four to eight persons can work well together in preparing and conducting the training event.

**Designing the Training**

Having reviewed the general purpose and specific objectives as developed by the diocesan commission, the team proceeds to design the course or training experience. As in the preliminary steps, thinking and discussion come first.

4. **Needs**: The team members must ask two questions here: What are the needs of the Church in the matter of reading and the liturgy of the word? What are the needs of the readers in this area?

From the answers to these questions come some direction for the course, which should be designed to meet these needs.

One team listed the following needs of readers in that part of the Church:

- *knowledge and appreciation of what scripture is.*
- *feeling comfortable with its imagery.*
- *finding the text of the reading in the bible and in the lectionary.*
- *other books to read.*
- *theology of the word in life and liturgy.*
- *understanding the liturgy of the word.*
- *techniques of public reading; microphones and their use.*
- *preparation.*
- *responsibilities of readers and the pastoral impact of the world of God.*
- *life of the reader should reflect what he proclaims: daily scripture reading.*

While these are not listed in order of importance, the team members might consider the items they list, and indicate which seem to be the most important or urgent.

5. **Expectations**: People coming to a training course have various preconceived notions about what they are coming for, and about what they expect to receive. Trainers have ideas about what they wish to share, and the sponsoring organization or commission may have still other ideas. To make sure that all agree at least on
the basic content (and on what the course will not be doing), clear guidance should be given in all publicity and letters, to parishes and candidates before the course begins.

Some may prefer to do this by reprinting the general purpose and specific objectives. Some may describe what will be taught ("candidates will learn good microphone techniques . . ."). But it should be clear to all before they come what they will receive and what will be expected of them. It should be noted that candidates will be able to discuss particular problems and difficulties at some time during the training.

The team should also consider these various expectations as the final step before designing the course. They should discuss in turn what each of the following groups expects of this course; then they will include — or exclude — these points, and make sure that pre-course material is sufficiently explicit. This prevents misunderstanding and disappointments later on.

One example of expectations, worked out by team discussion:

a) Readers: What do the readers expect when they come to this course?
   - to learn what to do and how to do it well.
   - to grow in understanding of the importance of their role.
   - to develop confidence in their work.

b) Priests and parish liturgy committee: What do they expect when they ask their readers to take this training?
   - to reinforce the power of the readings by the proper use of trained, confident readers.
   - to receive guidance in helping other readers become even better.
   - to have persons able to organize other readers and schedules.

One training team felt that the achievement of these expectations would be rather difficult unless priests and liturgy committee members attended at least the opening night of the course.

c) Diocesan commission and training team: Beyond the stated objectives, are there long-range plans or concerns? One group came up with these in discussion:
   - To improve the quality of liturgical reading in our area.
   - to serve as the first stage of a plan to provide a nucleus in each parish (or group of parishes) who will have the basic knowledge for training new readers in future.
   - to be the first step toward the eventual introduction of the ministry of readers.

d) People in the pews: Most important of all is the question, what do the people in our parishes expect of their readers? One team listed audibility, intelligibility, credibility.

*   *   *
Though it may seem a long preparation, these stages are necessary in the design of a good training course. While discussing these steps, the commission will find itself becoming more aware of its own responsibilities, and taking practical steps toward meeting them. The trainers will be welded as a team, and all will have a much clearer picture of the overall plan.

* * *

6. General outline of the course: After thorough discussion, a broad picture of the course should be developed. The team might decide, for example, that what needs to be taught will take five three-hour sessions; these would be given once or twice a week, according to local circumstances.

After indicating all the items that needed to be taught and outlining them in general, one team designed its course in this way:

a) Opening session:
   - Course aims and methods.
   - The word: bible and liturgy: power of the word, power of the liturgy to unite: this is an input or teaching session.
   - What the people of God have the right to expect (discussion): audibility, intelligibility, credibility. Training methods: use triads or brainstorming.
   - Nature of anxiety: presentation on videotape.
   - Practical exercise: reading prepared passages (send photocopied pages of lectionary with pre-course letter); divide into small groups for reading from lectionary (rather than from photocopies), and constructive criticism.
   - Final five minutes — God works through us: reader as a key person in the Sunday liturgy.

b) Scripture session:
   - Theology of the word of God — in life and liturgy: 20-minute talk.
   - Exercise: Finding your way in the bible — small groups are given cards with 20 references, including gospel texts, and are asked to locate them.
   - What is the bible? Discussion, brief talk — 20 minutes in all.
   - Power of the word: 20 minutes.
   - Group exercise (feeling comfortable with scripture) — what is imagery?
     one hour:
     — explain: two minutes at most
     — divide into groups of four people
     — each group receives photocopies (one per person) of a particular passage from lectionary: different passage for each group (such as agriculture: sower — Mk. 4; good shepherd — Jn. 10 or Ez. 34; war passages; love and marriage.
     — groups study and discuss — underline and discuss images used, discuss meanings; isolate problems for today's listeners: 10 minutes.
     — team member reads passage; particular group makes comments; other questions, comments.
     — other passages treated in same way.
• Versions: Translation is interpretation; every translation adds insights; practical suggestions for reader's personal bookshelf (five minutes).

c) Session on techniques: This was handled in three sections — preparation, delivery, follow up:

**Preparation**
• Microphone controls ON before Mass; don't blow or tap mikes.
• A mimeographed handout covered these points on preparation:
  — studying and understanding texts to be read.
  — working with celebrant.
  — knowing your book.
  — finding your place in the lectionary, in various bibles, in other reference books.
  — not being too cocky, but rather a respectful servant of the word of the Lord.

**Delivery**
• Microphones: how many? fear of; if no mikes available.
• acoustics.
• introducing readings.
• proclamation, not just reading in public: Christ is speaking through these readings (Liturgy, no. 7).
  • distractions: mike off
    baby crying
    dog walks in
    markings, ribbons
    extra readings — typed, clipped in.

**Follow up**
• Life of the reader: example; daily reading.
• responsibility of the reader.

d) Liturgy session:
• Liturgy in the life of the Church (power of readings): talk — 20 minutes.
• liturgy of the word of God (by handout and explanation):
  — structure
  — times of silence
  — options
  — varying roles and emphases
  — use of music
  — lectern: what (dignity, fixed, no "secular" uses), where.
• practical: introductions to readings; dignity.
• prayer of faithful: structure, roles, need of local preparation.
• funerals and weddings (practical session, using lectionary).
• help from celebrant.
• reference material: Scripture in Church, Discover the Bible, and similar aids.
• VTR: entrance procession, introduction to Mass, collect, liturgy of word, step by step — best options where possible.

• outside Mass: baptisms, wakes, bible services, weddings: use lectionary for proclaiming.

c) Final session
• Weddings and funerals: special needs, problems; choosing relatives or parish readers?
  • Organization: scheduling readers, cooperation, backup system.
  • Back-home problems: discussion of local situations and needs.
  • Confidence in their ability; in knowing what and how; competence in carrying out their role.

• Further training: always needed; stress on quality; opportunities for self-training and growth; ways of providing further training in parishes of the area; available resources.

• When to retire? discussion; possible answer: "When you think you don't need any more growth or training, it's time to retire."

• Helping new readers: recruiting, training, encouraging them to take similar courses.

7. Evaluation: There are many ways of evaluating the training being offered to readers. A good training team plans for a number of methods of evaluation during the course, including such ways as informal observation, open discussion with the group, opportunities for frank comments at any time, question box and panel discussions. Sometimes a simple evaluation form is used at the end of the course. Some training teams may prefer to contact individual readers a month or two later, to see how the training has been of help, and to gain suggestions for future courses.

* * * * *

There is no one perfect way of training readers. Here we have suggested a general method for designing training that will benefit the readers in your area because you will adapt it to meet their needs at this time.
BOOK REVIEWS

NO MORE PASchal MYSTERY?


* * *

Father McGloin *does* believe that Jesus was raised from the dead: he admits this in an aside on page 63. But he manages to ignore the paschal mystery of the death and rising of Christ by insisting that the Mass is a renewal of the crucifixion and a re-enactment of the last supper (page 19). The resurrection has nothing to do with it. Sorry, Jesus.

In chatty, slangy language, almost flippant at times, the book contains two good chapters, on listening to the homily and on the creed. But the rest of the book, while it contains good flashes here and there, is not always based on sound liturgy. “Strange” is a polite way of describing his interpretation of the opening prayer and the symbolism of the vestments. In his outline of the Mass, the author lumps the preparation of the gifts (as offertory or “offering time”) with the eucharistic prayer, while separating the communion rite from the rest of the liturgy of the eucharist. There seems to be no sign of the real offering during the eucharistic prayer, as described in the General Instruction, no. 55h. In the meantime, the Son of God is our creator (page 102), we receive God in communion (page 137), and the greeting of peace is alleged to be a post-Vatican II invention. We could fill another page with similar negative criticism. One is tempted to think that a 1930 manuscript was updated a little, but not quite enough. No copyright acknowledgement is given for the many ICEL-ICET texts quoted.

While the author’s faith and good will shine through the text, and his intention of helping people to appreciate the Mass more is commendable, the book has more liturgical drawbacks than benefits.

BEFORE AND AFTER

There was a time when it was common to see the celebrant spend some time in prayer before and after Mass.

Lately, however, it seems that the priest is kept too busy to pray at these moments which are so open to prayer. Before Mass, he has to organize people and things. After Mass, parishioners come in with many things on their minds, some urgent and important, some trivial, some commercial.

What is the situation in your community? If it fits the above description, is it not the responsibility of your people, especially of your liturgy committee, to relieve the celebrant of unnecessary tasks and distractions, so that he may pray to the greater benefit and edification of God’s people? This is particularly so in a one-man parish.

Take a look next Sunday, and see how little time your priests have to pray before and after Mass. Then do something about it!
CELEBRATING WITH YOUTH

_Let's Celebrate_, by Don Laing, 1974, Ottawa, Boy Scouts of Canada (Box 5151, Station F, Ottawa, Ontario K2C 3G7). x, 141 pages, illustrations (catalogue no. 20-357). $1.50.

* * *

If you work with young people in youth groups, catechetics, or in planning occasional worship services with them, you will find this collection of spiritual ideas useful. Written for leaders and chaplains in the Scout movement, this book is packed with ideas suitable for all Christians.

Rev. Don Laing, minister of Bethel United Church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, has had long experience working with youth in both Canada and the United States, and shares it in this book. His description of the place of religion in Scouting (page 8) applies to all parish organizations and activities as well. A practical approach to the spiritual is present on each page.

Ideas for working with young people from pre-school to adulthood, help for their leaders or counsellors, samples and suggestions for preparing worship services, more than thirty popular hymns, spirituals and folk tunes, and a collection of simple prayers for young people make this book useful for all concerned with helping youth to celebrate life.

* * *


In order to celebrate children's growing faith in meaningful liturgies, this book presents reflections in ritual in man's life, and presents ways in which it may enter liturgical celebrations with children.

Unfortunately, while promoting the value of scripture, the book puts contemporary readings on the same level, as though God's word did not hold the unique place in the liturgy of the word. By being so "relevant," people are tearing down respect for scripture. (Secular readings do have a place — in preparation of celebrations, sometimes before the eucharistic celebration begins, or in a bible service — but not in the Mass!) Several homemade eucharistic prayers are offered, despite the present legislation of the Church. The Sunday lectionary is casually put aside for the mixed choices of the authors.

The book has many good ideas for preparing celebrations with children, but will easily lead to abuses and errors unless used with respect for the Church's guidelines on liturgy. Unlimited creativity without responsibility does not lead to good celebration; it may be the liturgy of some group, but it is not the liturgy of the Church.