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62

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

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It is in the liturgy first of all that the people of God express their devotion. The liturgy may be described as the Church's first form of devotion.

History records that Christians have always sought to extend this public worship into their personal and family lives by forms of prayer, by devout actions, and in other ways.

Bulletin 62 looks at the main devotions of the Christian people. It analyzes present situations and trends. And following the lead of the Second Vatican Council, it encourages popular devotions which flow from and lead to the liturgy.

St. Plus X told us in 1903, and the Council repeated it in 1963: *Full sharing in the liturgy of the Church is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.*
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EDITORIAL

IN CHRIST

Christian devotion has always been centered around Jesus Christ. The gospels teach us that he is the way, the truth, and the life, our only way to the Father (see Jn. 14: 6).

Devotion may be described as a way of expressing our faith in prayer and in various pious practices; we are “taking home” what the liturgy proclaims in a more solemn manner. Christian devotion is directed primarily to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit and in the Church. We also have a deep devotion to Jesus our Lord. Believers also express devotion to Mary, the saints, and the angels.

The Second Vatican Council rearranged our theological perceptions by pointing out that its goals included the adaptation of some Church observances to the needs of our times, and the fostering of whatever contributes to the unity of Christians (see Liturgy constitution, no. 1).

The renewal and adaptations in the liturgy brought about by the Council have also had an effect on our devotional life. Before 1962, our devotions had to make up for the participation and other elements lacking in the liturgy. Now we are beginning to see that the liturgy is the summit and source of Christian living, the center of our worship, the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit. Popular devotions serve to lead to the liturgy and to bring its effects into our daily living.

Through the history of the Church, we find many forms of devotion evolving and disappearing as the liturgy waxed and waned. Now the time had come for us to assess the place and need of devotions in our lives. This means both a reassessment of the devotions we had before Vatican II, and a careful look at the ones which have developed since then. But they must always be seen in relation to the liturgy.

A Church with a strong liturgy and a deep devotional life is truly blessed.

* * *

Lord Jesus,
we praise you for saving us
by your dying and rising.
We give you glory for being the light of the world,
and for calling us to be your Church.

Deepen our faith and our love.
Help us to obey the Father's will
and to spread his kingdom on earth.
Bring our praise and our petitions to our Father,
for you are his beloved Son,
in the love of the Holy Spirit:
one God for ever. Amen!

3
LITURGY AND SPIRITUALITY

BAPTISM: BASIS OF OUR SPIRITUALITY

By baptism, Jesus sweeps us up into his paschal mystery, the mystery of his dying and rising. He accepts us into the community of God's people. He makes us children of our heavenly Father, and teaches us to call him our beloved Father, our Abba (see Rom. 8: 14-17). Jesus has taught us to be the blameless sons and daughters of our Father, to walk in his presence and sing his praises (see Eph. 1: 4-6).

We are the sisters and brothers of Jesus Christ, and thus of one another. We are related in the blood of our Lord, who died to save us, and who was raised to bring us into glory. It is through Jesus that we give praise to the Father, for our Lord is our only way, our only access to God (see Jn. 14: 6). Jesus has given us a share in his priesthood, and has invited us in baptism to join with him in offering spiritual sacrifices to his Father and ours (Liturgy constitution, no. 14); it is for this reason that we are enabled and expected to take our full part in the liturgy.

God has poured his Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, into our hearts (Rom. 5: 5), making us his temples (see 1 Cor. 3: 16-17; 6: 19-20). Our Father has sealed us with the Spirit of his promise (Eph. 1: 13-14), so that the Spirit may teach us to be spiritual people (Rom. 8: 13-14), to recognize God as our Father (Gal. 4: 6) and Christ as our Lord (1 Cor. 12: 3); moreover, God has given us his Spirit to teach us and enable us to pray as we should (Rom. 8: 26-27).

**Indwelling:** Jesus has told us that our God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — lives within us when we love him (Jn. 14: 23). Paul expresses this truth by describing us as temples of the Spirit, and by saying that Christ lives in our hearts by faith (Eph. 3: 17). Gradually we begin to understand that the active Church consists of those individuals whom God has called and accepted into his family: persons who have accepted God's call, persons in whom God is present.

When we see how God is actively present in his Church, we are beginning to grasp some of his truth and love for us.

**Sacraments of Initiation**

What Christ does for us in the sacraments of initiation: In these sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and eucharist, the Lord Jesus brings the light of his victory into our lives. He frees us from the kingdom of darkness and sin, and brings us into the kingdom of light. We die to sin, we are buried, and we rise again with Jesus. He gives us the Spirit of adoption, and makes us the daughters and sons of God. With all God's people, we celebrate this victory at the table of the Lord, and remember his death and rising.\(^1\)

In the sacraments of initiation, Christ brings us to his full stature, and makes it possible for us to carry out his mission — which is ours, for we are his Church, his body, the people of God — in this world:

\(^1\) See Vatican II, Decree on the Church's missionary activity, no. 14; *General introduction on Christian initiation*, no. 1 (in Bulletin 29, page 64).
• **In baptism** we become members of the body of Christ. Washed by his blood, we are his forgiven people. He makes us new creatures through water and his Holy Spirit, and makes us God's children by adoption. We become the chosen, royal, priestly people of God, and have the right to share with Christ in Christian worship (Liturgy constitution, no. 14).

• **In confirmation or chrismation** the Spirit fills our hearts, making us more perfect images of Christ. We are witnesses to the Lord Jesus before all, and continue to build up the body of Christ by being eager to do good works for him (Titus 2: 14).

• **In the eucharist,** Jesus invites us to eat and drink at his banquet, which promises us eternal life. As we eat together in love, we are a sign of the unity to which God's people are being called. In the eucharistic action, we offer ourselves with Christ, and share in his sacrifice: we are offered to God by Christ our high priest. With Jesus we pray that God will send his Spirit upon the whole human race, bringing us all into the love and unity of his Church.

When we continue to share in the eucharistic celebration, the covenant between God and ourselves is renewed; we give him praise, and are made holier by his grace (Liturgy constitution, no. 10). Participation in the Christian liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the true spirit of Christ (no. 14).

**Initiation is a process:** Conversion to God is generally a time-consuming process, lasting over a considerable period. The practice of the Church at Rome at the beginning of the third century gives us a clear picture of the process of initiation. Writing around the year 215, Hippolytus describes how pagans became Christians. His book, *The Apostolic Tradition,* is still of importance today, for the process and rites given there remain as the foundation and basis of what we do today in all the major Christian Churches. (See “Helpful reading, page 30.)

• **Catechumenate:** The period of preparation for baptism was about three years, marked from time to time by liturgical rites celebrating various stages along the way. After being examined on his reasons for becoming a Christian, a person was publicly admitted to the catechumenate, and entered a period of instruction, prayer, active charity, and good works in the community.

• **Final preparation:** For some time before Easter, those to be baptized were set apart for special examination (scrutinies) and exorcisms. (This final period contributed to the development of Lent: see Bulletin 47, pages 31-33.) On the Friday and Saturday before Easter, they joined the entire Church in the solemn paschal fast.2

• **Solemn initiation rites:** The night before Easter Sunday was spent in prayer and vigil, with the entire believing community listening to scripture readings and instructions.

The baptism took place in a separate room or area, at cockcrow. The candidates, who were naked, renounced Satan, had their bodies anointed with oil, and went down into water, where they made their profession of faith as they were being baptized. When they came out of the water, they were anointed by a presbyter with the oil of thanksgiving. After drying and dressing, they were led to the bishop in the church.

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2 The Vatican Council restored the paschal fast, which was the tradition of our Church from at least the second century. (See Liturgy constitution, no. 110.)
In the presence of the assembled community, the bishop poured oil on the forehead of each new Christian, and signed him. Then the new members of the Church were able to join for the first time in the prayer of the faithful, which concluded with the kiss of peace.

The deacons carried the offerings to the bishop, including those brought by the candidates in preparation for their first Mass. Over these gifts the bishop proclaimed the brief eucharistic prayer. Then the new Christians received the bread of life and the cup of salvation for the first time.

- **Catechesis after baptism:** After the solemn rites of initiation, the new members of the Christian community were to please God, to live good lives by devoting themselves to the Church, practising what they had learned, and thus advance in the service of God. If necessary, the bishop was to give the new believers further instructions privately.

Hippolytus is of great importance in the history of Christian initiation. He gives us the first complete picture of the process of initiation. His influence also extends to the present, for the revised Catholic rites of adult initiation are based on his witness, as are the more recent revisions by various Anglican and Protestant Churches.

**Fragmented rites:** In the following centuries, the unity of the rites of initiation gradually began to disintegrate. First, in Rome from the sixth to the twelfth centuries, the adult rites were used for children, and were eventually compressed and shortened. Then during the rest of the middle ages, further breakdowns took place:

- **Confirmation is separated from initiation.** (This is one of the reasons why it is hard to find a theology for the distinct sacrament of confirmation: everything we say about it really belongs to baptism.)

- **Communion is separated from initiation.**

- **Baptism is celebrated soon after birth** (instead of only once or twice a year, at Easter or Pentecost).

- **Confirmation is further separated from baptism,** (leading eventually to legislation requiring maturity).

These steps in the collapse of the unity of the sacraments of initiation are discussed in more detail in Bulletin 51, pages 286-290.

- **In our own century,** a further step has taken place, with the sacrament of reconciliation inserted between baptism and eucharist.

**Gradual improvement:** The past few decades have given us some steps forward in our understanding and celebration of Christian initiation:

- **Catechumenate:** The catechumenate has been restored, and is closely tied to the liturgical year, especially during the seasons of Lent and Easter.

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3. Our second eucharistic prayer is based on the model given by Hippolytus, although the 1968 modifications changed its pattern considerably.

4. By the fourth century, this period became developed more fully as the time of mystagogy: see Bulletin 51, page 295. Bulletin 64, *Christian Initiation: Into Full Communion,* also discusses this period.
• **Lent**: Renewal of the purpose and liturgy of Lent (see Liturgy constitution, nos. 109-110); the paschal fast is restored; the third, fourth, and fifth Sundays of Lent (year A), with their special gospels, are used for the scrutinies, and may be used any year as part of the lenten preparation for the celebration of Easter.

• **Easter vigil**: Reform of the Easter vigil as a proper setting for the celebration of the sacraments of initiation.

Similar developments are taking place in other Churches as all strive to renew their liturgy in the pattern of the earlier and better traditions — as taught by the Fathers of the Church. As a result, we are coming closer together, for we are all turning to the same sources.

**Problems**: Two pastoral problems are facing the Church of today, and they are not easily solved. While we may have no immediate answers, we need to keep on seeking them:

• **Seeing the unity of the sacraments of initiation**: For many, "tradition" means what they can remember from their childhood, that is, from a time when the unity of these three sacraments was shattered everywhere. Pastors, bishops, and liturgical commissions and committees need to learn more about how our rites were in the beginning, and how they fell apart. The titles listed under "Helpful reading" at the end of this article offer some help. Bulletin 51, *Christian Initiation*, provides a simple overview of the situation and its gradual development.

• **How do we restore the unity of the sacraments of initiation?** This is a difficult question indeed, and it is going to take a long time to find the best answers for our day. Together with the other Christian Churches, we need to study and pray and work for a gradual solution in accord with our traditions. *May God guide us along this path!*

**Basis of our spirituality**: Our Christian initiation — our dying and rising with Christ in baptism, confirmation, and eucharist — is the foundation of our spirituality. This is the way the entire Church of God is called to holiness and salvation.

Through the sacraments of initiation we are brought into the priestly community of the Church, and are able to share in its worship, its charity, its witness, and its self-denial. The eucharist is the summit and source of the Christian life: in this celebration, we offer ourselves and are offered with Christ to God, and are nourished and fortified by his grace. Through the other sacraments as well, we are called and strengthened to become perfectly holy — as perfect as our heavenly Father (Mt. 5: 48; Constitution on the Church, nos. 10-11).

The Vatican Council placed emphasis on the call of the entire Church to become holy.\(^5\) Jesus died in order to sanctify his Church (Eph. 5: 26-27), and poured out his Spirit of holiness upon it. It is God's will that we all become holy (see 1 Thess. 4: 3; Eph. 1: 4). Jesus taught us to love God and neighbor (Mk. 12: 30-31), and to love one another as he himself loved us (Jn. 13: 34).

All believers are called to this holiness. Whatever vocation they follow, their primary vocation is that of Christian. It is the same holiness that is sought by all who are moved by the Spirit to obey and worship the Father as they follow Christ in their

\(^5\) See Vatican II, Constitution on the Church, chapter 5, nos. 39-42.
daily living. By faith, by accepting God’s will, by love, all Christians can grow in holiness each day. Love of God and neighbor, frequent sharing in the eucharist and other liturgical rites, constant prayer and self-denial, service of others: these are the marks of the true follower of Christ and lead us to holiness (Constitution on the Church, nos. 39-42). The primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit is found in active participation in the liturgy (Liturgy constitution, no. 14).

From the day of our baptism we are called to enter ever more fully into the paschal mystery of Christ. We renew our baptismal vows — to die to sin and to live with Christ for God — in our confirmation. Each year we return to our baptismal spirituality as we prepare throughout Lent to pledge our baptismal allegiance anew in the Easter vigil. Each celebration of Mass is a renewing of our baptismal covenant with God (Liturgy constitution, no. 10). In the sacrament of penance we continue the forgiveness of sins first available in baptism. In the anointing and communion of the sick, holy water is used as a reminder of our baptismal commitment to Christ.

When the time comes for viaticum, the true sacrament of the dying, we renew our baptismal promises once more. In death we enter the paschal mystery completely, dying in Christ for the last time, and truly rising with him in glory. This is underlined by the various baptismal signs used in the funeral rites, recalling that our baptism gives meaning to our life and death on earth.

The sacraments of initiation are the basis of our Christian spirituality. They help us to understand the meaning of our life and worship as followers of Christ.

What are we doing to make this truth more evident in the liturgical and devotional life of our community of faith?

Helpful reading:

Vatican II, Constitution on the Church, especially chapter 5 (nos. 39-42).


WORSHIPPING GOD

Why do Christians worship God? What does our worship mean? We may find answers to these questions by listening with faith to the word of the Lord.

Called to worship God: From eternity, before God created the universe, he called us in Christ to be his beloved people. He set us aside, dedicating us to give him praise and glory by our worship and by our life of loving obedience. In baptism, Christ brings us to share in his priesthood, and enables us to worship in spirit and truth with him and with all the people of God. This worship flows from a life of love and service for God and neighbor.

Jesus teaches us to worship: By his words and particularly by his example, our Lord helps us to see that our obedient response in faith to God's will is the sacrifice truly pleasing to the Father. He sealed his teaching by his own obedient death on the cross — and the Father raised him in glory, and made him Lord over all.

Christian attitudes in worship: We come with Jesus to praise the Father. Cleansed in Jesus' blood, sharing in his paschal mystery, we are made one with all God's people by his Holy Spirit. Our sacrifice of praise comes from thankful hearts, for we have been raised from the realm of darkness to the kingdom of light.

Using material things in worship: From the beginning the Church has promoted the use of created things in our worship, carefully avoiding the false spiritualism of the Gnostics. Bread and wine are brought for the eucharistic meal; water is used in the bath of baptism; oil is poured and bodies are anointed in several sacraments. Bodily gestures, song, incense, light, color: these are used to express the worship of the entire human person in the service of God, and our praise is offered to the Father by his incarnate Son.

Reverence and love: The prayers and actions used in our worship are given meaning by our interior, heartfelt praise and glory. What we do externally has to express our true intentions: our love for God, our faithful obedience to his will (see Mt. 7: 21-23), our concern and action for others. God cannot be deceived by external actions that are not based on true love for him.

Personal and community worship: While the personal and sincere element of worship is essential, it is also important that we offer this in union with the people of God whom God has chosen. By baptism Christ has brought us into the family of God: we are his Church, his body. Filled with his Spirit, we offer glory and honor and praise to the Father through Christ, our brother and our Lord.

Praise and glory are yours, Father of love, from all your beloved people in heaven and on earth.

We praise you for your saving love, and thank you for giving us your Son as our Lord. Fill us with your Spirit of love, for we are your beloved children.

Glory and honor are yours for evermore. Amen!
HEARING THE LIVING WORD

Some reflections on the place of the scriptures in the life of the people of God.

God's loving plan for our salvation has involved many stages. At last, after many other prophets, he sent his own Son to become one of us: Jesus came to save us by his obedience to his Father's will — obedience that led him to death, even by crucifixion (Heb. 1: 1-2; Phil. 2: 7-8). By giving us his Word as our Lord and brother, our heavenly Father was showing his great love for us, and was calling us to eternal life (Jn. 3: 16-17).

Since the first days of the Church, Christ has continued to teach us through his apostles and through the bishops, whom he sends to guide and nourish his Church. The Spirit guides the Church's tradition, its handing down of the faith from one generation to another, just as he inspired some to write down the teaching of Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament scriptures.1

Scriptures in Our Church

Jesus was raised in the teaching of the scriptures, and saw them as God's word to his beloved people. The Christians inherited the Old Testament as being profitable for salvation and leading to the truth (2 Tim. 3: 15-17). Its canon was gradually recognized in varying ways by the Jewish and Christian people.2

As the apostles began to preach the Good News about salvation in Jesus, they explained how the Hebrew scriptures were being fulfilled in the Church as in the new Israel. The Church continued to reflect on these writings, and to read them in the light of what God had done in Christ.

From about the year 51 to the early 100s, various individuals and groups wrote down some of the sayings of Jesus and events from the tradition about him, along with the teachings and reflections of the apostles and the Churches on his meaning for the world. Written and edited under the inspiration of the Spirit, these writings were later to be known as the 21 books of the New Testament.

At the same time and in later years, many other books were written about Jesus and his teachings. Some of these books claimed to be gospels or epistles, and others were written as normal letters or accounts.

Gradually the Church had to discern which books were to be considered as scriptures — as the inspired writings that are the word of God, guiding us to salvation. After obviously unsuitable books were eliminated, the main criterion for inclusion in the canon of the New Testament was this: Are the Churches accustomed to read them in their liturgies? The first local councils to affirm the present Catholic canon of 45 books in the Old Testament and 27 in the New were at Hippo (393) and Carthage (397).

1 See Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic constitution on divine revelation (Nov. 18, 1965). A useful summary is contained in Scripture in the Church, in Bulletin 56, pages 260-264.

Pope Innocent I mentioned the same books in 405. In 1546, the Council of Trent recognized this list as naming the canonical books for the Catholic Church.3

In this way, books such as the Didache, the Shepherd of Hermas, and the letters of St. Ignatius were seen not to be part of the inspired word. The Spirit of truth, who inspired the writers, also guided the prayer life of the Christian people, and thus helped them to know which writings he had inspired for them.

An early witness: As one example of how the Church used God's word in the liturgy, we may cite St. Justin. A lay teacher (probably a catechist or instructor for the catechumens) in Rome around 150, he was martyred for the faith some years later. In describing the Sunday celebration in the city, he points out how the liturgy of the word had evolved in his time:

After a reader proclaims texts from the memoirs of the apostles and from the prophets, the president speaks, and urges the community to imitate these examples. Then all stand to pray the common prayers aloud (general intercessions); at least in eucharistic celebrations after new members are initiated, the kiss of peace concludes what we now know as the liturgy of the word.4

Further developments: Some 65 years later, around 215, Hippolytus describes how the scriptures are used in the liturgical and devotional life of the Christian community of Rome. He notes first of all that the bishop appoints readers by placing the book in their hands.

At Rome catechumens were not allowed to hear the gospel until the final stages of their period of formation (usually three years); in other Churches, they could remain with the community until the gospel. Then they were dismissed, and went with a teacher for further instruction and prayer. During the (Easter) vigil service when the catechumens were to receive the sacraments of initiation, the community listened to readings from the scriptures while the candidates were in the separate baptistry, being stripped, anointed, baptized, anointed, and clothed. They were brought in to the bishop, who anointed them once more with the oil of thanksgiving. The liturgy of the word concluded with the general intercessions and the kiss of peace. Then gifts were brought to the altar and the liturgy of the eucharist began.

During the week, the community was invited to take part in weekday instructions on the word whenever a teacher passed through town; on other days, they were encouraged to read the scriptures at home. The hours of daily prayer were related to the hours of Christ's death and rising (see page 26).

Destroying the scriptures: In the time of persecution at the beginning of the fourth century, the empire sought to burn the scriptures — the books used by the readers — as well as destroy the church buildings or houses used by Christians for their liturgical assemblies.5

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1 See ibid., no. 67: 6-8, pages 516-517.
2 Apologia I, nos. 65, 67.
Development of lectionaries: During the fourth century, as more feasts and seasons were added to the liturgical year, appropriate readings were suggested for these days. In 397, the Council of Carthage named the 72 canonical books of the bible as the sources for readings to be proclaimed in the Church's liturgy. Early examples of lists of fixed readings for certain days, feasts, and seasons are seen in the fourth and fifth centuries.7

During the early middle ages, various Churches developed different sets of readings. These were first gathered into separate books for Old Testament lessons, New Testament epistles, and gospel readings. The efforts spent in copying and illuminating the scripture texts show their importance to the people of God.8

A brief history of the development of the lectionary in the Latin Church is outlined in *Lectionaries — then and now* in Bulletin 50, pages 216-219. The 1969 Roman lectionary, which is contained in *Lectionary for Mass*, is described and analyzed in Bulletin 50, *Reading God's Word: the Lectionary*.

Christian use of psalms: The way that Christ and the Church have interpreted the psalter as a Christian prayer book is discussed in "Psalms as Christian prayer," in Bulletin 58, pages 96-100.

Current renewal: In its Constitution on liturgy, the Second Vatican Council called for more reading from the bible in the liturgy (nos. 51; 35: 1), and pointed out the place of scripture in liturgical celebrations (no. 24), in the eucharist (no. 51), in the liturgy of the hours (no. 92a), and in hymns for all celebrations (no. 121).

These desires were carried out in the *Lectionary for Mass* (1969), in subsequent books for the sacraments of penance and the anointing of the sick, in the *Liturgy of the Hours*, and in the sections of the *Roman Pontifical* now being prepared.

Scripture in the Church today: Since the Council, scripture has returned to the foreground of the Church's life:

- *In the liturgy*: The scriptures are now proclaimed in all liturgical celebrations, from an enlarged and enriched lectionary. The book of the word is carried in during the entrance procession and enthroned on the lectern or altar as a sign of respect. Specially chosen and trained ministers are entrusted with the proclamation of the word.

- *In parish life*: In parish life today, the scriptures are gradually penetrating the lives and thinking of priests, ministers, and people. More people are reading them, and are letting God's word guide them in prayer and living. There remains a need, however, for all to look at parish institutions, practices, and habits in the light of the gospel message.

6 See Bulletin 47, *Year of Praise*, on the development of the liturgical year. Further references are given in Bulletin 61, pages 303-312.

7 For the old Armenian lectionary, used in Jerusalem in the final years of the fourth century, see Egeria's *Travels*, by John Wilkinson (1971, SPCK, London), pages 253-277. The lectionaries used by St. Augustine and St. Ambrose, as well as by various Churches, are described and discussed in *St. Augustine's Lectionary*, by A.A. Willis (Alcuin Club, no. 44: 1962, SPCK, London).

8 See for example the magnificent reproductions in *The Book of Kells*, from the manuscript in Trinity College, Dublin, with a study of the manuscript by Françoise Henry (1974, Thames and Hudson, London): 126 color plates, 75 black and white illustrations.
In family life: More families are listening to the word at home. See the following article, *Daily reading of the scriptures*. Bulletin 63 concentrates on *Children and Liturgy*, and discusses the place of the scriptures in the home.

**Helpful reading:** As well as the books and articles referred to in the footnotes of this article, see:


*Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination* (1977, George Braziller, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016).


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**A PRAYER**

Blessed lord,  
which hast caused all holy Scriptures  
to bee written for our learning;  
grante us that we maye in suche wise heare them,  
read, marke, learne, and inwardly digeste them;  
that by patience, and comfort of thy holy woord,  
we may embrace, and ever holde fast  
the blessed hope of everlasting life,  
which thou hast gaven us in our sauior Jesus Christe.

First Prayer Book of Edward VI (1549)  
From *The First and Second Prayer Books of Edward VI*  
(1910, 1968, Everyman's Library, Dent, London;  

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**NEXT ISSUE**

*Children and Liturgy* is the title of Bulletin 63, which is to be ready for mailing in March. In 64 pages, this issue discusses many ways of giving pre-school children a solid foundation for liturgy: ideas for home and church offer practical suggestions for your parish.

This issue also looks at Masses and other liturgies celebrated with school children.
DAILY READING OF THE SCRIPTURES

Most Rev. Aloysius M. Ambrozic, Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto, is a doctor in theology (Wuerzburg, 1970), and formerly taught at St. Augustine's Seminary, Scarborough, and in the Toronto School of Theology.

The bible can be read and studied in many different ways: it is a collection of literary works, containing passages of great beauty which are meant to be enjoyed; it gives us useful information about people, events, ideas, and customs of the ancient past. Yet we shall be untrue to its inmost being and purpose unless we hear God speaking through it about himself, his work of creation and salvation, his love and purpose for his creatures. In the bible God speaks to us and demands an answer from us. This answer consists primarily in prayer, communal or individual, which spills over into our daily living. Daily reading of the scriptures will keep us aware of the loving, and therefore demanding, presence of Jesus, who promised to be with his disciples "all days."

How are we to go about this daily reading? Many ways spring to mind. Some years ago I attended October devotions in a parish church, and was rather impressed by the manner in which each of the mysteries of the rosary was "said" — a brief passage of the New Testament related to the mystery was read, the priest gave a one-minute reflection on it, another minute was devoted to silent reflection, and one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory be formed the conclusion. I came away convinced that the priest leading the prayer understood Jesus' directive to the leaders of the Church: "Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old" (Mt. 13: 52). Anyone sufficiently familiar with the New Testament can pray the rosary in the same or similar manner, either alone or with his family or in larger groups. Stations of the cross and other devotions can likewise be revitalized by means of biblical readings. We can also follow a gospel, or an epistle, or any other book of the bible from beginning to end — not all at once, of course, but in short daily instalments. We can read, and reread, sections of the bible which have made a deep impression on us. Lately the practice of praying the Liturgy of the Hours, in whole or in part, has begun to spread slowly among lay people. And there is the magnificent new Lectionary.

In the long run the liturgy of the hours and the lectionary will undoubtedly be recognized as the best and the most convenient ways of doing the daily reading of scriptures. By means of the liturgy of the hours, where biblical prayers predominate, God imprints on us the awareness already given by him to his inspired writers of his nearness and transcendent mystery, of his holiness and love, of his awesomeness and gentleness. Through this awareness he guides us to relate as he intends us to relate to himself, to ourselves, and to our neighbor. Apart from the readings in the context of the eucharist, the liturgy of the hours is most likely the best way of reading the bible in groups, since, among other things, it effectively saves it from becoming a mere "topic of discussion," helpful as discussions may be sometimes.

1 See Apostolic exhortation Marialis cultus of Paul VI on devotion to Mary (Feb. 2, 1974), nos. 42-55. This 46-page booklet is available for 60c plus postage from Publications Service at the address on the inside front cover of this issue.

2 See Marialis cultus, nos 53-54, on the liturgy of the hours as the "high point" of family prayer. Bulletin 58, Day by Day We Give Him Praise, concentrates on the liturgy of the hours.
The lectionary, on the other hand, assures us of coming in contact with all the representative sections and themes of the bible, and counteracts our instinctive desire to avoid hearing what upsets us.

The most necessary disposition for our daily reading of the bible is the consciousness of the personal presence of God: its aim, after all, is not to talk to ourselves and others about what God has to say, but to listen and talk to him. This awareness will unquestionably be increased if we read the bible, and particularly the gospels, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, for in the eucharist Jesus is most fully and authentically present in our world: there the incarnate Son of God, totally obedient in his death and forever united with his Father in the resurrection, is sacramentally visible to us. Neither should we be afraid of visualizing Jesus in a particular gospel scene and ourselves in that scene, for Jesus has not forgotten his life on earth and is still speaking the words which he spoke then.

When a passage “says nothing to us,” it may be that some, however simple, study might be necessary; but it may also point to blindness on our part in regard to God, ourselves, and our neighbor.

* * *

Helpful reading: These books are suggested as helpful to those who wish to read the scriptures daily:

- **Scriptures:** Various editions are available. Three approved in Canada for liturgical use are *The Jerusalem Bible, Revised Standard Version, New American Bible*: available at most book stores.

- **Excerpts from the scriptures** are contained in *Sunday Lectionary — Study Edition* and *Weekday Lectionary — Study Edition*, as well as in *Sunday Mass Book*: available from Publications Service (see address on inside front cover of this Bulletin).

- **Commentaries:**


- **Liturgy of the hours:**

  See *Christian Prayer* (1976, Helicon Press, 1120 N. Calvert St., Baltimore, Md. 21202; The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn.): contains morning, evening, and night prayer throughout the year, with music for 185 hymns. (See detailed review in Bulletin 58, pages 117-120.)

  Other useful books for morning and evening prayer are described in Bulletin 58, pages 114-116.

* See Bulletin 50, *Reading God’s Word: the Lectionary.*

**LENT**

Many articles on Lent are contained in past issues of the Bulletin. These are listed in the index in Bulletin 61, pages 307-310, under *Lent* and *Holy Week.*
JESUS IS LORD

Devotion to the Lord Jesus is part of our practice of Christian prayer. This article looks at our devotion to our Lord. The next three articles consider specific areas of Christian piety: devotion to the passion of Christ, and eucharistic devotion.

Jesus Is Our Lord

Because the Father loved us so deeply, he sent his only Son to be one of us, and to bring us to eternal life (Jn. 3: 16). He came as the light of the world. He is our brother and our Lord, Son of God and son of Mary. He is a man like us in all things but sin. Those who receive him and believe in him become God's children (Jn. 1: 12).

“Jesus is Lord” — These words were used by the early Christians as a profession of faith, and probably in the adult baptismal rite (see Rom. 10: 9-10). Only those led by the Holy Spirit could make this act of faith (1 Cor. 12: 3). It is the earliest form of the Christian creed or profession of faith. In the passage describing Philip and the Ethiopian official who came to faith (Acts 8: 26-40), verse 37 is now considered to be an early gloss preserved in the Western Text; it seems to reflect the liturgy of baptism of the Church's first decades. This profession echoes that of Peter in Mt. 16: 16.

Jesus is our risen Lord: The Lord we honor and follow is the risen Lord, seated now at the right hand of the Father (Mk. 16: 19) and making intercession for us (Heb. 7: 24-25). It is our risen Lord who is our mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2: 5). It is this same glorified Lord through whom we pray, and who is our only way to the Father (Jn. 14: 6). When we gather together in Jesus' name (Mt. 18: 20) or help him in others (Mt. 25: 31-46), it is the risen Lord, the Lord of all the ages, that we meet: there is no other Lord we can know.

Through Christ our Lord: The Nicene creed describes the Father as designing and making the world through his Word (see also Jn. 1: 3-5). God showers his gifts on us through Christ, who is the savior and center of the universe. The Father has given us his Son as our only way to him; now we can approach with confidence (Heb. 4: 16). We offer our worship, our prayers, and our lives to God through Jesus, our Lord and our brother: through him all glory is given to the Father.

The Christian liturgy offers worship to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. This is particularly noted in the prayer endings of the opening prayer (collect), prayer over the gifts, and prayer after communion, as well as in the final doxology of the eucharistic prayer ("Through Christ, with him, in him"): see GI, nos. 32, 55h.1 See also Bulletin 54, pages 139 and 158.

Applying Old Testament passages to Christ: Jesus applied various Old Testament passages to himself (see Lk. 4: 21), and the early Church did not hesitate to follow this practice. Some examples:

1 GI: This abbreviation indicates the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. Written as a pastoral introduction and explanation of the rites of Mass, it is found at the beginning of the sacramentary; it is given on pages 11-54 of the Canadian edition.
**Good shepherd:** In the psalms, the title of "shepherd" is applied to God (see Ps. 23, Ps. 80). Jesus, who grew up praying these psalms to his Father, told us that he himself is the good shepherd (see Jn. 10: 11-18); see also Bulletin 58, pages 97-98.

**Seated at the side of the Father:** Jesus applies Ps. 110 to himself as the Christ or Messiah (Mt. 22: 41-46; Jn. 4: 26), and his followers continue to see it as a prophecy about his ascension to the right hand of the Father (see Acts 2: 34-36; Heb. 1: 13; 8: 1; 1 Pet. 3: 22).

**Lord:** The gospels and epistles, written years after the resurrection of Christ and his sending of the Spirit, often apply the title "Lord" (Adonai, Kyrios) to Jesus; in the Old Testament, this was reserved for God alone. The Sanhedrin reacted to the Church's use of this title in the persecution of Stephen (Acts 6: 8—7: 60) and of Peter and John, who suffered for the name (Acts 4: 1-22; 5: 21-41).

**Suffering servant:** Jesus emphasized that he came as the servant and savior of all (Mk. 10: 45). The New Testament sees Jesus as God's servant, basing its imagery on the four songs of the suffering servant in the book of Isaiah the prophet: see Is. 42: 1-9; Is. 49: 1-6; Is. 50: 4-11; Is. 52: 13—53: 12.

The Church continues to apply Old Testament titles to Jesus: see *Oantiphons* in Bulletin 55, pages 200-204; the invitatory psalm in the liturgy of the hours often applies the phrases of Ps. 95 to our Lord.

**Psalms as Christian prayer:** By interpreting the psalms as the prayer of Christ and of his people, the Church gives a Christian interpretation to the psalter. This is discussed in more detail in "Psalms as Christian prayer" in Bulletin 58, pages 96-100.

**Titles of our Lord:** The 21 books of the New Testament use many titles and names for the Lord Jesus. If the members of the parish liturgy committee, choir, a class at school, or prayer group wish to grow in their devotion to Christ, they could study the titles in various New Testament books, and share them in a prayerful half hour of reflection. (Some starters: see Mt. 1: 21-28; Jn. 1: 34; 11: 27; 1 Cor. 2: 6-10.)

**Jesus' growth and development:** One of the concerns of Christology (the theological study of Jesus Christ) through the centuries has been his self-knowledge and understanding: how much did he know about himself and his mission?

**Growing up:** Luke tells us that Jesus grew up gradually as we all do. He grew physically, mentally, spiritually, morally, and socially: in wisdom, age, and grace before God and other people (Lk. 2: 40, 52). Like us, he had to seek out God's will for him, and pray and work to discern the unique vocation and mission to which the Father called him.

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2 See *General Introduction of the Liturgy of the Hours* (GILH). This pastoral introduction and explanation of the office today is found at the beginning of *Liturgy of the Hours* (1975, Catholic Book, New York), vol. I, pages 21-98. The section on the psalms as Christian prayer is contained in nos. 110, 100-109. If we are to understand the present state of the office and celebrate it properly, we need to become more familiar with this Introduction.


Completely like us: The New Testament assures us that Jesus is one of us, our brother in the flesh: He is like us in all things but sin (Heb. 4: 15). He had to learn through obedience (see Lk. 2: 51) and suffering, and thus he is able to sympathize with us and help us (Heb. 4: 15-16). He was tempted (Heb. 4: 15), and he even begged to be freed from the terrible suffering which his Father commanded him to undergo (Mk. 14: 35-36). His total obedience to the Father’s will was the pleasing sacrifice that saved us: through his obedient suffering he became able to help us (Heb. 5: 8-10).

Jesus’ devotion to the Father: As a devout member of the Israelite people, Jesus prayed three times each day, and was in the habit of attending synagogue worship (Lk. 4: 16). He had a deep devotion to God as Abba, his beloved Father, and allowed his followers to use this intimate title for God in their prayer. He spent much time in prayer. When Jesus’ disciples asked him to teach them to pray, he gave them a model (Mt. 6: 9-13; Lk. 11: 2-4), which has come to be known as the Lord’s prayer.

Our Lord’s devotion to the Father was expressed in his actions. So devoted was he to God’s will in his own life (see Jn. 4: 34) that later writers could characterize him in the words of Ps. 40: 6-8: “I have come to do your will” (see Heb. 10: 5-7). This obedience to God’s will was exemplified during his agony in the garden of Gethsemane (see Mk. 14: 32-42 and parallels), and was summarized by his use of Ps. 31: 5 on the cross (Lk. 23: 46; see also Acts 7: 59).

By his word and example, Jesus taught his followers to obey God’s will (Mt. 6: 10b; 7: 21), and to show love for God by loving and serving others (Jn. 13: 34-35). He came as a servant, and taught us to serve in obedient faith.

Devotion to Christ

Devotion to Christ is our grace-filled response to God’s wonderful works in Christ for us. We express our love for our Lord in many ways, but first of all in obedience to God’s will (Jn. 15: 10) and in love for others (Jn. 13: 34). Some of the elements in this devotion are described below, and in the following articles.

Aware of his presence: Jesus assured us that he would always be with God’s people (Mt. 28: 20). This continuing presence is experienced in many ways:

○ The apostles and early Christians recognized him in the breaking of bread, the eucharist (see Lk. 24: 35; Acts 2: 42).

○ Stephen saw Jesus with him, and prayed to him during his trial and martyrdom (Acts 7: 56, 59).

○ Jesus promises that those who live in him and love him will bear eternal fruit (Jn. 15: 1-17). He and his Father will live in us (Jn. 14: 23), and Jesus will give us his Spirit (Jn. 7: 37-39).

○ Jesus is present in those who suffer. He tells us that we help him when we help others in need; we turn him down when we refuse to come to their aid (see Mt. 25: 31-46).

4 See Jesus — man of prayer in Bulletin 58, pages 73-74.
Jesus also teaches us that he is with us when two or three of us gather in his name (Mt. 18: 20). This is particularly true when we are praying in his name (see Jn. 14: 14; 15: 7; 16: 23-24).

The middle ages concentrated almost exclusively on the sacramental presence of Christ in the eucharistic species. This presence came to be known as the “real presence.” (See Other eucharistic devotions on pages 40-46.) One effect of this concentration was a neglect of the other forms of his presence among us.

The Second Vatican Council has begun to restore some perspective in the matter of Christ’s presence among his people. In the Constitution on the liturgy (no. 7), it taught us that Christ is present in the liturgical action and assembly in several ways, in order to give praise and thanks to the Father for his gifts of salvation in Christ (nos. 6-7).

Christ is present in his Church, and particularly in its celebration of the liturgy. In the Mass, Jesus is present in the priest, and in the eucharistic species. He is present in the sacraments by his power: it is he who really baptizes, forgives, heals, and unites. When God’s word is proclaimed in the Christian assembly, it is Jesus who speaks to his gathered people. He is present whenever the people of God gather to pray and sing in the eucharist, in sacramental celebrations, and in the liturgy of the hours (nos. 7, 83-84).

Come, follow me: Jesus is our only way to the Father (Jn. 14: 6). The New Testament describes our following of Christ as the Way (Acts 9: 2) and the Life (Acts 5: 20).

Our Lord wants us to follow him through suffering and self-denial into the glory of his resurrection. He promises no easy paths now, but only a narrow, difficult road (Mt. 7: 14). He invites us to follow him by carrying our cross each day (Lk. 9: 23).

He is with us. When we are tired of carrying our burdens, he invites us to come to him for rest. Though we find our crosses heavy, he promises that his yoke will be light (Mt. 11: 28-30). It is when we are weak that he is able to accomplish great works in us (2 Cor. 12: 9-10), and thus help us to bear eternal fruit for the Father (Jn. 15: 16).

Christians must continue to crucify their passions (Gal. 5: 24-25), and let the Spirit guide and control their lives (Rom. 8: 1-17). This responsibility flows from our involvement with Christ’s paschal mystery: we were baptized into his death and rising. Plunged with him into the waters, we died with him to sin; brought up out of the baptismal bath, we rose with him to new life for God (Rom. 6: 3-14). Christ lives in us as we live by faith (Gal. 2: 19-20). See Baptism: basis of our spirituality, on pages 4-8.

Serving in love: Jesus summarized the ten commandments into two: total love of God, and love of others equal to our self-love (Mk. 12: 28-34). In the last supper discourse, these are summed up in a new commandment, to love others as Jesus loves us (Jn. 13: 34; 15: 12) — that is, even to the point of laying down our life for them as Jesus has for us (Jn. 15: 13; 10: 11, 15, 17-18). When we love one another, the world will recognize us as his followers (Jn. 13: 35) and therefore persecute us in hatred (Jn. 15: 18-21). But we are to have courage and peace, for he has overcome the world (Jn. 16: 33). We are to rejoice and be filled with peace (Phil. 4: 4-9), to be eager for good works as we await his coming (Titus 2: 11-14), to live always in thanks (Col. 3: 17), for with Jesus Christ we are God’s heirs (Rom. 8: 17).
Union with Christ: In his figure of the vine and branches (Jn. 15: 1-17), Jesus speaks of the love which binds him and his followers in the Church. The Father tends the vine, the new Israel, and makes it fruitful. This passage is filled with rich allusions, and would be a good one for personal meditation and for study by the liturgy committee.

Devotion to Christ's passion: This is discussed in the following article, Paschal mystery in our devotion.

Some Problems

The Second Vatican Council described its goals quite clearly in paragraph one of the Constitution on liturgy. It wanted to:

- help Catholics to deepen their Christian living each day;
- adapt changeable Church observances to the needs of today's world (see Liturgy constitution, no. 21);
- strengthen everything that contributes to unity among Christians;
- make the Church more attractive to all people.

The liturgy was the first of the areas needing such reform. Popular devotions were commended by the Council, but were to be reformed according to the principles underlying the liturgical renewal, and were to be filled with the spirit of the liturgy (Liturgy constitution, nos. 13, 17).

The purpose of this section of this article is not to ridicule certain devotions, but to invite Catholics to re-examine them soberly in the light of the scriptures, Christian tradition, liturgical principles, and the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.

What about “Baby Jesus”? In Rome, there is a great devotion to the bambino in his glass box in the former temple of Juno; he gets letters from around the world. In Manila the nino gets great attention in the oldest church in town. Around the world, people put lace dresses and copes on a doll known as the infant of Prague, and wonder why its ring goes around two fingers. Every Christmas since the time of St. Francis of Assisi (1223), cribs are erected in homes and churches.3

We have to ask ourselves some questions. Can we pray to Jesus “in the days of his flesh” (Heb. 5: 7), as he was in the past? Can we pray to the helpless infant in the crib, to the lost child in the temple, to the fasting leader in the desert? Can we pray to Jesus at Cana or Capernaum or Gethsemane, to Jesus carrying his cross or nailed to it? Can we pray to Christ in the cenacle or in the tomb?

In the liturgy and in our personal devotions, we can pray only to Jesus Christ our Lord and brother, alive and risen from the dead, and now seated in glory at the right hand of the Father; we can pray to the risen Lord Jesus who is present among us in many ways (see Liturgy constitution, no. 7; Mt. 25: 31-46). We can remember what he has done for us in his paschal mystery, and thank him for his incarnation and for his suffering for our sake. But we can pray to him only as he is, in glory — not as he was.

3 It should be noted that cribs are not even mentioned in the liturgical books of the Roman rite. They are fitting for use at home, in school, and in shopping centers; if used in church, they should not distract from the liturgical celebration or impede the ministers or people. A full discussion on the positive use of cribs is contained in Bulletin 36, pages 262-264; see also no. 41, pages 312-313; no. 55, pages 211-212.
• **Horrible example:** It was the eve of the feast of the Epiphany, 1977. The North American Academy of Liturgy was meeting in San Antonio, Texas. As part of our conference, we were able to take part in a tour of the surrounding area, with its centuries of Christian history. In one Spanish mission, built by the *padres* and their converts, we were led through the compound into the church. As we approached the altar in the dim light, a most eminent North American liturgist exclaimed: "Piety strikes again!" The *corpus* had been removed from the cross over the altar, and had been replaced by a large figure of the child Jesus, aged about six!

**Other Notes**

**New Testament canticles:** The new liturgy of the hours incorporates a canticle as the third psalm in evening prayer. They sing of the Father’s choice of Christ, of our Lord’s abasement, obedient death, victorious resurrection and ascension. They also reflect the heavenly liturgy and its unending hymn of praise and thanks.

These canticles give us a positive scriptural approach, praising the Father for his gift of his Son, and giving glory to his Son, our brother.

**Balance:** The over-emphasis on the divinity of Christ in reaction to Arian errors led to an unbalanced form of liturgy and devotion. This was counterbalanced later by a strong emphasis on Jesus’ humanity and sufferings. Today, we seem to have a reasonable equilibrium: we see Christ as our Lord and our brother, as the Son of God and the son of Mary, as the Lord of glory and a man like us in all things but sin. As the years go on and new feasts and devotions develop (or as old ones dwindle and disappear), we need to keep this sense of balance, and hand it on to those who come after us.

**Knowing the Father:** Jesus gives thanks to his Father for revealing himself to little ones (Mt. 11: 25-26), and tells us that we know the Father when we know and love and obey his Son (Jn. 14: 7-11; 17: 3). We are in fellowship with the Father and with Jesus (1 Jn. 1: 3). The first epistle of John describes many of the results of our loving union with God.

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6 The proceedings of each year’s meeting of the Academy are published in the July issue of *Worship*. For the 1977 proceedings, see *Worship*, vol. 51, no. 4 (July 1977), pages 282-375.

7 The canticles used in the liturgy of the hours are listed and briefly described in Bulletin 58, *Day by Day We Give Him Praise*, page 77.

8 St. Ignatius of Antioch, who was martyred in Rome around 110, tried to retain this balance in his day in this quotation from what seems to be an early Christian hymn:

There is only one physician:

carnal and spiritual
begotten and unbegotten
born in flesh God
in death true life
of Mary of God
subject at first to suffering now invulnerable

Jesus Christ is our Lord.

Jesus' Spirit: The New Testament is filled with references to the Spirit of Jesus. Our Lord promised to give his Spirit to his Church (Jn. 14: 26), to fill us with God's power (Lk. 24: 49). Our heavenly Father is always ready to give his Spirit when we ask him (Lk. 11: 13). The Spirit of love, who has been poured into our hearts (Rom. 5: 5), lives within us as his temples (1 Cor. 3: 16-17). He leads us to recognize our beloved Father as we try to live for Christ (Rom. 8: 14-17), and teaches us to pray (Rom. 8: 26-27). The Holy Spirit showers the fruits of Christian living upon us (Gal. 5: 22-23), and helps us to sow now so that we will reap eternal life (Gal. 6: 8; 1 Cor. 9: 6).

True devotion: What is true devotion to Christ in our day? While the details may vary a little, all orthodox believers will agree on these points:

- Obedience in faith: It was by obedience that Jesus won his victory over death and brought us salvation. We cannot be his followers if we do not obey Jesus, and do the Father's will: there can be no Christian living without this (Mt. 7: 21). (As noted in Bulletin 42, pages 20-21, the first penance we must undertake is giving up sin.)

- Faithful to the scriptures: The Council has called us back once more to be people of the word, who hear and read the scriptures, reflect on them, and live them. The renewed Sunday lectionary proclaims the major truths of our faith during the three-year cycle (see Bulletin 50, Reading God's Word: the Lectionary, pages 224-230). Christians need to make sure that their attitudes, actions, and devotional practices are in accord with the teaching and example given us in the bible, particularly in the New Testament.

- In harmony with the Church: The Father has made Christ Lord of all creation and head of the Church (Eph. 1: 11). The Lord Jesus founded his Church on Peter (Mt. 16: 17-19) and the apostles (Mt. 18: 18). The Church is the entire people of God, head and members, in time and in eternity. The term is also used of the people of God on earth, and sometimes of those who serve its members as their leaders. In telling us to listen to the leaders (see Lk. 10: 16), who are chosen by the Spirit (Acts 20: 28) to be guardians of God's flock (1 Pet. 5: 2) and to nourish it (Acts 20: 28), Jesus also gives these leaders the responsibility of teaching and leading according to his will rather than theirs.

- Devotional practices are prayers and actions which help to reinforce and express our faith by bringing it into our daily life. These practices are to be in accord with our faith, with the scriptures, with the liturgical tradition and practice of the Church, and with ecumenical and antropological guidelines: see Marialis cultus, nos. 29-39.

Primary and indispensable source: The Church teaches us that the primary and indispensable source of the true spirit of Christ is to be found in the complete sharing in the liturgy of the Church — the eucharist, the sacraments, the liturgy of the hours, and other liturgical rites. Acceptable devotions must never be in contradiction or opposition to these, nor seek to replace them; good devotions are always in harmony with the full liturgy of the Church.

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22
Jesus is Lord:

- Let us reverence him in our hearts.  
  *(1 Pet. 3: 15)*

- Let us kneel to him,  
  and confess that he is Lord.  
  *(Phil. 2: 10-11)*

* * *

Helpful reading:

* Jesus: a gospel portrait, by Donald Senior, CP (1975, Pflaum Standard, Cincinnati, Ohio).
* Jesus, God and Man: modern biblical reflections, by Raymond E. Brown, SS (1967, Bruce, Milwaukee).
* * *

Father of Jesus,  
we give you praise and glory  
for saving us through your Son.  
Help us to follow him each day  
and to listen to his Spirit of truth.  
May we give you honor by our lives  
until you invite us to be with you for ever.

Father, we give you praise  
through Christ our Lord.  Amen!
PASCHAL MYSTERY IN OUR DEVOTION

By the paschal mystery we mean the suffering, death, resurrection, ascension of Jesus, his sending of the Spirit, and his coming again in glory at the end of time — seen as one great saving act of God. Devotion to this mystery means devotion to the Lord Jesus who has undergone these various moments in his paschal mystery in order to save us: (see Liturgy constitution, nos. 6, 12).

Through the centuries, these devotions have varied immensely among Christians.

In the New Testament

Foretelling the paschal mystery: The synoptic gospels\(^1\) record that Jesus foretold his suffering, death, and resurrection three times. He emphasized that it was necessary for him to die in order to accomplish his paschal mystery (Mk. 8: 31; see also Lk. 24: 26, 46). Naturally, his disciples did not understand what he was talking about.

Passion narratives: The four passion accounts are considered to be the first part of our present gospels to crystallize as a continuous section or narrative. They cover the last supper, the trials, the crucifixion, death, and burial of Jesus, and lead to the account of the resurrection. John's gospel places more emphasis on the fact that Jesus is victorious and glorified through his passion (Jn. 16: 33; 17: 1-5). A brief proclamation of these events is part of the apostolic teaching (see Acts 13: 27-31, and Peter's first sermon in Acts 2).

The story of their liturgical use is described in Bulletin 47, Year of Praise, pages 35-36.

Jesus had to suffer: The early Christians sought to understand why Christ was put to death. Reflection on the words of Jesus and on Old Testament passages (such as the servant songs in Isaiah, and the psalms) gradually led them to see why Jesus had to suffer in order to save us: see Lk. 9: 22; 24: 7, 23-27, 44-46. With the help of the Holy Spirit, their preaching of Jesus' death-resurrection would lead many to repentance and forgiveness (Lk. 24: 45-49; Acts 2: 23-24, 32-33, 36, 38-40).

This preaching permeates the epistles, and is summarized in the beautiful canticle in Phil. 2: 6-11.

In the Early Church

The paschal mystery was celebrated in many ways in the first centuries:

Day of the Lord: From the time of the apostles, the first day of the week was celebrated as the Lord's day, a day for recognizing the risen Jesus in the breaking of bread.\(^2\) Sunday still remains the most important day of the Christian week, a day for the Christian assembly to celebrate the paschal mystery. This day is the nucleus and heart of the liturgical year (Liturgy constitution, no. 106).

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\(^1\) See Mk. 8: 31-32; 9: 30-32; 10: 32-34, and parallel passages in Matthew and Luke.

\(^2\) The meaning and celebration of Sunday are studied in Bulletin 43, Sunday Belongs to the Lord. Its history and place in the liturgical year are discussed in no. 47, Year of Praise, pages 14-16. See also Bulletin 50, Reading God's Word: the Lectionary, pages 224-230, on the Sunday lectionary.
Easter: As early as the beginning of the second century, if not earlier, the East had an annual celebration of the pascha, the death-and-resurrection of the Lord. It was seen as a unitive feast, preceded by a day or two of fasting. This celebration came to Rome in the second century, and was fixed on Sunday after a period of controversies over its date. (See Bulletin 47, pages 48-54.)

Christian initiation: The vivid symbolism of our death, burial, and rising with Christ in baptism (Rom. 6: 3-11) is continued in the rites of Christian initiation, in which the candidates — usually adults — go down naked into a pool, make their profession of faith, and come up to be anointed, clothed, and brought into the community for chrismation and eucharist. This celebration was firmly attached to the Easter vigil by the beginning of the third century.

Eucharistic prayers: The earliest texts of the eucharistic prayers proclaim the paschal mystery clearly. Addressed to the Father, they thank him for sending his only-begotten Son to save us; made man and born of Mary, Jesus accepted his suffering on the cross, died, and was raised again; now in glory, he will come at the end of time. During the prayer, the narrative of institution is said in his memory, and the Father is asked to send his Spirit to make these offerings holy. As well, prayers are offered for the Church. After acclaiming Amen! all eat and drink the body and blood of the Lord in communion.

These ideas continue to be expressed today in modern eucharistic prayers.

Fasting and penance: After his baptism, Jesus began his public ministry by a 40-day fast in the desert (Mt. 4: 1-11). He said that his followers would fast after he had been taken away from them (in his ascension): see Mt. 9: 14-15. He also taught them the proper spirit in which to fast in order to please God (Mt. 6: 16-18). Fasting is mentioned several times in the Acts in connection with prayer and laying on of hands (Acts 13: 2-3; 14: 23).

The Didache reflects the life of the Church in its early years, probably around the year 100 or earlier. It urges fasting — by the candidate, the one who baptizes him, and by others — for a day or two before an adult is baptized.

The Epistle of Barnabas, written around 130, repeats the warnings of Isaiah 58 about the kind of fasting that God wants. (The Church uses two passages, Is. 58: 1-9a, and Is. 58: 9b-14, on the Friday and Saturday after Ash Wednesday: see lectionary, nos. 222-223.)

3 See Bulletin 51, Christian Initiation, pages 279-285 on initiation in the early Church. (A study edition of Christian Initiation of Adults is available for $2.00 from Publications Service, at the address on the inside front cover of this issue.) Bulletin 64 (May-June 1978) looks at the instruction and formation of baptized persons in Christian Initiation: Into Full Communion.

4 For example, see the prayers in Hippolytus and Sarapion, listed under "Helpful reading" at the end of this article.

5 See for example the four eucharistic prayers in the current sacramentary (Canadian edition, pages 425, 588-616); Sunday Mass Book: English texts, pages 595-596, 650-671; French texts, pages 694-712. Five new eucharistic prayers are contained in Masses with Children/Masses of Reconciliation (Canadian edition, $5.00, including all nine prayers and the complete order of Mass for celebrations in homes and schools: available from Publications Service). See also the proposed edition of The Book of Common Prayer ... according to the use of the Episcopal Church (1977, The Church Hymnal Corp. and The Seabury Press, N.Y.); see the great thanksgivings (eucharistic prayers) in rite I, pages 333-336, 340-343; rite II, pages 361-363, 367-375. Outlines of the great thanksgiving are provided on pages 402-403.
Fasting days were Wednesday and Fridays in both East and West (Didache 8: 1). Tertullian called these station days, or days on which Christians did their duty for the Lord by prayer and fasting. By the fourth century the Church in the West observed Friday and Saturday as fast days. Lent evolved in the third century, and spread more widely in the fourth.

The Second Vatican Council called for a renewal of the spirit of penance, especially during Lent, which has both a baptismal and a penitential character. The Council also restored the paschal fast (Liturgy constitution, nos. 109-110).

In 1966, Pope Paul issued an apostolic constitution on the virtue and practice of penance. That same year, the Canadian bishops spoke on penitential discipline, and encouraged Catholics to “maintain the penitential character of Lent, and of all Fridays of the year.” Particular attention was to be given to Fridays in Lent, especially Good Friday. Canadians were invited to rediscover the spirit of penance (see Bulletin 10, pages 7-12).

Since that time, a call to greater penance has been growing in the Canadian Church, particularly during Lent. (See Bulletin 42, Call to Penance; Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1977-1978 Liturgical Calendar, pastoral note 25, “Penitential discipline.”) The calendar also contains appropriate notes at the beginning of Lent, on Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday.

Hours of the passion: Prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours was strongly recommended by Tertullian at the beginning of the third century. Hippolytus also encouraged prayer at these times, and related them to the passion of Christ. Later writers continued this style of prayer, though with varying interpretations (see Bulletin 58, Prayer of the early Christians, pages 79-87; Parish and monastic offices, pages 88-95).

In the renewed liturgy of the hours, these traditional hours are provided for midmorning, midday, and midafternoon (see GILH, nos. 74-75; Liturgy constitution, no. 89e). On Friday and in evening prayer, the office refers to Jesus’ passion, and on Sunday and in morning prayer, it celebrates his resurrection (see GILH, nos. 38-39, 158b).

Making the sign of the cross: In the early 200s, Tertullian notes that Christians mark a cross on their forehead on many occasions: when going out, walking, or coming in; when dressing, bathing, eating, or lighting lamps, when sitting or lying down; and in all their ordinary occupations of each day. Around 217, Hippolytus adds that believers make a small cross on the forehead in this way: the person breathes on his hand (a reminder of the Spirit and of the waters of baptism), and renews his baptismal faith. This is done at midnight prayer and in time of temptation: this symbol of Christ’s passion made without show on the forehead or on the eyes drives away Satan.

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6 Early Christian Writings: the Apostolic Fathers, translated by Maxwell Staniforth (1968, Penguin, Markham, Ontario). This valuable little book includes the First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians (pages 15-59); the Didache (pages 223-237); the letters of Ignatius (pages 61-131), and other useful writings. It is recommended for any student of the liturgy or of the Church's beginnings.


26
In the fourth century, the Church Fathers talk of the sphragis, the seal or sign of the cross made in the baptismal rite, usually during the anointing with chrism after baptism. This cross was seen as an indelible sign of Christ’s ownership over his flock, a mark of his protective care, and a badge of membership in Christ’s army.\(^8\)

Hippolytus notes that the bishop seals the forehead, ears, and nostrils of the catechumens on Saturday, before the vigil service. After their baptism, they are led into the church, where he lays hands on their head and signs their forehead with the oil of thanksgiving.

During the fourth century, the small sign of the cross was made on the breast and forehead in the liturgy, and the eucharist was used to sign the forehead and eyes. The large sign of the cross was known in the fifth century, but did not enter the liturgy until much later. The restored Mass liturgy has dropped many of the signs of the cross added in the medieval period. In the baptismal rite, the signing of the children on the forehead by priest, parents, and godparents is intended to show that these children now belong to Christ. (This rite is a very brief form of the “catechumenate” for children.)

The feast of the exaltation of the holy cross dates from the dedication of the churches at the site of Calvary and the sepulcher in September 325.

Other Notes

**Christian art and the cross:** Though the Church preached that Christ was crucified and raised again to save us, Christian art was slow to represent the cross. Until the fourth century, it was a means of execution of criminals; it was a shameful and agonizing death for the victim, who was crucified in the nude. The earliest representation of Christ’s crucifixion is a second-century pagan graffito on a building on the Palatine hill in Rome: it shows a soldier worshipping his God, who is drawn as a crucified man with the head of an ass.\(^9\) In the second century Justin the martyr did try to explain the crucifixion of Christ to the emperor, around 155, and said that the cross is the greatest symbol of Jesus’ power and authority (Apologia I: 55).

In the fourth century, Constantine’s vision of the cross in heaven led him to put this sign on the shields of his army. After freedom of worship became possible for Christians, he built shrine churches in the holy places of Jerusalem, as well as in Constantinople (his new capital in the East) and in Rome. He also abolished crucifixion as a method of execution. By the second half of the century, it was widely understood that Christ’s cross had been found, and relics of it were taken to many parts of the world. Egeria describes the veneration of the cross in Jerusalem on Good Friday (see Bulletin 47, page 41). Many legends developed in both East and West about the finding of the cross.

Fourth century art saw the cross as a sign of Christ’s Easter victory, or a sign of his coming again. Christians drew the cross on the facade of their homes. From the early 400s there are only two known representations of the crucified but living Christ.

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\(^9\) A photograph of this graffito is given in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, page 474. This volume contains interesting illustrated articles on “Cross” (pages 473-479); “Finding of the holy cross” (479-482); “Crucifixion” (485-486); “Crucifixion in art” (486-497); “Theological significance of crucifixion” (497-498).
The jewelled cross (*crux gemmata*) was used in the fifth and sixth centuries. By the late sixth century, devotion in the East led to many images of the crucifixion in various forms of art. Hungary provides the first crucifix in the form of pectoral crosses in the seventh century. The dead Christ did not appear in Eastern iconography until the eighth or ninth century. By the eleventh century, the classic Byzantine form — majestic and other-worldly — was developed.

In the Western Church, the first crucifixion scenes appear in an Irish manuscript of the gospels in the eighth century. Around 980, an Anglo-Saxon book is the first to show the dead Christ. This becomes more common in the latter part of the twelfth century, and replaces the victorious Christ by 1250. Late medieval art continued to portray the wounds with stark realism, and to add many other details from the passion narratives. Emphasis during this period was more on the suffering Christ.

Renaissance crucifixion paintings in Italy tended to be still, with no signs of suffering. By the 1560s, historical details are back in. Baroque art portrayed both the living and the dead Christ on his cross. In recent years, there has been a trend to portray the living Christ on the cross, wearing the vestments of high priest or king, as more symbolic of the paschal mystery.

*In the liturgy*: Processional crosses were used in the liturgy at the end of the sixth century. Lectionaries and bibles were richly illuminated, and ivory carvings decorated their covers. It was thought that the Roman canon began after the preface, and the large initial "T" of *Te igitur* came to be elaborated into a picture of the crucifixion. Innocent III (1198-1216) ordered the cross to be on the altar, and in the following century this became a crucifix. Today, a cross or crucifix is placed on or near the altar; often the processional cross is used, since it is to be visible to the people without blocking their view (GI, nos. 270, 269).

Since the middle ages, twelve crosses are marked on the church walls, and are anointed during the rites of consecration. The new rite of dedication of churches allows for four or twelve crosses, and for their anointing.

**Devotion to the humanity of Christ**: Specific devotions to our Lord’s humanity have developed gradually in the past 1,000 years, and have gone through various forms.

*In the scriptures*, Jesus promises that the Spirit will flow from his breast (Jn. 7: 37-39). The Fathers in the second and third centuries related this with the water and blood flowing from his side (Jn. 19: 33-37), and saw these as signs of salvation in baptism and eucharist. The giving of the Spirit is also reflected in verse 30. The Church is born from the side of Christ (Ambrose, Aquinas, Pius XII).

*Middle ages*: From the jewelled cross of victory, the middle ages moved toward a more vivid depiction of the suffering and death of Christ, with more concentration on his humanity than during the earlier anti-Arian centuries. Bernard de Clairvaux (1090-1153) meditated on our Lord’s human life in order to be like Christ and grow in his love; Cistercian chapels and monasteries were plain and devoid of all ornamentation. St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) emphasized that Jesus is both God and man; in his humanity he is helpless, and vulnerable, able to serve, suffer, and die for us.

Medieval mystics meditated on our Lord’s sufferings, leading to devotion to his five wounds, and later to the wound in his side.
Devotion to the Sacred Heart: In the thirteenth century, St. Gertrude had a vision of Christ's heart, beating with love for all. This devotion spread among religious communities for the next two centuries, and became distinct from the devotion to the five wounds. In the 1600s, it was spread by St. John Eudes and St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. A universal feast was established in 1856; Pius XII wrote an encyclical letter on the theological nature of this devotion in 1956. In the 1969-1970 reform of the liturgical books, new texts were prepared for this feast.

Christ's heart is seen as a symbol of his total love for us, in laying down his life for us (Jn. 10: 11, 15, 17-18; Jn. 15: 12-14). This saving love led him through his paschal mystery, and brings us into it. May we come to understand the depths of this love! (See Eph. 3: 18-19.)

Pilgrimages: Very early, pilgrims came to Rome to visit the tombs of Peter and Paul. Pilgrimages to the Holy Land became more common during the fourth century. A number of pilgrims left written accounts of their travels to visit the holy places, including the churches built in Jerusalem and Bethlehem by Constantine. Individual pilgrimages to the Holy Land continued during the following centuries, with interruptions at various periods for wars or other political reasons.

In the middle ages, pilgrimages developed, and many European shrine churches in honor of Mary, St. James, and other saints became centers for pilgrims. Chaucer describes the pilgrims along the way to St. Thomas Becket's tomb in Canterbury Tales, around 1386. Pilgrimages continue to be popular today, and include many of the ancient and medieval sites, as well as more recent ones.

Crusades: From 1095 through to the thirteenth century, the pope would invite rulers to "take the cross" and fight for the defence of the Holy Land or other threatened places. While conceived as a time of pilgrimage and religious conversion, the crusades did lead to much bloodshed, and a further weakening between the Eastern and Latin Churches. The interest in the holy places led to a deepening of devotion toward the humanity of Christ, and to places and objects associated with his passion. Crusade literature helped literary development in the vernacular languages in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Stations of the cross: This devotion flows from the pilgrimages and crusades in the sense that it represents a moving through various stages in our Lord's way to Calvary, while the person or group meditates on the various sufferings that Christ underwent to save us. There is evidence of a form of five stations (stops) in Bologna in the 400s. Crusades in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries brought the "Little Jerusalem" devotion home, setting up images in honor of Christ's passion. From the fourteenth century, the Franciscans, who had custody of the holy places, promoted devotion to our Lord's passion, leading to the devotion of the way of the cross. For

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10 See, for example, two references in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (about 1386): in the miller's tale, for God's heart is used in exclamation (similar to our "for God's sake"); the wife of Bath mentions that Jesus bought us with his heart's blood. See Geoffrey Chaucer: Canterbury Tales/Tales of Canterbury, edited by A. Kent Hieatt and Constance Hieatt (1964, 1976, Bantam, 666 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019): page 178, line 629; page 214, line 718.

many years the number of stations varied from seven to more than thirty. In 1731, Clement regulated and stabilized the devotion.

During the past decades, some have prepared more scriptural forms of prayer for this devotion; some have added a fifteenth station, the resurrection. Until the present, the devotion has not been renewed officially according to the principles of Vatican II, but some are speaking of a revision which would omit legendary stations and add others from the scriptures. At the time of going to press nothing official has been issued on such a reform.

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**Where are we today?** The Church continues to express its devotion to Christ in his paschal mystery in many ways.

- **In the liturgy,** which remains as the first and indispensable source of Christ's spirit: Sunday is the day for celebrating the paschal mystery, and Easter is its annual celebration; in evening prayer we celebrate the “evening sacrifice” of Christ, and in morning prayer we praise his rising (GILH, nos. 38-39); Mass texts praise the Father for the death and rising of Christ; liturgical seasons and feasts of our Lord reflect on and celebrate his paschal mystery; Friday and Sunday remind us of this mystery in the liturgy of the hours.

- **In our devotions:** The paschal mystery is celebrated to some degree in various popular devotions, particularly in the rosary which Pope Paul classifies as the highest family prayer after the liturgy of the hours. All popular devotions have to be examined and renewed in the light of the Second Vatican Council's principles (see Liturgy constitution, nos. 13, 17, 1). Gradually, the spirit of the liturgy, which is the true spirit of Jesus Christ (no. 14), must penetrate and give life to all forms of popular devotions.

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**Helpful reading:** As well as the titles mentioned in the footnotes of this article, readers may find the following useful:


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12 See “Un Nouveau Chemin de Croix Proposé par la Congrégation pour le Culte Divin” in *Documentation Liturgique,* March 1976, pages 85-87; this article was translated from *La Nuova Alleanza,* October 1975, pages 392-395.

13 See Paul VI, Apostolic exhortation *Marialis Cultus,* Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary (1974, CCC, Ottawa): no. 54, page 41. This booklet is available from Publications Service, at the address on the inside front cover of this issue.
The eucharist is the primary and central act of the Church’s worship of the Father. Full and proper participation in it is the first and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit (Liturgy constitution, no. 14, referring to the words of St. Pius X).

How should we take part in the Mass today? Now that we have become accustomed to the new rites and texts, it is good to remind ourselves how we should participate in the liturgy.

Why participate? The basic reason for sharing in the eucharistic liturgy lies in the fact that Christ has made us sharers in his priesthood (Liturgy constitution, no. 14). Through baptism he has made us God’s chosen people, priests belonging to the kingdom, a nation called to be holy; we have been shown his mercy, and have been called from darkness to light (1 Pet. 2: 9-10). We receive all our graces and gifts from the Father through the Son, and we give our praise and thanks to the Father through Christ.

The Church is calling us to full, active, and intelligent participation in its worship (Liturgy constitution, nos. 14, 30):

- **Full participation:** We are called to complete sharing — by all our faculties — in the entire Mass. Gradually the Church is restoring the other part of our daily worship, morning and evening prayer.¹

- **Active participation:** The Mass is an action, not a collection of texts. Our sharing is not to be merely passive. We are to co-operate, taking part with the community in carrying out our share of the action.

- **Intelligent participation:** The different parts of the Mass demand different forms of action by us. We have to understand what we should be doing and saying at various moments in the Mass, and take part accordingly.

This article shows us what Christ and the Church expect of us as we take our full part in the Mass.

**Eleven Ways to Participate**

The different aspects of participation in the Mass are described here. They are not exclusive: several of them can be done at the same time.

1. **Preparing:** No one — priest, minister, or member of the congregation — can take part in the Mass properly without adequate preparation. This is particularly true of the Sunday celebration. Preparation includes:

   - **Purification:** We have to admit that we are sinners, constantly in need of God’s mercy and grace. Unless we accept the fact of our need, we remain closed to his saving action. Living in the state of God’s love means that we are against sin, but we need to ask often for forgiveness and strength. The Lord’s prayer said with devotion, the reverent use of holy water, an act of charity, general confession of sin in the

¹ See Bulletin 58, *Day by Day We Give Him Praise.*
PRAYER: Before Mass begins, we should be praying in tune with the prayers of the Mass. We can praise God and thank him for his gifts — for salvation in Jesus, for the Church and the sacraments, for the angels and saints, for calling us, for letting us take part once more in the eucharist. We can also pray for ourselves and for others; as well as our personal needs and those of people close to us, we need to open our prayer to greater causes: peace in the world, the spread of God's kingdom, the conversion of sinners, guidance for leaders in the Church and in civil governments, social justice for all. Having prayed in this way before the celebration, we will find ourselves more in harmony with the general intercessions and the petitions in the eucharistic prayers and elsewhere in the Mass.

Such prayers can be offered during the week, as well as in church before Mass. It would be good if we could take five minutes each day to rest in this type of praying.

ATTITUDES OF MIND AND HEART: We should be joyful, for we are God's beloved people, called together in his Spirit to join with Christ in this celebration. We have been liberated from the dominion of Satan and brought into God's kingdom. We should be happy to give this hour to God, who has given us our life and who promises us eternity with him in unending happiness. We should be open to God's action, eager to hear his word, ready to give him thanks and praise.

PREPARING THE TEXTS: Though the Mass is primarily an action, it is one enshrined in many words. The readings from scripture are the most important texts in the celebration, and should if possible be prepared carefully at home by all, not just by the readers. Many useful resources are available for Sunday and weekday Masses.

The parish bulletin could list the readings for each day of that week and for the following Sunday. These references are also given in Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy, the annual liturgical calendar.

Careful and prayerful reading of the scripture texts ahead of time will mean that we can be free to listen to them more attentively during the Mass, without being distracted by strange names or the abrupt beginnings of some pericopes.

The other texts of the Mass, particularly the eucharistic prayers, should be reread and prayed over occasionally. It is good for us to meditate more on what the Church is saying to the Father in the Mass, and to understand what we are asking for when we pray that Christ "will make us an everlasting gift" to the Father (eucharistic prayer III).

PREPARING OUR BODY: We have inherited all sorts of mixed and conflicting attitudes toward our bodies, a mixture of Platonism and Manicheism. Our faith tells us that our bodies are temples where the Holy Spirit lives (1 Cor. 3: 16-19; 6: 19-20); our bodies are parts of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 6: 15), and one day they will become

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3 For Sunday readings, see Sunday Lectionary — Study Edition; the readings and Mass texts are included in Sunday Mass Book; weekday readings are in Weekday Lectionary — Study Edition. All three are available from Publications Service at the address on the inside front cover of this Bulletin.
immortal, beautiful, and strong (1 Cor. 15: 42-57). Everything else in the scriptures about the flesh needs to be interpreted in the light of the above passages.

We adorn our bodies with our Sunday best because we are using them for God's glory (1 Cor. 6: 20). We are going to use them to hear his word, to see the ritual actions, lights, and movements; to smell the fragrance of incense and flowers and candles; to walk in procession; to reach out for and eat the bread of life, to drink from the cup of salvation; to touch the hand of a brother or sister at the kiss of peace; to enjoy sacred dance and beautiful music.

If our attitude toward our body is negative, we are going to be uncomfortable, embarrassed, or upset at our gestures and postures during the celebration, and we will avoid them or make them as small and unnoticed as possible. We will also be bothered by others who are more free and at ease with their bodies.

An important part of our preparation for Mass is our coming to a happy understanding of what our body means. We should not split body and soul in our thinking. Christ did not die to save our souls alone: he died and rose again to save us — people who are a body-soul complex. Remember what the Vatican Council told us: God calls the whole person, so that with our entire being we may share everlasting life with God. This is the victory which Jesus won for us in his death and resurrection. (See Church in the modern world, no. 18; also Bulletin 40, pages 249-250.)

**Coming ahead of time:** Under normal conditions, Mass should begin on time, every time, all the time. Priests or ministers who habitually delay the beginning of Mass are forming people in bad habits; people who regularly stroll in late are insensitive to the way they distract members of the community by their tardiness (see Late entry in Bulletin 38, pages 89-90). One might sometimes wonder: does such lateness betray an unconscious unwillingness to be there?

By coming ahead of time — perhaps ten or fifteen minutes — members of the community have time to pray (see above) and to relax, thus getting into the right mood for happy and full participation in the celebration. They will also have time to pray for the readers and other ministers of the community.4

_Adequate preparation is essential for good celebration._

2. **Singing:** In the Mass, there are times for singing and times for listening to song and instrumental music.

**Community singing** is an important part of the celebration, and belongs in every Mass, especially on the Lord's day: there are no longer “high” or “low” Masses, but only those with more or less singing.

The most important moments of song are the three acclamations in the eucharistic prayer (the Holy, holy, holy Lord, memorial acclamation, and great Amen at the conclusion), the responsorial psalm, the gospel acclamation, the Lord's prayer. Psalms or hymns for the entrance and communion procession are desirable, and should become part of each Sunday celebration. A hymn of praise may be sung after the communion of the Mass.

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4 See _A prayer for our ministers_ in Bulletin 54, page 192.
○ **Listening to others sing:** The community listens as the priest sings some of his parts of the Mass, particularly the preface and the doxology of the eucharistic prayer; he may also sing the narrative of institution. The collect, prayer over the gifts, prayer after communion, and last blessing may be sung, as well as other prayers and invitations given with music in the sacramentary.

The community listens while the cantor sings the verses of the responsorial psalm, and then all sing the refrain. They sing the *Alleluia*, and the cantor or choir sings the verse of the gospel acclamation. The choir may sing the *Glory to God*, a hymn during the procession with the gifts, and the *Lamb of God*; in most communities the choir usually sings during part of the communion time.

The preparation of the gifts is a good time for the community to listen and reflect as the choir sings or as quiet music is played.

Singing in the eucharist helps to underline the important moments of the celebration, and deepens its effect (see Liturgy constitution, nos. 112-121; GI, nos. 18-19). Good singing by priest, cantor, choir, and congregation helps all to participate more fully in the source of the true spirit of Christ.

3. **Saying prayers together:** Certain prayers are said by the entire community. These include the *I confess* of the first penitential rite, the creed (not really a prayer, but a statement of faith); the Lord's prayer and the *Glory to God*, when not sung. Good participation demands a community rhythm, with all staying together, and no one a syllable or two ahead or behind. The meaning of these prayers is reinforced by using them at times in personal prayer or by reflecting on them, so that they do express both our individual and community belief.

Another form of prayer together is the dialogue made by the community with the priest and other ministers. Ministers have to learn to speak in such a way that a response is encouraged. Occasional reflection on the meaning of what is being said will help to keep these words full of meaning. Once in a while, the parish bulletin could contain some thoughts on the meaning of these prayers and responses.5

Priests and ministers have to learn not to begin any prayer or reading until the congregation has finished standing, kneeling, or sitting.

4. **Listening** is an important way of participating in the eucharistic celebration. We should listen carefully and in faith to the priest's greetings and introductions, to the prayers of the day, to the readings and responsorial psalm verses, to the homily, to the petitions in the general intercessions, to the singing of the choir, to the words of the eucharistic prayer and its preface.

Many liturgists maintain that it is better to listen to the texts than to try to follow them in a book or booklet. Proper preparation of the readings by the readers and of the homily by the priest6 will enable the people to participate more fully by listening. This would seem preferable to a constant paper chase by the community as they try to keep up with their ministers.

5 The background and meaning of the rites and prayers of the Mass are discussed in Bulletin 54, *Story of the Mass*.

Listening also extends to the music and to the singing of the choir, as well as to the words being sung by the entire congregation.

5. Reflection and silent prayer: One of the important changes in the reformed rites is the time built in for personal reflection and silent prayer. These times include the reflection at the penitential rite, before the opening prayer or collect, after each reading and the homily, and silent prayer after communion or before the prayer after communion (GI, no. 23). Many parishes are also adding a moment of silence at the end of the petitions in the general intercessions. (Silent prayer is also an acceptable response to the petitions: see GI, no. 47.)

In today’s liturgy of the words, we need to have all these pauses for silent reflection. Priests should stop saying their private prayers aloud (see GI, no. 13) before the gospel, during the preparation of the gifts, and before communion. While the current sacramentary says these are to be said “quietly,” the Latin original states secretus, silently.

The time when reflection is needed most in today’s liturgy is during the preparation of the gifts. After a large dose of words in three readings, psalm, gospel acclamation, homily, creed, general intercessions, the community needs time to pray quietly during the preparation of the gifts. The first choice for this part of the Mass is quiet singing or music.

Priests and people alike need to become more comfortable with silent prayer during liturgy. We need time to gather ourselves together; to let the Spirit speak to us; to sink into ourselves, and bring ourselves back to community prayer.

Parish liturgy committees would do well to promote more silent prayer and reflection in the liturgy. In an era of wrap-around sound and piped-in music, we need some time to think, to reflect, to listen to the whispering of the Spirit within.

6. Movement and gestures: What we do with our bodies in liturgy expresses and reinforces our faith and our interior acts of worship. For this reason, the Church encourages us to make common gestures and postures during the Mass in order to show and deepen our spiritual offering. We do this by:

- **Our posture:** We stand, sit, or kneel at certain points of the Mass to show our reverence and attention (see GI, nos. 20-22). In the first four centuries of the Church, it was considered unthinkable to kneel on Sundays or throughout the Easter season, since these were days of celebration over the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (see Council of Nicaea, canon 20).

- **Gestures:** Our bow to the altar or genuflection before the reserved sacrament as we enter and leave, our sign of the cross at the beginning of Mass, the striking of the breast in the first penitential rite, the small signs of the cross before the gospel, the sign of peace, the stretching out of our hands at communion time, the sign of the

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7 Sometimes misplaced announcements add to this wordiness. If used at all, announcements may follow the prayer after communion: see GI, no. 123.

8 On the work of the local worship committee, see Bulletin 35, Parish Liturgy Committees, and no. 66, Diocesan Commissions and Parish Committees. See also Making Mass more prayerful in Bulletin 44, pages 135-142. The importance of silence during the liturgy of the word is also mentioned in the pastoral notes in Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy (1977-1978 edition, note 7c, page 16).
cross during the final blessing: these are the gestures the Church asks us to make well during the Mass.

The Church discourages any sign of individualism or disunity during the liturgy (GI, no. 62, paragraphs 2-3). People who insist on a catalogue of additional gestures (breast-beating when bells ring, signs of the cross before and after the homily, ducking their heads during the narrative of institution or elevations, extra kneeling, and similar actions) are unconsciously trying to be holier than the Church. It is better to do the required acts well than to gild the lily. The history of the Mass shows how these tangential devotions constantly tend to obscure the meaning of the Mass and its rites.9

- Processions: There are two sorts of processions in the Mass: ministerial processions at the entrance, gospel, and recessional, and processions of the people at the preparation of the gifts and at communion. Occasionally, the people are invited to join other processions during the liturgical year, as on Passion Sunday, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday, during the solemn annual exposition, or during certain blessings.10

— Communion procession: When people move together in an orderly procession toward a common goal, a sense of peace and security prevails. This is true both in church and in a queue or lineup for a bus or theatre. People who push or cut in, or who come back by their own route instead of following the general traffic patterns, upset the prayerfulness of the community and display their own unfortunate self-centeredness. The same might be said about those who dash up to communion first, or who wait for the last possible moment. (See GI, no. 22.)

— Procession with the gifts: Members of the congregation bring the bread and wine to be consecrated in this celebration. Where it is possible, some of the community could bake the bread and make pure wine. The money gifts for the poor and for the Church may also be brought up at this time; on Holy Thursday evening, the lenten alms for development and peace could be included in this procession (see GI, nos. 22, 49-50; Bulletin 37, page 38).

Music normally accompanies a procession during the Mass. Particularly during the processions with the gifts and for communion, well chosen common song helps to bind the community together, to deepen their sense of joint action, and strengthen the impact of the rite. Responsorial songs work well in this setting. It is also quite fitting to have the choir sing or instruments play quietly during the procession with the gifts (GI, no. 50), since this is best seen as a brief period of calm reflection between the liturgy of the word and the eucharistic prayer.

It is the responsibility of the ushers to organize and direct processions during the liturgy (see GI, no. 68b).

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9 See the history of various parts of the celebration in Bulletin 54, *Story of the Mass*. By the beginning of the sixth century, additions and changes to the Mass began to obscure the clear vision and structure of earlier centuries: see Bulletin 55, pages 241-253, especially page 244.

10 Processions are also involved in the rites for February 2 and Ash Wednesday, as well as in the blessing of throats. Suggestions for ceremonial in community celebrations of blessings include processions: see Bulletin 49, *Blessed Be God and His Creation*, page 161.
7. Watching: We also take an active part in the liturgy by watching what is happening — not as idle spectators (Liturgy constitution, nos. 14, 48) but as interested participants. We watch the actions, movements, lights, colors, vesture, setting. The lighting, banners, and decoration can help put us in the right mood for community worship.

Many liturgists feel that watching books constantly does not lead to better participation. Hymn books are often necessary for singing, but by now most people are familiar with the common responses and prayers. Readers and priests have to continue to develop their ability to proclaim well, and people should be encouraged to prepare the Sunday prayers and texts during the week.

8. Interceding: The collect or opening prayer is a general prayer of petition, preceded by the silent prayer of all in the assembly. The prayer over the gifts asks that the sacrifice to be offered will honor God and that he will give us his grace and mercy. The prayer after communion asks that God will grant the effects of this eucharist to those who have taken part in it. Each of these three presidential prayers is concluded and affirmed by the people's Amen as an acclamation of their approval. (See GI, nos. 32, 53, 56k.)

At the end of the liturgy of the word, the general intercessions (prayer of the faithful) should summarize the petitions of this community and of the universal Church, beseeching God to show mercy to all in need. Good participation depends on good preparation of the petitions and of the people: of the petitions, so that they truly represent the sincere concerns of the Church, both local and universal, at this time; by the people, who should continue to pray throughout the week for these and similar needs. Many articles on developing such prayer are contained in past issues of the Bulletin.11

General petitions for the Church and the world, for the living and the dead, are also included in the eucharistic prayer. These intercessions are brief and succinct, and can easily pass by unnoticed if we have not become familiar with the contents and structures of the eucharistic prayer. These are studied in more detail in Bulletin 54, Story of the Mass, pages 157-169. Personal prayer throughout the week for these and similar intentions helps us to participate more fully in the Mass. (See also Bulletin 58, page 128; Sunday Mass Book, page 1335.)

9. Thanking: The word “eucharist” means thanksgiving. The great work of offering thanks takes place during the eucharistic prayer, and is usually expressed more fully in its preface (see GI, nos. 54-55a; Bulletin 54, page 159). We normally express gratitude to the Father for giving us his Son to save us. Sometimes we add praise because of the created universe, or voice its thanks to God. Other mysteries of salvation related to the seasons or feast are also included in the preface texts.

From the preface the Roman eucharistic prayers move rather rapidly through an anamnesis or recalling of various gifts for which we thank and praise the Father: creation; the incarnation of the Son of God as our savior and brother; his saving paschal mystery; his death-resurrection-ascension-sending of the Spirit—and coming again in glory.

Because this time of expressing thanks is so brief, some years ago it was suggested that a brief pause be made after the prayer over the gifts, before the preface dialogue opened the eucharistic prayer. At this point the priest could remind the community of some further reasons for gratitude, according to the season and local circumstances. It is certainly part of the homily's concern to lead people to greater motives for giving thanks during the eucharistic prayer (see Bulletin 60, Liturgical Preaching, pages 217-218).

After communion, there is room for silent prayer, and sometimes for a song of praise (GI, no. 56j). A psalm or hymn of thanksgiving is quite in order at this point, since thanksgiving is another facet of praise to the Father.

It should be noted here that the prayer after communion is not a prayer of thanksgiving: it is a prayer in which we ask the Father that the effects of this eucharist will take place in our lives (GI, no. 56k).

When Mass has ended, it is quite appropriate for some members of the congregation to remain in silent prayer and thanksgiving. Then they go out with the rest of the community, commissioned to give praise and thanks to God by their good works (GI, no. 57b).

- **Preparation:** Because there is so little time for expressing our thanks during the Mass celebration, it is all the more important for priests and people to spend time during the week in reflecting on the many gifts God has given us, and in thanking him for these signs of his love. Many prayers of praise and thanks have been printed in past issues of the Bulletin (see the list in Bulletin 61, pages 338-339), and will continue in future issues; these are suggestions for guiding and prompting our personal efforts.

- **Attitude of thanks and praise:** We are called to live each day in an attitude of loving praise and thanksgiving, offering our thanks to God for all things through Jesus (read Col. 3: 16-17). Our attitude should be that of grateful sons and daughters — chosen and loved in Christ, forgiven in Christ, called in Christ to give praise. Sorrow and a desire to improve will readily follow, but praise of the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit, should be the mark of our Christian living.

We might rightly ask: How are such attitudes being promoted by the preaching and prayer life in our parish?

- **Offering:** In the four eucharistic prayers, the anamnesis is immediately followed by the offering. Remembering Jesus' death-resurrection, we offer this bread and cup, this sacrifice, the body and blood of our Lord. This offering is made by the entire Church, but especially by the community assembled here in faith (see GI, nos. 74-75). We offer the pure and holy victim to our Father in heaven. Those for whom we offer are mentioned in the intercessions.

Today this offering is perhaps the most misunderstood element in the Roman Mass. The Church's offering takes place during the eucharistic prayer, and not during the so-called "offertory." What few seem to understand, however, is when and how we do offer during the canon.

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The General Instruction teaches us more about this:

- **Offering Christ:** The people are to offer the victim (in silent reverence: GI, no. 55h) as the priest offers him in their name and in the name of the Church (GI, no. 62). We offer Jesus Christ, who died that we might die to sin, who was raised that we might live with him for God. Christ his Son is the only gift that can be truly pleasing to God.

- **Offering themselves:** Yet we are also commanded to offer ourselves in union with Christ. Christians need to learn how to offer themselves and their lives during the Mass. They need to be taught to come with the necessary dispositions, so that they may make this offering (see Liturgy constitution, nos. 11-12).

We pray that Christ will make us his gift to the Father (third eucharistic prayer). St. Paul tells us to give God proper worship by offering ourselves to him as living sacrifices: we are to live in a way that is pleasing and acceptable to him. This involves a rejection of this world's standards, and an opening of ourselves to God's action, letting him transform us from within. Thus we will be able to know God's will, and carry it out with his grace (see Rom. 12: 1-2; 1 Pet. 2: 4-5).

- **Union with the Father:** Union with God demands obedience in faith (Jn. 15: 10; Mt. 7: 21-23), and love (Jn. 14: 23). It is the Spirit, living in us as in his temples (1 Cor. 3: 16), who teaches us (Jn. 16: 13) to be spiritual people (Rom. 8: 1-17). This union with the Father is to grow daily (GI, no. 55f).

- **Union through Christ:** The Lord Jesus is the way, the truth, the life: he is our only way to the Father (see Jn. 14: 6). If we are to grow each day in our union with the Father, we have to do it through Christ. He demands that we follow him by carrying our cross daily with him (Lk. 9: 23); he wants sincere followers who serve by deed, not by lip service only (Mt. 15: 7-9; James 1: 27 and 2: 14-17). Through the eucharist God will give us his strength to be true followers of Jesus.

- **Union with one another:** We have constantly been taught that our love of God must be shown in love for our neighbor: see Mt. 25: 31-46; 1 Jn. 4: 7-21, especially verses 20-21. If we are going to grow in union with God, if we hope that he will accept this sacrifice we offer (see Mt. 5: 23-24), we have to be seeking an ever-growing love and union with one another. This love will be the sign to all that we are Christ's (Jn. 13: 35).

**Education necessary:** Members of the Church — both priests and people — need to deepen their understanding of the action of the Mass. Priests are to instruct their people on how to do this. The continuing liturgical education of the clergy remains a vitally important responsibility of the bishops.

11. **Receiving and accepting:** As well as giving in the Mass, we also receive. As long as we are humbly open to God's gifts and aware of our poverty before him, he is able to fill us with his grace (see 2 Cor. 12: 9; 9: 6-15). Moments for receiving and accepting are during the readings and the homily (we are open to God's word), at the kiss of peace (we are open to our brothers and sisters in Christ), and communion (we are ready to be nourished with the bread of life and cup of unending salvation.)

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13 Vatican II, Decree on the ministry and life of priests, no. 5; Liturgy constitution, nos. 11-12, 14, 18-19, 48.

14 Liturgy constitution, nos. 14, 17-18, 41-42; Decree on the bishops' pastoral office in the Church, nos. 15-16, 30.
OTHER EUCHARISTIC DEVOTIONS

Devotion to the eucharist outside the time of Mass grew slowly in the Church. Some of the steps along the way are described in this article.

In the Early Church

From the days of the apostles, Christians gathered to celebrate the eucharist on the Lord's day. Communion under both forms by all baptized persons present was normal; only catechumens, penitents, or excommunicated persons did not come to communion. Justin tells us that in 150 in Rome, deacons carried communion under both forms to those who are absent: this food, he says, is called eucharist.

Around 215, Hippolytus speaks about communion reserved in the homes of Christians. This is to be their first food of the day. They are to take care that it is not eaten by a pagan or by mice, and they are not to drop it, for it is the body of Christ, to be eaten by Christians; they are not to spill the chalice, for Christ's blood is the price of their ransom.

Viaticum - communion given to a dying person as “food for the journey” - was considered to be an ancient custom by the time of the Council of Nicaea in 325: canon 13 states that this sacrament is not to be refused to Christians who are dying. In the early centuries, the eucharist was often taken home by family members for the sick or the dying. By the tenth century, lay persons were no longer allowed to bring the eucharist to the dying. Viaticum was generally given under both kinds until the thirteenth century. (See Bulletin 57, pages 46-47.)

Reservation: It was necessary to reserve some of the consecrated elements for the dying. The reserved eucharist was treated with respect, as described by Hippolytus, and was kept in the church or sacristy. This reservation laid the foundation for the development of eucharistic devotions in later centuries.

Another form of reservation was the fermentum. It was the custom of the Bishop of Rome to send a particle of the consecrated bread to the bishops of other Churches as a sign of intercommunion and unity. Irenaeus says this was the Roman practice at the beginning of the second century. In the early fifth century, Pope Innocent I sent acolytes with the fermentum to the priests in the titular churches in Rome each Sunday.

In the papal Mass in the seventh century, a subdeacon with acolytes showed the pope a container with fragments of the consecrated bread from the previous papal Mass. The pope bowed his head in greeting, and indicated how much was to be used for the fermentum in this Mass; the rest was to be kept (see Bulletin 55, page 245).

Infrequent communion: Even in the fourth century, people began to take part in the Mass without going to communion. In the East this was caused to some extent by the reaction against Arianism, leading to overemphasis on the divinity of Christ. Fear and awe were emphasized in going to communion, for Jesus is the Son of God, the all-

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powerful judge. A similar approach crept into the West in later centuries.²

Gregory the Great (590-604) commented that in his time, the sacrament of reconciliation usually took place on the deathbed. This was necessary before viaticum and anointing could be received.³

In the ninth century, the Church in the West began a number of changes which reflected a different attitude toward the eucharist. Unleavened bread came into use, and was prepared in the form of discs. The host began to be placed on the tongue instead of in the hand.

Developments in Doctrine and Devotion

In the first centuries of Christianity, the eucharist was seen as a holy action, giving praise and thanks to the Father and sharing his graces with his people, especially in communion. By the year 1000, this was changing.

Berengarius of Tours, who lived from about 1000 to 1088, precipitated the development of the Church's teaching about the eucharist. He did not accept the doctrine that the eucharist was the body of Christ. The change was not in the elements, he said, but in the believer's mind, and then he was able to share in the benefits of Christ's death. These teachings were condemned by a Roman council in 1050. Reactions against them led to the development of a strong teaching on the real presence of Christ in the eucharist, and on transubstantiation — advancing beyond the writings of the earlier Fathers.

Subsequent centuries saw a twofold movement:

- **A decline** in the understanding of the real meaning of the Mass. Many causes led to this: the silent canon, the allegorical "explanations" of the rites, the gradual loss of the chalice to the laity, infrequent communion, the disintegration of the sacraments of initiation, the multiplication of "private" Masses and of Mass-priests, the failure to move to the language of the people, the increase in votive Masses and saints' feasts to the detriment of the major seasons. (These points are described in a little more detail in Bulletin 55, pages 247-249.)

- **An increase** in eucharistic devotion which was almost divorced from the Mass, and which in a way attempted to replace or make up for the reception of communion during the Mass. Communion was so infrequent that the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) had to command it at least once a year, at Easter. In the same century, we witness a move toward "visual communion" — staring, not sharing: the elevation of the host during the silent canon, after the words of consecration (begun in Paris in the early 1200s, and widespread by mid-century); elevation of the chalice by the end of the century; Corpus Christi was instituted in 1247; genuflections were introduced in the fourteenth century, replacing the bow. People rushed from church to church in order to see the eucharist at the time of the elevation. In England, someone shouted

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out, "Heave it higher, Sir John!" when the priest did not hold the host high enough to be seen by all.

**Corpus Christi:** The type of piety which avoided communion but revered the sight of the eucharist led to the development of "the feast of the eucharist." Begun in Liège in 1247, it was made a universal feast by Urban IV (former archdeacon of Liège) in 1264. The feast was resisted for about 50 years, and was reaffirmed in 1317.

**Eucharistic processions** began to develop. In England in the eleventh century, the eucharist was carried in the Palm Sunday procession; in later years, it was buried with the cross in the Easter sepulcher (see Bulletin 47, pages 35 and 44). A eucharistic procession was begun in Cologne in 1279, and by the fourteenth century was part of the *Corpus Christi* rites, moving through each city, with pauses at "stations" for prayers and exposition.

**Monstrances:** At the beginning of these developments, the sacrament was carried in a chalice or ciborium. Then reliquaries came into use in France and Germany during the fourteenth century. By the fifteenth century, monstrances were used — some so large that they had to be placed on a cart and pulled through the streets.

**Development of tabernacles:** Until this period, the eucharist reserved for the dying was kept in the church or sacristy. Various forms of vessels were used — in the shape of a dove, a cupboard in the wall (ambry), in a sacrament house or tower. The Fourth Lateran Council commanded that the chrism and the eucharist should be kept under lock and key (canon 20).

The tabernacle on the main altar began to be the norm in the sixteenth century, and was made general in 1614 in the first *Roman Ritual*. Except for cathedrals (see the 1918 code of canon law, canon 1268: 3), this remained in force until after the Second Vatican Council.

**Benediction:** This rite of exposing the eucharistic host and blessing people with it developed in the fifteenth century, and appears to have evolved from the "stations" during the *Corpus Christi* processions.

Benediction became a popular devotion, and was used to conclude other prayer services and devotions. In the 1940s and 1950s, it was often celebrated with more solemnity than the Mass.

**Forty hours:** This form of devotion developed in Milan around 1527. Flowing from earlier practices (40 hours of watching before the sepulcher at the end of Holy Week, processions with the eucharist, exposition of the host, and prayers directed to Christ in this sacrament), the period of forty hours recalls the approximate time that Christ's body lay in the tomb. (In earlier centuries, this was one of the ways of computing the paschal fast.) The devotion consisted of 40 uninterrupted hours of exposition; as one church ended the rite, another began it anew.

Originally the devotion was one of supplication, asking God to protect his Church from all evils; in some places, it was considered a form of reparation for what went on during the pre-lenten carnival period.

The forty hours' devotion was approved for Rome in 1592, and simpler rites were permitted in 1731. In North America, these were followed, with reposition each
evening. In many parishes, this three-day devotion each year was considered as a time of personal renewal and return to the sacraments.

**Reformation:** At the beginning of the sixteenth century, there were abuses surrounding the Church's worship. An overabundance of devotional practices — some with commercial touches — led to a desire for renewal and reform. The Fifth Lateran Council (1512-1517) began with a sermon against the evils in the Church, and sought to wipe them out by its decrees and censures.

When the Protestant Reformers began their program of reform, they sought to remove abuses from the worship and life of the Church. The proper celebration of the eucharist — purified of later additions and restored to the norms of the scriptures and the Fathers of the Church — was one of their aims.4 (The Second Vatican Council made many of the same changes: see Liturgy constitution nos. 50-56.) In some Churches, the reforms and the insistence on weekly communion led to the replacement of the Sunday eucharist with other forms of word service or liturgy of the hours.

The Council of Trent (1545-1563) reformed the worst abuses, but felt unable to bring in new adaptations because this would appear to be admitting that the Reformers were right; in the climate of the times, this seemed to be unthinkable.

In today's ecumenical climate, as the various Churches and traditions are returning to the same sources, there is a remarkable coming together in attitudes and rites. All major Churches see the Sunday eucharist as central to Christian life. We are not yet one in everything, but we are more aware that we have much in common. Recognizing that our common baptism makes us brothers and sisters in Christ, we are hungering to be united at the banquet table of the Lord, and to be able to eat and drink together once again.

**Renewal of Eucharistic Devotion**

When the Second Vatican Council spoke about renewing the eucharist, it mentioned only the Mass (Liturgy constitution, nos. 47-58). The reforms have proceeded in various stages since 1964, and may be summarized in this way:

The Mass is the center and high point of the Church's life and liturgy. Its renewal is necessary in order to restore true vitality to the life of individual members and believing communities.

The reform of the Mass included the return to a simpler and clearer structure; greater emphasis on the scriptures; full participation by all according to their proper ministry; use of the language of the people; integration of preaching with the Mass; return to communion under both forms from elements consecrated in that celebration; room for adaptation; enlarged sources of texts; and many other changes. These improvements were made within the context of the history of the Mass rites and of present-day needs.

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4 See *The Patristic Roots of Reformed Worship*, by Hughes Oliphant Old (1975, Theologischer Verlag, Zurich). This book was reviewed in Bulletin 59, page 184.

Perhaps the most important change has been this: helping us to realize that the eucharistic celebration is primarily directed to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit. We come to Mass in order to join Christ in praising the Father, rather than to adore Christ.

The purpose of these reforms is to make it possible for believers to find the deepest source of the true Christian spirit in their full participation in the Sunday eucharist. In this way they exercise their right and responsibility as sharers in the priesthood of the Lord Jesus, and are enabled to go forth and be his witnesses in their daily life.

**Drawbacks:** There were many changes in a short period of time, and most did not realize how closely the various rites were linked together: changes in one led to a domino effect in others. Many Catholics did not understand the principles underlying the reform, though they were clearly described in the Liturgy constitution. Some still have trouble with the changes because they are trying to celebrate the new rites with an old mentality.

**Consolation:** The work of liturgical reform is under the guidance of the Spirit (Liturgy constitution, no. 43), and is the way the Church of today is leading us to God. Faithful and reverent efforts to prepare and celebrate the liturgy well will lead to greater praise to God and grace for his people. We need always to keep these words in mind:

> We are God's holy people, his chosen priests; we are brothers and sisters of Christ. Jesus calls us to share in his dying and rising, to join him in praising the Father, to work and pray with him for the salvation of the world. He has given us his Spirit to live within us, to be our light, to teach us to pray. If God is with us, no one can be against us!

**Eucharistic devotion outside Mass:** Reforms in eucharistic devotion outside Mass must be understood in relation to the Mass. To make this more evident, the Church has given us new guidelines.⁶

- **Christ's gift to the Church:** The eucharist is first of all the Lord's gift, which he has entrusted to his Church. It has to be understood and celebrated in the light of his teaching, enshrined in the scriptures and the living tradition of the Church. We need to see the eucharist in perspective and in context — not only in the brief span of our personal memories and limited experience, but in the memory and experience of 2,000 years of Christian worship.

- **Adoration of Christ:** In the Mass we adore the Father. In eucharistic devotions outside Mass, we adore the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, who is truly present in this sacrament, as well as pray with him to the Father. Prayer to and with Christ should lead his people to share more fully in his paschal mystery, to dedicate themselves more fully to his service, to offer their life work with him to the Father. Such eucharistic adoration and prayer will encourage them to celebrate the eucharist and receive communion with deeper devotion and love.

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• **Relationship to the Mass:** Eucharistic worship outside Mass gives honor to Christ. His presence in the eucharist is derived from the sacrifice of the Mass, and leads his people to sacramental communion and spiritual union with Christ.

a) Exposition for a longer period: The host to be exposed is consecrated during the Mass, and exposition begins after communion. Then the Mass is concluded with the prayer after communion.

b) Leading toward participation in the Mass: All forms of eucharistic devotion outside the Mass lead toward full participation in the Mass. Thus, communion of the sick or dying unites those unable to take a full share in the Mass with Christ and his offering. Eucharistic devotion is not to replace participation but lead to it. Christ's purpose in giving us the eucharist is to be our food, our healing medicine, and our comfort.

c) Unity: The reformed lectionary and sacramentary (1969-1970) changed the title of *Corpus Christi* to the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. The ritual for eucharistic devotions provides readings from the votive Masses of the Eucharist, of the Precious Blood of Jesus, and of the Sacred Heart. This reminder of the unity of the paschal mystery and the various devotions to Christ is helpful for maintaining a balance in our prayer life.

• **Not upstaging the Sunday celebration of Mass:** The ceremonies of eucharistic worship have been deliberately toned down so that they may not seem more solemn or important than those of the Mass. Thus, the number of candles has been drastically reduced from 20 or 26 to four or six, as at Mass; the double genuflection has been abolished; Mass may no longer be celebrated before the exposed sacrament; the sacrament must be reposed before Mass may be celebrated.

• **More ministries involved:** Priests and deacons are the ordinary ministers for exposing the eucharist and for blessing the people with the sacrament after a period of adoration; when no priest or deacon is available, an acolyte or auxiliary minister of communion may expose the eucharist in the ciborium or monstrance, and replace it in the tabernacle after the time of adoration: they may not bless the people with the sacrament. The local ordinary may appoint a member of a religious community or of a lay organization which is dedicated to eucharistic devotion, to expose and repose the sacrament, but not to give the blessing.

• **No instant celebrations:** Eucharistic worship is to be a time of prayer and adoration. Every period of exposition which leads to benediction must have a time for scripture readings, silent prayer, hymns or psalms, and prayer. It is not allowed to expose the sacrament just for the purpose of giving benediction.

• **Varied forms of celebration:** The ritual now provides for a variety of celebrations of eucharistic worship outside Mass.\(^7\) These include solemn annual exposition (which replaces the former forty hours' devotion); a brief period of exposition (similar to a holy hour, or a shorter time); adoration in religious communities; eucharistic processions; and eucharistic congresses. The rite of exposition and benediction includes hymns, prayers, scripture readings, silent prayer, and may also have a homily or brief exhortations; morning or evening prayer, or other

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\(^7\) The National Liturgical Office is presently preparing a practical book for these celebrations of eucharistic worship.
liturgical hours, may be celebrated during longer periods of exposition. The rite of benediction has been slightly simplified.

- **Related to the liturgical season:** Eucharistic devotions are to be in harmony with the spirit of the liturgy and with the current liturgical season (see Liturgy constitution, nos. 13, 17).

- **Example:** By their example and their words, pastors are to encourage their people to worship Christ in the blessed sacrament.

- **A time for prayer:** Christians are united with Christ in sacramental communion, and are able to extend this union when they pray before him in the reserved sacrament. Both personal visits and community eucharistic devotions will provide time for renewing our baptismal covenant, for asking for Jesus' help, for seeking his guidance and comfort, and for interceding for others, for the Church, and for the entire world.8 (See *Visits should be restored*, in Bulletin 44, page 163.)

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**Helpful reading:** In addition to the books mentioned in the footnotes of this article and the one on *Taking part in the eucharist*, the following are useful:


- **Eucharistic Reservation in the Western Church,** by Archdale A. King (1965, Sheed and Ward, New York).


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8 Many articles on the eucharist and eucharistic devotion have appeared in past issues of the Bulletin. See the complete lists in Bulletin 61, pages 342-344, 314-324.

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**"SOBERNESS AND SENSE"**

“The genius of the native Roman rite is marked by simplicity, practicality, a great sobriety and self-control, gravity and dignity . . . In two or three words, . . . essentially soberness and sense.”

With these words in 1899, Edmund Bishop described the basic character of the Roman liturgy. We may consider these as desirable qualities in our devotional life if it is to be in accord with the spirit of our liturgy.

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SAINTS OF GOD

BLESSSED FOR ALL AGES

Mary in the Scriptures

The earliest mention in the scriptures of Mary's role is found in Gal. 4: 4. Writing around 54 or 55, Paul tells us that in the fullness of time the Father has sent his Son, who was born of woman (that is, he was truly human, one of us in all things but sin: Heb. 4: 15). Jesus was under the law in order to save those under it. Thus he would make us God's children with him, able to call God our Abba, Beloved Father! Redeemed from slavery to sin, we are now heirs to God, sharing in Christ's inheritance. (See Gal. 4: 4-7.) By conceiving and giving birth to Jesus, Mary gave him the humanity by which he was able to save us in his paschal mystery.

Infancy narratives: The first two chapters in both Matthew and Luke are of a particular literary genre, and are not intended to be historical accounts as are the other parts of their gospels.

- Matthew: Writing around the year 70, in the time after Jesus' resurrection, Matthew is able to read the Church's faith in Christ back into the accounts of his conception and birth. The infancy narrative proclaims to the Jewish Church that Jesus Christ is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament: he is to save his people from their sins (Mt. 1: 21). He is conceived by a virgin in fulfillment of Is. 7: 14, and he is revealed as Emmanuel ("God with us"). The wise men come seeking the King of Israel, and meet the savior of all nations. Mary is the mother of Emmanuel, who will remain with us until the end of time (Mt. 1: 23; 28: 20).

- Luke: In the first two chapters of the third gospel, Luke draws a careful parallel between the announcement, conception, birth, and naming of John and Jesus, and a more subtle contrast between John's parents and Mary. Mary is a virgin, betrothed to Joseph, and is greeted by the angel as highly favored by God (Lk. 1: 28). She is to be overshadowed by the Spirit (1: 35), and her son will be the Son of God, a king for ever in the line of David (1: 32-33). Her child is to be the Lord (Kyrios), the Christ (Messiah), and the savior (2: 11). Many Old Testament echoes are included in these two chapters. The overshadowing of the Spirit reflects the presence of God in his sanctuary (Exod. 40: 34-35).

Mary is portrayed as the mother of the Lord (Lk. 1: 43), blessed because she has believed (1: 45). Mary's reply, the Magnificat canticle (1: 46-55), is still used by the Church as the climax of evening prayer (see Bulletin 58, pages 110-111). She is part of the poor people of God (ananaim), obedient to God's law (2: 22-24), and she ponders God's actions and words in her heart (2: 19, 51).

Hearer of the word: The scriptures present Mary as one who hears God's word and keeps it (Lk. 8: 19-21; see also Jn. 15: 7-10), and ponders in her heart over his actions (Lk. 2: 19, 51). Elizabeth calls her blessed for having believed that God's word would be fulfilled (Lk. 1: 45).
"Do what he says" — John's gospel shows us Mary in relationship to Jesus' first sign, even though the hour of his glorification (his death-resurrection) had not yet come (Jn. 2: 1-11).

"Behold your mother" — John notes that Mary was standing at the foot of the cross on Calvary as Jesus was dying to save the world. He entrusted Mary to John's care (Jn. 19: 25-27).

Waiting in prayer: In the days before Pentecost, Luke describes the apostles, Mary, and others, as devoting themselves to prayer (Acts 1: 14). (In John's gospel, the Pentecost event seems to occur at Jesus' death when he gave up his spirit (Jn. 19: 30).

Apocalyptic image: The last book of the bible describes a sign: a woman clothed with the sun, and giving birth to a child. This varying image reflects Old Testament references to Israel, the Church as the new Israel, and Mary as the mother of Jesus (Rev. 12: 1-6).

**Devotion to Mary**

In the first seven centuries (to 600 AD), Christians expressed their devotion to Mary as the holy mother of God. Christ was at the center of their devotion, and Mary was honored because she was chosen to be his mother.

- **Second and third centuries:** Meditating on the scripture passages about Mary, Christians began to take the first steps in giving honor to her. Around 110, St. Ignatius of Antioch speaks of Mary's virginity, and says that Jesus is Son of Man — born a human like us all — and able to save us (Ephesians, 7, 18-20). Ignatius underlines Jesus' humanity — his birth, passion, and resurrection (Magnesians, 11). Speaking to the Church at Tralles in Asia, he is emphatic: "Close your ears, then, if anyone preaches to you without speaking of Jesus Christ. Christ was of David's line. He was the son of Mary; he was verily and indeed born, and ate and drank. . ."

Second-century baptismal creeds began to mention that Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. Justin and Irenaeus speak of Mary as the new Eve, in relation to Christ the last Adam (1 Cor. 15: 45, 47). Catacomb art and the apocryphal scriptures show that popular reverence was increasing for Mary as the mother of Jesus Christ.

Around 215, Hippolytus' eucharistic prayer proclaimed to the Father: "You sent him (your Word) from heaven into the Virgin's womb; and, conceived in the womb, he was made flesh and was manifested as your Son, being born of the holy Spirit and the Virgin."

- **Fourth century:** Mary was considered as a model for virgins by Athanasius and Ambrose. Epiphanius used "mother of the living" as a title for Mary. When the feast of Christmas was established around 336, it was primarily a feast of the incarnation of the Son of God: the gospel was Jn. 1: 1-18, rather than that of Luke's infancy narratives. Some churches were dedicated to Mary during the 300s.

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1 The letters of Ignatius are contained in *Early Christian Writings*: the apostolic Fathers, translated by Maxwell Stanifort (1968, 1972, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Mdx.): see pages 61-131. The above quotation is from page 97, no. 9.

Fifth century: St. Augustine, who died just before the Council of Ephesus, does not seem to have celebrated feasts of Mary in his Church, although Luke 2: 1-39 was used for the Christmas gospel in Hippo at that time, with Ps. 84. St. Nilus, who died in 430, said that Mary was praised in all countries and in all languages. In 431, the Council of Ephesus defined that Mary was the bearer or mother of God (Theotokos, Deipara). In Rome Sixtus III, pope from 432 to 440, reconstructed the church known today as St. Mary Major.

Mary in the liturgy: Liturgical celebrations of Mary originate in the East, and are centered around Jesus Christ. The first Marian feast, in the fifth century, is a memorial similar to the martyrs' "birthday into heaven" (see General norms for the liturgical year, no. 56: in the Canadian sacramentary, page 73). Celebrated on January 1, this feast was restored to the Roman Church in 1969.

The annunciation by Gabriel was first celebrated in Advent (Wednesday of ember week, and now on December 20: lectionary, no. 197) and then on March 25 by 550. The dormition of Mary (later known as the Assumption) was celebrated by 600. The birthday of Mary, assigned to September 8, and the presentation in the temple, February 2, are known in the East by the late 500s. While Sergius I was pope (687-701), these four feasts were celebrated with processions in Rome (see Bulletin 47, pages 60-61).

Since the sixth century, the remembrance of Mary as the mother of God has been part of the communicantes ("In union with the whole Church") in the Roman canon.

From 700-1500: The middle ages saw Mary as the powerful queen of heaven, holy and free from sin. As mother of Christ the King (see Lk. 1: 43, a title used for queen mother in 2 Kings 10: 13), she was considered to be the mother of mercy. In the East, preaching praised Mary's role as intercessor. At the end of the eighth century, Alcuin encouraged Saturday as a day of devotion to Mary. (Our Lady's Saturday may still be observed in ordinary time when no obligatory memorial is observed: see 1977-1978 liturgical calendar, pastoral note 24, page 43.) The East developed two more feasts in the eighth century: the presentation of Mary, and the conception of St. Anne, which later became the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

By the eleventh century Masses and offices in honor of Mary were developing, and the Salve regina ("Hail, holy queen") was being sung. During the following century, devotion was influenced by the teachings on Mary as mother of all believers (based on Jn. 19: 26), free of sin (based on Lk. 1: 28), and on her assumption (she is now able to help all Christians). Early forms of the Hail, Mary were evolving, and the rosary and litanies based on Mary's titles were developing.

Thirteenth century: Many of the Gothic cathedrals being built were dedicated to Mary. Some of the saints of this century who had great devotion to her were Francis, Dominic, and Thomas Aquinas.

Late in the fourteenth century, around 1386, Chaucer has the prioress and the nun introduce their stories in The Canterbury Tales with a prayer to Mary. The presentation of Mary was approved in 1372 for November 21, and the Visitation on July 2.

**Fifteenth century:** Printing made it possible to spread books of sermons and devotion, including woodcuts. Popular hymns such as “St. Mary, with us be” expressed this devotion. The feast of the Immaculate Conception received some approval in 1477. The *Hail, Mary* came to be used in its present form.

**Modern times:** Luther retained some devotion toward Mary, honoring her as the humble and obedient virgin and mother. He published a commentary on the canticle of Mary in 1521, and a German version of the canticle with music in 1533. He also rewrote songs addressed to the saints by directing them to God: thus, “Virgin Mary, with us be” (1480) became “God the Father, with us be” in 1524. In general, the Reformation dropped the honoring and invocation of saints as taking away from the worship due to God.

The Council of Trent (1545-1563) upheld the veneration of saints, and said that it was right to imitate and respect them, as well as pray to them (see the following article, *Those who follow Christ*).

**Seventeenth and eighteenth centuries:** As Marian studies were flourishing, devotion increased, although sometimes it went to excess, such as “slavery” to Mary (which had also emerged in the eleventh century). Some taught that devotion to Mary involved her role in the interior life, consecration to Mary, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

**Nineteenth and twentieth centuries:** Many religious orders were founded with a special place for Marian devotions in their way of life; zeal for the Church’s apostolate was considered to be part of true devotion to Mary. Shrines were built and pilgrims flocked to them. Leo XIII wrote many encyclical letters concerning the rosary.

In 1943, Pius XII began the renewal of Catholic biblical studies, which led to further research on the analogy between Mary and the Church: his letters on the mystical body (1943) and on the liturgy (1947) helped to provide a context for this. In 1954, a Marian year was celebrated. Both Pius XII and John XXIII warned against excess in devotion, and called for a balance, faithful to the traditions of East and West.

**Vatican II:** The Council fathers voted in October 1963 to include the document on Mary within the Constitution on the Church, instead of making it a separate document. On November 21, 1964, the Constitution was promulgated, with chapter 8 (nos. 52-69) on the role of Mary in relation to Christ and to his Church. A middle path was taken between extremes, and excesses and exaggerations were rejected (no. 67). The Church sees Mary as the most perfect fruit of Christ’s redemption, and as a model of what the people of God want to be (see Liturgy constitution, no. 103).

**Paul VI:** On February 2, 1974, Pope Paul issued a letter on devotion to Mary. After the *Christian Initiation of Adults*, this is perhaps the most unrecognized and explosive document of the past decade. It lays down biblical, liturgical, ecumenical, and anthropological guidelines for true devotion to Mary, which has to be seen

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4. See *In Praise of Mary*, by Donal Flanagan (1975, Veritas, Dublin): reviewed in Bulletin 51, page 334. Luther’s thoughts on Mary are presented on pages 39-43, 118-120, and Calvin’s on pages 47-49. Many other interesting prayers, hymns, and statements from Christian tradition are included in this useful book.

5. *Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*: apostolic exhortation of Paul VI — “Marialis cultus,” February 2, 1974 (1974, CCC, Ottawa). This 46-page booklet should be read carefully by every Christian, and particularly those involved in planning and leading worship. Available for 60e plus postage from Publications Service. 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario; bulk prices are available for wide distribution.
together with our relationship to Christ and his Church. It recalls the Church to a
gospel image of Mary, and strongly rejects activism, credulity, and sentimentality as
substitutes for devotion. Devotions have to be in harmony with liturgy, and not merge
with it.

The Eastern Churches continue to have a strong devotion to Mary: see Decree
on ecumenism, no. 15.

"The ultimate purpose of devotion to the Blessed Virgin is to glorify God and to
lead Christians to commit themselves to a life which is in absolute conformity with his
will" (no. 39).

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The place of Mary in Christian life is important, for it exposes our theology of
Christ. Ignatius of Antioch saw this clearly in the second century. Our first question
has to be, Who is Christ? Only then can we answer other questions about Mary and the
Church.

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Helpful reading:

The Mystery of the Woman: Essays on the Mother of God, edited by Edward D. O'Connor, CSC
(1956, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana).

Blessed Art Thou Among Women, by John Henry Cardinal Newman (Dimension Books, Denville,
N.J.).

The Seat of Wisdom: an Essay on the Place of the Virgin Mary in Christian Theology, by Louis
Bouyer (1965, Regnery, Chicago).

"On the Origins of the Feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary," in Liturgica Historica,

"New Dimensions in Mariology," by Heribert Muehlen, in Theology Digest, vol. 24, no. 3 (Fall
1976), pages 286-292.


"The Fathers' Praise of Mary," by Sister Marie Stephen, OP, in Orate Fratres, vol. 25, no. 6 (May
1951), pages 268-271.

“Our Lady's Titles in the Breviary,” by Sister Marie Stephen, OP, in Worship, vol. 26, no. 6 (May
1952), pages 319-322.

New Catholic Encyclopedia (1967, McGraw-Hill, New York and Toronto); vol. 9; pages 335-387:
• page 335: Articles on Mary
• 335-347: Mary in the bible
• 347-364: Mary in theology
• 364-369: Devotion to Mary

The Birth of the Messiah, a commentary on the infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke, by

“Mary, Model of our Worship,” in Come, Let Us Worship, by Godfrey Diekmann, OSB, (1961,
Helicon, Baltimore, Md.): pages 135-143.

National Bulletin on Liturgy: A list of articles on Mary in past issues is contained in Bulletin 61,
page 348.

“Letters to Rectors of Marian Shrines,” Paul VI, May 1, 1971, in The Furrow, vol. 22, no. 7 (July

51
THOSE WHO FOLLOW CHRIST

Both Old and New Testaments use the word *saints* to describe God’s people, who are called to be holy and blameless in his sight.

The Father loves the world so much that he gave us his Son to save us: everyone who believes in Jesus will have eternal life (Jn. 3: 16-17). Jesus himself is our way, our truth, and our life, our only way to the Father (Jn. 14: 6). The Lord Jesus has called us to follow him in love and service, and in obedient faith. He gives us himself as the bread of eternal life (Jn. 6: 51), and he has the words of eternal life (Jn. 6: 68). We were baptized into his paschal mystery, dying with him to sin and raised up with him to live for God (Rom. 6: 1-11). At the end of our life on earth, Jesus comes to us in viaticum. If we have been faithful in his love, he will invite us to share with him in his heavenly banquet, for he has gone ahead to prepare a place for us (Jn. 14: 2).

God has never revealed fully what good things he has in store for those whom he saves. Images of glory, banquets, and rest are traditionally used in an attempt to describe life in heaven. The book of Revelation presents an image of the heavenly liturgy, where the angels and saints give unending praise to the Father and to the Lord Jesus.

Our liturgy is united with the heavenly liturgy, as we continue to proclaim at the end of the preface of the Mass. The Vatican Council notes that the Church’s liturgy on earth is a foretaste of the liturgy of praise and thanks in heaven (Liturgy constitution, no. 8).

Devotion to the Saints

Christian devotion to the saints began with the martyrs. At first they were buried as were any other believers who had died. In the East, a vivid eyewitness account of the martyrdom of St. Polycarp at Smyrna (probably on Feb. 23, 155) gives us the first evidence of the veneration of a martyr: “We did gather up his bones — more precious to us than jewels, and finer than pure gold — and we laid them to rest in a spot suitable for the purpose. There we shall assemble, as occasion allows, with glad rejoicings; and with the Lord’s permission we shall celebrate the birthday of his martyrdom. It will serve both as a commemoration of all who have triumphed before, and as a training and a preparation for any whose crown may be still to come.”

The cult of martyrs began in the West almost a century later, after the martyrdom of Pope Callistus in 222, and of Sixtus II and his seven deacons (including Lawrence) from August 6 to 10, 258; a month later, on Sept. 14, Bishop Cyprian of Carthage was also put to death for the faith. These events led to the beginning of a simple cult of the martyrs at Rome: assembly around the tomb on the anniversary of the saint’s “birthday into heaven” for a funeral meal (*refrigerium*), prayer, and the eucharist. An inscription from 260 asks Peter and Paul to pray for the writer in eternity.

Shrines and churches were built around some of these tombs in the fourth century, and Constantine had great basilicas built in the holy places of Jerusalem, and in Rome and Constantinople. Ambrose speaks of burying the bodies of martyrs under a new altar (see Rev. 6: 9-11). The use of *votive relics* (objects touched to the saint’s tomb) was resisted in Rome until the seventh century, but from then on relics were

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placed in altars to make them a “martyrs' tomb.” (This practice remained in force until 1970: now the use of relics in altars is considered fitting, but is no longer obligatory — see GI, no. 266.)

**Other saints:** Veneration was gradually extended to others who suffered for their faith (exiled or sentenced to labor in the mines) without dying a martyr's death. Hippolytus speaks of these persons as *confessors,* and says that they already have the office of presbyter because they have confessed the name of the Lord. Hippolytus himself earned sainthood by his deportation and death in 235.

When persecutions ended in the fourth century, other ways to holiness were discerned: the ascetics in the desert, virgins, and widows were seen to be leading a way of life which could be considered as a substitute for martyrdom; bishops were soon added to this list.

*The following centuries* saw a move from veneration of local martyrs to veneration of martyrs and saints from other Churches. Local calendars were exchanged, until many saints were venerated in most parts of the Christian world. *Martyrologies* collected all the saints attached to a particular day, and expanded this devotion to other communities. Following the Council of Trent, Gregory XIII (who gave us the current Gregorian calendar) issued the *Roman Martyrology* in 1584. The Second Vatican Council ordered that the lives of the martyrs and saints in the liturgy of the hours should be true history (Liturgy constitution, no. 92c).

**Canonization:** For centuries, approval by the local bishop was considered adequate for the local cult of a martyr or saint. By the tenth and eleventh centuries, more and more bishops tended to consult Rome. By 1171, Rome's agreement was required. When the Congregation of Rites was established in 1588, it was given the responsibility of handling cases for canonization. The 1918 code of canon law (canons 1999-2141) provides strict rules for these processes. The American Episcopal Church has added many recent saints to its calendar in the *Book of Common Prayer* (see note 5 on page 25 of this Bulletin).

**Devotion to the saints** includes some of these elements today:

- **Praise:** We praise God who — for his own glory — has raised up this saint as another sign of Christ's victory over the world (Jn. 16: 33).

- **Example:** We thank God for having given us another model for living the gospel; we can admire and imitate this saint who was so dedicated to serving God, and be encouraged. God continues to expand the *cloud of witnesses* for us (Heb. 12: 1).

- **Praying to the saints:** We ask the saints — our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ — to pray for us to God. The litany of the saints is a good example of balanced prayer: it begins and ends with prayer to Christ.

Never do we consider the saints as unique go-betweens with God: there is only one mediator, Christ our Lord. Our first prayer is to the Father; we also pray to Jesus, our brother and our savior, and to his Spirit. Prayer to Mary and the rest of the saints can never be on the same level as our prayer to the Father, to the Lord Jesus, or to the Spirit.

**Problems:** When leading new tribes and nations to conversion, the Church has attempted to “baptize” pagan practices by adapting them (see Liturgy constitution, no. 40: 1). Local gods and goddesses have been replaced by Christian saints and practices. In a similar manner the Church moved against sun worship by establishing the feast of Epiphany and Christmas. (See Bulletin 47, pages 19-27, 63-64.)
Too many feasts: Saints’ feasts and holy days tended to multiply during the middle ages. Every reform since then has reduced the number of saints’ days, but they continue to increase. The Second Vatican Council emphasized that the celebration of the saints should be subordinate to the celebration of the liturgical seasons: Christ has already achieved his paschal mystery in their lives; now he is working in ours (Liturgy constitution, nos. 102-104, 106, 108, 111).

Abuses: Around 1386, Chaucer describes the pardoner in the Canterbury Tales: he has a packsack filled with pardons “hot from Rome,” and with things he claimed to be Mary’s veil, Peter’s sail, and pigs’ bones masquerading as relics. Luther inveighed against the abuses of his day. Since the Council of Trent, Rome has constantly waged battle against all abuses, and has tried to maintain a better balance in devotional life.

True devotion to the saints is described in the Constitution on the Church, no. 51.

In the eucharistic prayers, the pilgrim Church continues to pray and worship in union with the whole Church — in heaven and on earth. We ask for fellowship with the apostles and martyrs, and pray that we too some day will share in eternal life with them. Finally, when sin and death are conquered, we will join Mary, the apostles, the martyrs, the angels, and all the saints in glory, to sing unending praise to the Father, through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit.

Helpful reading:


POPULAR DEVOTIONS

In this article, Most Rev. Francis J. Spence, Bishop of Charlottetown, P.E.I., and Auxiliary to the Military Vicar, speaks of the relationship between the liturgy and popular devotions.

At the beginning of its Constitution on liturgy, the Second Vatican Council warmly commended popular devotions. These should be in harmony with the seasons of the liturgical year; they are to be in accord with the liturgy. Popular devotions should flow from the liturgy and lead people to it, for the liturgy goes beyond these devotions by its nature (Liturgy constitution, no. 13).

From the beginning of the Church the celebration of the eucharist has been the central act in the life of Christians. Apart from celebrating the eucharist, however, Christians have been accustomed to assembling for other forms of communal prayer.
which developed in various ways and for various reasons. Some of these forms of communal prayer are known as popular devotions.

These devotions are never substitutes for the sacred liturgy, but are instead meant to lead to an ever greater participation in liturgy, especially in the eucharist. St. Paul tells us that the Christian should “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5: 17). It seems natural, then, that the Christian, whose faith and love are regularly strengthened in the eucharist, should seek in common with his fellow Christians for various ways to respond to God in prayer forms that express his way of life, his sentiments, and his intimacy with God and the whole mystical body. Such prayer in common disposes Christians to celebrate the liturgy in a truly sacred manner.

Chief among the popular devotions and ever to be encouraged is devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. We are all familiar with solemn exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. We are familiar also with the solemn annual exposition. Some of our familiar devotions have arisen in times of crises and great spiritual needs. An example of such a devotion in honor of our Lord is the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

The Blessed Virgin Mary has always held a prominent place in the prayer of Christians. In the history of the Church we see special devotions in time of special needs. The most common form of devotion to Mary is the rosary, which combines the mysteries of Christ’s life with the intercession of Mary.

Christians have devotions also in honor of other saints. Dioceses and parishes have special patron saints, whom they honor in a special way. Depending on their way of life in particular areas or localities, Christians have devotions that are typical of that life. In our day scripture services for a diversity of occasions have taken a priority among popular devotions. Then there are special devotions for the liturgical seasons. The first example that comes to mind is the stations of the cross. What better way is there than the way of the cross to prepare for the liturgical events of Holy Week? In the list of devotions there are included also the litanies and novenas in preparation for the celebration of feasts.

Realizing the contribution that popular devotions make to private and family prayer, we are helped to see that all of us have a role to play in their proper promotion. This includes the traditional ones and the introduction of new ones that truly express the reality of Christian life today and that are conducive to liturgical celebrations wherein that Christian life is enhanced.

Recently, with the coming of afternoon and evening Masses, perhaps less attention has been given to popular devotions. We may even hesitate to encourage repetition or ritual. But repetition is a necessary part of life’s total rhythm. Ritual permits involvement in a variety of ways, and so makes it easy for people to give a total expression of themselves.

Popular devotions are part of our Christian heritage. As such, their proper regulation is the responsibility of the bishop. It belongs to him to make sure that the devotional prayer forms in his diocese are theologically true and that the song or music is an authentic expression of the Church’s spirit of worship.

1 See Bulletin 58, pages 79-91, on the development of morning and evening prayer and other forms of devotion in the early centuries.

2 This devotion was formerly known as the forty hours. See Other eucharistic devotions on pages 40-46.
PENANCE CELEBRATION

Lent

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). Penance celebrations help the Christian community to deepen its spirit of penance, and assist individuals as they prepare to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation (Rite of penance, nos. 36-37).

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 Lent. Communities should consider having several services, perhaps one near the beginning of Lent, and another during the final two weeks of the season. Preparations should begin well in advance of the date chosen.

During the final days of Lent, the Christian community is preparing for the celebration of the paschal triduum. This penance celebration should help them in making the choice of dying with Christ to sin and living with him for God.

b) Personal attention: The priest should seek to make the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation a personal meeting of the penitent with Christ and his Church. Individual attention — in the form of instruction, advice, and 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) A guide: 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 Lent (nos. 22-37 and 220-260; nos. 174-175, pages 406-407), or in the liturgy of the hours for this season.

If general absolution is warranted (see Rite of Penance,1 nos. 31-35), the third rite is used (nos. 60-66; Canadian edition, pages 71-74; see outline of rite in Bulletin 52, pages 30-33).

In Rite of Penance, several outlines are provided for specific penitential services (Canadian edition, Appendix II, pages 113-152). As well, the rite provides an extensive list of scripture texts in nos. 101-201 (pages 86-94).

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

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1 Rite of Penance, available from Publications Service (address on inside front cover of this Bulletin).
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: pastors are to encourage people to take part by their
acclamations and responses, and by singing psalms, antiphons and hymns, as well as
by their actions and bodily postures. Reverent silence for reflection is an essential part
of good participation (see Liturgy constitution, no. 30). An effort should be made to
include all or many 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 Lent, Passiontide, Christian vocation, community, penance celebrations, unity,
word of God.

g) Full celebration: There should be a presiding priest, a number of confessors,
the reader carrying the lectionary, servers (including two with lighted candles),
crossbearer, thurifer, and choir. The president presides from the chair, leads the
prayers, and preaches the message of conversion. His work will be more effective 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: Parishes may 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 in his mercy to bring them back to full life
in his family; this should be particularly true throughout the lenten season. During the
penance celebration, the president 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). This prayer may well be backed up by an appeal
for fasting by individuals, families, and the believing community (see paragraph k,
below).

k) 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 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).

l) Suitable days: A weekday — especially Wednesday or Friday, the Church's
traditional days for fasting and penance — is more appropriate for a penance
celebration than is the Lord's day. In planning these services, pastors should lead their
community into greater accord with the practice of the universal Church.

m) Banners and posters based on the theme, or reflecting the spirit of Lent, may
help to set the mood for this celebration.
CELEBRATION OUTLINE

Theme

"We are the light of the world." This theme may be explained in a few sentences before the service begins, after the greeting, or in any leaflet distributed to the congregation.

Entrance Rite

1. Song
From the depths of sin and sadness
Forgive our sins
Psalm 100 (99)
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 paragraph g above. He or she places the book in a place of honor (reading stand or lectern), and the candles are placed nearby. The presiding priest incenses the book after it has been enthroned.

3. Greeting

After all make the sign of the cross, the president greets the assembled community with one of the following, adapted as necessary: Gal. 1: 3; Col. 4: 18; or the following greeting from the Epistle of Barnabas:

Greetings to you,
and peace in the name of the Lord Jesus who loves us.

And also with you.

The president or one of his assistants may explain the theme briefly, if this has not already been done.

4. Opening prayer

The president may choose a suitable prayer from the lenten 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 to God our Father,
and praise him for choosing us in Christ
to be the light of the world.

All pause for silent prayer.

Blessed are you, Father of all,
ruler of the universe:
you have loved us so fully
that you sent your Son to save us.

He loved us and gave his life for us,
dying so that we might die to sin,
rising in order to raise us to life in you.
He is light from light,  
and overcomes the darkness of sin.  

We praise you for saving us from sin  
and for making us your beloved people.  

Help us to be the light of the world,  
to give you praise by our good works,  
and so lead others to praise you.  

All glory and praise are yours, Father,  
for ever and ever.

Liturgy of the Word

God's word invites us to conversion and renewal of our life by proclaiming that  
Christ's death and rising have freed us from the darkness of sin, and have brought us  
into the kingdom of light.

5. Readings from the word of God

The first reading may be chosen from Rom. 13: 11-14 (lectionary, no. 1); Eph.  
5: 8-14 (no. 31); 1 Thess. 5: 1-6, 9-11 (no. 432).

6. Meditative silence

A few moments of silence 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:

Psalm 91 (90): lectionary, page 407  
Psalm 130 (129): lectionary, page 407  
Lord, who throughout

8. Second reading

If a second reading is used, it may be chosen from one of the New Testament  
texts above, or from readings in the seasonal lectionary. A moment of silent prayer  
follows this reading.

If a gospel acclamation is to be sung, it may be chosen from CBW, nos. 208-210.

9. Gospel reading

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

Mt. 5: 13-16  
Jn. 1: 1-5, 9-14 (shorter reading)  
or Jn. 9: 35-41  
or Jn. 12: 32-36

10. Homily

The president proclaims the wonderful works and mercy of God as revealed in  
the scripture texts, and leads the assembly to prayer for sinners, to a reflective  
examination of conscience, and to repentance.
11. Prayer for sinners

The presiding priest introduces this prayer; he may use ideas from introductory note j. Then he invites all to prayer:

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 you through 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,
to warm those who are indifferent to you,
and to bring your light into their lives.

Father, 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.

12. Hymn

If desired, a hymn may be sung:

O crucified redeemer
Into your hands
Creator of the earth and skies

CBW, no. 277
no. 280
no. 284

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.

The questions should be read slowly, and a pause is to be made for reflection after each group. The examination of conscience is the heart of the penance service: unless suitable time is given for reflection during it, it becomes a waste of everyone's time.

13. Examination of conscience

Presiding priest:
Let us turn to God our Father and ask his mercy,
that we may repent of our sins
and turn back to him in love.

Other forms for the examination of conscience are given in past issues of the Bulletin: for Advent, see nos. 36, 41, 46, 51, 55, and 61; for Lent, see nos. 32, 37, 42, 47, 52, and 56. Another form is included in Sunday Mass Book, pages 1108-1112.
Reader:
Jesus has called us to be the light of the world,
to shine like him through the darkness.
In my words and conversations,
do I reflect the light of Christ?
Does my talk lead people closer to Jesus?

All pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Reader:
Do I think about God and his plans for me?
Are the things of God far from my thoughts?
Do I want to make his kingdom come?

All pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Reader:
Does Christ find a welcome in our home?
Do we pray as a family? as individuals?
Do we listen to God's word together?

All pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Reader:
Do I love Christ?
Do I obey his commandment to love others?
Am I ready to serve others as he did?

All pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Reader:
Am I working to make my parish community
shine with the light of Christ?
Am I trying to make it a community of prayer?
Do I try to promote better worship and celebration?
Do I serve in one of the parish ministries?

All pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Reader:
Do I keep God's commandments
and encourage others to do the same?
Do I let others' laughter keep me from doing right?
Do I pray each day for help to obey God's will?

All pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Reader:
During the past year,
have I grown in God's love or service?
Is my life pleasing to Christ?
Are there areas where he wants me to improve
so that I can reflect his light more fully?

All pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

The parish council or liturgy committee may wish to add other reflective questions at this point.
The examination of conscience may conclude in this way:

Are we living as followers of Jesus Christ?
Do we live as God's people, holy and blameless in his sight?
Do we ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and strength
to love others as Jesus has loved us?

All pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

* * *

Presiding priest (he may extend his hands over the congregation):

People of God,
Christ is calling us to turn away from our sins.
Die to sin, and live with Jesus for God.
Let his Spirit lead you back to him,
forgiving you and filling you with his love.

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 reconciliation will be celebrated after this bible service.3

15. Community act of sorrow

In this prayer, the Lord, have mercy may be sung from CBW, nos. 165-169, or with a tune familiar to the community.

Reader or president:

Lord, you have taught us to be the light of the world:
forgive us for failing to be people of light.
Lord, have mercy.

All:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have you called us to be the people of love:
forgive us for choosing hatred and sin.
Christ, have mercy.

All:

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, you have chosen us to do good,
to help others in your Spirit of love:
forgive us for preferring to serve ourselves.
Lord, have mercy.

All:

Lord, have mercy.

3 The act of satisfaction (formerly known as “the penance”) is to be personal and must be given individually, in a way that is fitting to each person's sins and sorrow. It is contrary to the mind of the Church to impose a general or universal act of satisfaction on all members of the congregation before or after the individual celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation (see rite, no. 55).
16. Acclamation

A hymn may be sung:

Prayer of St. Francis  
All glory, laud, and honour  

CBW, no. 404  
no. 285

Or a brief form of the general intercessions may be based on the theme, ending with the Lord's prayer, no. 17, below.

Conclusion of the Rite

17. Lord's prayer

This prayer is best sung by all, as at Mass (CBW, nos. 221-223). The president may prepare an introduction to this prayer, based on the theme of the service. For example:

God has given us his Son  
to make us the people of light.  
Let us pray with Jesus to our Father:

Our Father.

18. Sacred action

The presiding priest 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 president invites the congregation to celebrate the sacrament of penance after the bible service has ended. The various locations for a personal encounter with Christ through the priest (see note b in the introduction) should be mentioned in a positive way. (They could also be described in the parish bulletin on the previous Sunday, with a strong encouragement to take advantage of the spiritual opportunities being offered on this occasion of grace.)

20. Blessing

The presiding priest may conclude with a simple blessing, or may use this form:

May the Father of light bless you with all good,  
and protect you from all evil.

All:  
Amen!

May his wisdom enlighten your hearts,  
and give you everlasting understanding.

All:  
Amen!

May he look upon you with mercy,  
and raise you to unending happiness.
All:
Amen!

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the + Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All:
Amen!

21. Concluding hymn

As the priests move toward the places for individual reconciliation, all sing a seasonal hymn or song of praise:

When I behold
O merciful redeemer
or another seasonal hymn

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 priests. The choir might sing meditative or seasonal hymns or psalms in a quiet manner for the first five or ten minutes after the communal service ends.

HAiku PRAYERS

The haiku is a brief Japanese form of poem, consisting of 17 syllables, with five in the first and third lines, and seven in the second. For some years now, this form has been used in English poetry.

It may also be adapted for prayer by individuals, or by classes who wish to develop their own prayers for particular occasions. Some examples are given here:

For protection:

Lord, to you we pray
that you will guard us this day
in your love. Amen!

Bless us:

Father of Jesus,
we bless your glorious name.
Bless us in your love.

For peace:

Lord Jesus, grant peace:
our world of turmoil and sin
needs your saving help!

Prayer to Mary:

Hear our pleas for help,
holy mother of Jesus:
pray for us always.

Morning prayer:

Lord, we praise you now.
Help us live this day with you
in love and service.

Prayer for today:

Help me live today
in your love and peace, Jesus.
Let me follow you.