LITURGICAL YEAR AND SPIRITUALITY
National Bulletin on Liturgy

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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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Since the fourth century, the liturgical year has been a strong part of our liturgy. Its constant presence and variation have an effect on our spirituality. It is one of the ways in which our prayer life affects our faith and our daily living.

This issue of the Bulletin looks at the current Roman Catholic calendar, and sees how its seasons and celebrations affect the life of Christian people. The calendar has a strong influence on the prayer and worship of the believing community.

Active participation in the Church's liturgy is, as St. Pius X told us, the "primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit." In this issue, we see how this is achieved through the celebration of the liturgical year.
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INTRODUCTION

LITURGY OF TIME

Though we are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, and fellow citizens with the saints, we are still members of the Church on earth. We are part of the kingdom which is both here and on its way.

From the beginning, the Church has celebrated its liturgy in time. Born in a Jewish milieu, the Christian community gradually developed a liturgy of time:

• **Day**: Each day began and ended with communal or personal prayer. Morning and evening prayer were the foundation of the Church's daily worship.

• **Week**: Each week began with Sunday, the Lord's day. It was a day of worship, joy, and prayer.

• **Year**: The primary feast during the year was the *pascha*, the celebration of the Lord Jesus' saving death-resurrection.

The Second Vatican Council led us through a renewal of the liturgy, including the liturgy of time. Since 1963, we have seen the restoration of Sunday as the primary feast day of each week, and the cleansing of some distractions from the strong seasons of Lent-Easter and Advent-Christmas. We have also seen — not for the first time in the Church's history — a reform of the celebrations of the saints.

As human beings, we are necessarily living in space and time. Living on a planet which revolves once every twenty-four hours, which has a satellite circling it every twenty-nine days, and which itself orbits the sun every \( \frac{365}{3} \) days, we are inevitably wrapped up in time.

Over the centuries, the Christian people have taken the elements of time — days, weeks, months, seasons, years — and have organized them in what we now know as the liturgical calendar or liturgical year. We have taken time and have used it to give praise — from the rising of the sun to its setting — to God our Father, through his Son, in his Holy Spirit.

Through this issue of the National Bulletin on Liturgy, may God help us to appreciate more fully his gift of time.

*Blessed are you, Lord our God, king of all ages:
from eternity you have called us to be your people,
to sing your praises at all times.*

*Bless us in our work and our prayer,
and grant that our lives may give you glory
through our words, our witness, and our worship.*

*We give you praise, Father,
through Jesus Christ, our brother and our Lord,
in the communion of your Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever. Amen!"
A YEAR FOR GOD

Time is one of God's many gifts to his people. During our life on earth, we are called to build up his kingdom as we look forward to the coming of his Son in glory at the end of time. *Time and all the ages belong to Christ*, as we proclaim at the beginning of the Easter vigil celebration.

**Purpose of the liturgical year:** The liturgical year leads us to give greater praise to God and to enrich our spiritual life as we celebrate and share in the saving mysteries of the Lord Jesus. In this way we are led to conversion and renewal.

**Baptismal spirituality:** The spirituality of the liturgical year, of the liturgy, and of all Christian living is based on our initiation into the dying and rising of Jesus Christ. By the sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, and eucharist), we are brought fully into the life of Christ and his Church.

**Conversion and renewal** continue to be the thrust of the liturgical celebrations during the year. In all seasons we are called to die to sin and to live with Christ for God:

- **Sunday:** The Lord's day is the heart of the liturgical year (see pages 149-152). Each Sunday we are invited to renew the baptismal covenant that the Lord Jesus has made with us (see Liturgy constitution, no. 10).

- **Easter cycle:** This cycle includes a time of preparation (Lent: see pages 153-157), of celebration (Easter triduum: pages 159-162), and of continuation (Easter season: pages 164-166). Lent is a time when catechumens make their final preparations for initiation, and Christians get ready by prayer and penance to renew their baptismal promises. The triduum celebrates the death-resurrection of our savior; the catechumens are baptized into Christ, and those who have been baptized renew their vows of dying to sin and living for God. During the Easter season, all believers reflect on the great gifts that the Father gives to those who are his children through baptism.

- **Christmas cycle:** During Advent (see pages 167-169), we heed the call of John the Baptist to "make straight the way of the Lord" (see Mk. 1:3). We seek the renewal of our baptismal life as we prepare for the coming of the Lord in glory, and for our celebration of his coming among us as one of us at the first Christmas (pages 170-171). We reflect on salvation in Christ and our mission as his Church during the first weeks of January (page 171).

- **Ordinary time:** Between the strong seasons surrounding Easter and Christmas, we have ordinary time (see pages 173-176). For some thirty-three weeks of the year, we celebrate Sunday as our main feast, and let its gospel passage lead us to a deeper knowledge and love of the Lord Jesus.

* * *

During the liturgical year, the Lord continues to bless his people and lead them to a greater sharing in the saving graces of his life, death, and resurrection.

*May his name be praised for ever!*
DAY OF THE LORD

The idea of a day dedicated to the Lord — in praise, in petition, in abstention from secular works — comes to us from Judaism, and has been continued during the Christian centuries.

**Old Testament ideas:** “Keep holy the Sabbath day” (see Exod. 20: 8). There are several elements of meaning in the Sabbath. Together they form a full picture of its religious purpose and value:

- **Day of rest:** The main idea of the Sabbath is rest from work. This was related to the desert sojourn in Exod. 16: 21-30 (the people of God were not to gather manna on that day); gradually, the day was spiritualized by additional elements.

- **Day of liberation:** The rest was extended to all — slaves, aliens, animals — in Deut. 5: 12-15, because the Hebrews were once slaves in Egypt. This is extended in meaning to proclaim their liberation by God from slavery; at the same time, an eschatological element is added (see Jer. 17: 21-27).

- **God’s day:** The Sabbath became a day for sacred assembly (Lev. 23: 3), a day for particular sacrifices (Num. 28: 9-10), a day belonging to the Lord. A theological reason was proposed for the meaning of the day of rest: God himself rested after creation, and therefore his people should rest (Gen. 2: 2-3; Exod. 20: 11).

- **Sign of the covenant:** Keeping the Sabbath became a sign of God’s covenant (Exod. 31: 12-17). Their observance of this day showed their membership in the people of God, and reminded them that they should bless the Lord for letting them share in the life of his creation and in the holiness of his chosen people of Israel.

*While Sunday is not a transferred Sabbath, many of these ideas have influenced the Christian attitude toward the Lord’s day.*

**Sunday in the New Testament:** Sunday is the heart of the Christian year. It is the original feast day, the basis and the center of the liturgical year (Liturgy constitution, no. 106). The first generation of Christians chose the first day of the week (our Sunday) as the Lord’s day, and in this way, made it the foundation of the liturgical calendar as it developed through the next twenty centuries.

- **Day of the resurrection:** Though the gospel accounts of the resurrection disagree in minor details, they are one in affirming that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the Jewish week, the day we now know as Sunday.

- **Day of Christ’s appearances:** Sunday is also the day the Lord chooses to appear to his disciples when they are gathered together. Some of these Sunday appearances are to Mary Magdalene (Jn. 20: 11-18); to Peter (Lk. 24: 34); to the disciples on the way to Emmaus (Lk. 24: 13-35); to the apostles (Lk. 24: 39-49, and Jn. 20: 19-23). On the following Sunday, he appeared to Thomas and the other apostles (Jn. 20: 26-29). The last appearance of the Lord mentioned in the New Testament is also on a Sunday (Rev. 1: 9-20).

- **Day of the outpouring of the Spirit:** Pentecost, celebrated seven weeks after the Lord’s resurrection, is the day when the Lord Jesus poured his Spirit upon his Church, and called all nations to form the new Israel (Acts 2: 1-41; see also Jn. 20: 22).
It is evident that... primitive Christian tradition looked on Sunday as the normal day for the Lord to appear, just as in the Old Testament it had been the normal day for God to appear to the prophets. To show that Christ was continuing Yahweh's prophetic apparitions is one way of saying that he is Lord and God. To the first Christians, Sunday was therefore the day when the Lord was still in their midst.\(^1\)

- **Fulfills the Sabbath:** The early Church held that Jesus, by his rest in the tomb on the Saturday after the crucifixion, fulfilled the meaning of the Jewish Sabbath, and abrogated it along with the rest of the Old Testament ceremonial laws. For Christians, the Sunday gathering for the eucharist replaced the Sabbath observances. *Christians are those who keep the Lord's day, not the Sabbath,* writes St. Ignatius of Antioch to the Magnesians around the year 110.\(^2\)

- **Day for eucharist:** The first day of the week was observed from New Testament times as the day of worship in the breaking of bread: an early eucharistic sermon — a long one — by Paul is recorded in Acts 20: 7-12. The first day of each week was the time he urged the Christians of Corinth to set aside alms for the poor of Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16: 2). As Lk. 24: 30-31 notes, Christians recognized the Lord in the breaking of bread.

**Sunday in Our Spirituality**

**Vatican II:** The Council described Sunday as the Lord's own day, celebrated every eighth day. It is a day when God calls his people together to celebrate the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the eucharist. In our memorial of the suffering, death, rising, and glorification of the Lord Jesus, we thank our Father for having saved us in Christ.

Sunday is the *original feast day,* a day of joy and freedom from work. It is the *foundation and nucleus* of the whole liturgical year. (See Liturgy constitution, no. no. 106.)

**Chief day of the week:** "The day of the Lord is the lord of days."\(^3\) Sunday is the greatest day of the week, its liturgical highlight. All our actions and celebrations during the week prepare us for next Sunday's liturgy, and each Sunday's liturgy gives us light and strength to live another week in the Lord's service. Life leads to liturgy, and liturgy leads to life.

- **Day of assembly:** We are God's chosen people, whom he has brought together as his Church. Each week he assembles us, calls us together to celebrate eucharist: we meet the risen Lord in the assembled community, in his word, and in

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\(^{2}\) See *Early Christian Writings,* edited by Maxwell Staniforth (1968, 1972, Penquin, Harmondsworth, Mdx.): page 89, no. 9. All the letters of Ignatius are most instructive for learning about the ministries, liturgy, and attitudes of the Christians in the first years of the second century: see pages 61-131.

\(^{3}\) This saying of Pseudo-Eusebius of Alexandria is quoted in a letter from Cardinal Jean Villot, Secretary of State, to the Italian National Liturgical Week. See *L'Osservatore Romano* (English edition), Sept. 15, 1977, page 4.
the breaking of bread. It is when we are gathered in this way that the Church is most visible on earth. (See Liturgy constitution, nos. 41-42; GI,\(^4\) nos. 74-75.)

- **Day of the word:** Sunday is the day the Lord speaks to his people through his revealed word. The Sunday readings have been carefully chosen so that over a period of three years, the main teachings of Christian faith are proclaimed to the community. (See The Church's catechism, in Bulletin 56, pages 293-295; Systematic preaching from the lectionary, in no. 60, pages 221-233.)

- **Day for the eucharist:** Before the world was created, our Father chose us in Christ to be his people of praise. When we come together to celebrate the eucharist, we praise God and give him glory. We thank him for creation and salvation, and we pray to him for ourselves, the Church, and for all the world. He nourishes us with the body and blood of Christ and sends us to continue to live and serve with Christ.

- **Day of light and joy:** Christ is the light of the world (Jn. 8: 12). We, his followers, are called to be a sacrament or sign of unity and love for all the people on earth (Constitution on the Church, no. 1). The light and joy that we reflect should flow from the Spirit of Christ, who is poured into our hearts (Rom. 5: 5).

**Baptismal spirituality:** The spirituality of Sunday is directly related to our baptism. This is one of the reasons why it is preferable to celebrate baptism on the Lord's day.

- **Called to worship:** In baptism, we become God's children, and we are made sharers in the priesthood of Christ. We have both the privilege and the responsibility of taking part with him in his worship of the Father. Full participation in the Church's liturgy is the *primary and indispensable source* of the true spirit of Christ. (See Liturgy constitution, no. 14.)

- **Renewing our baptismal covenant:** We are baptized into Christ but once, but are called to renew our baptismal covenant often. In our baptism, we renounced sin and Satan, and made our profession of faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In our baptism, we were baptized into the death of Christ, and we rose with him to new life for God: we were made sharers in the paschal mystery of Christ. In every eucharist, we renew our baptismal covenant with God (Liturgy constitution, no. 10). For this reason, the rite of blessing and sprinkling water is a fitting replacement for the penitential rite in Sunday's liturgy.

* * *

**Reflection:** What is the place of Sunday in the life of our parish or community? What does it mean for individuals and families? How do we balance recreation and work and prayer and worship? (See *Whose day is it?* in Bulletin 43, pages 67-68.)

* * *

\(^4\) 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; in the Canadian edition, it is given on pages 11-54.
Helpful reading: The texts for Sunday Masses are given in the lectionary and sacramentary, and are reprinted in *Sunday Mass Book*. Other helpful references are suggested here:


*Sunday is the Lord's Day*: a pastoral leaflet prepared by the National Liturgical Office (1979, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1 Canada).

National Bulletin on Liturgy:

- Bulletin 43, *Sunday Belongs to the Lord*.
- History: Bulletin 47, pages 14-16.
- Family activities: see no. 63, *Children and Liturgy*.
- See *Our opened treasure — the Sunday eucharist*, in no. 65, pages 195-201.
- Other references are given in Bulletin 61, pages 304-305.
STRONG SEASONS

The strong seasons of the liturgical year are the weeks which prepare for, celebrate, and meditate on the feasts of Easter and Christmas. These seasons surround and strengthen the Lord's day, Sunday, which is the heart, nucleus, and core of the liturgical year.

LENT PREPARES US FOR EASTER

Purpose: The season of Lent prepares us to celebrate the paschal mystery of Jesus — his saving death and resurrection seen as a single act of God's love for us.

Work of Lent: Lent provides us with a double task: it is a time for us to renew our baptism or prepare for it; it is also a time for stressing penance. In a single word, it is a time of conversion.

- Baptismal aspect of Lent: During this season, the Lord calls us back to our baptism as the basis of our spirituality. Catechumens who will be baptized at the Easter vigil enter the period of enlightenment and purification. They spend weeks in prayer and reflection on the message of Jesus, striving to overcome sin's power in them. The community prays with them as they go through the final stages of their journey toward baptism (See Christian Initiation of Adults, nos. 21-27, 152-208; also Bulletins 51 and 64 on Christian initiation.)

  Christians are called back to their baptismal covenant. During Lent they seek to die once more to sin and to live with Christ for God. They will renew these promises in public at the Easter vigil, after the catechumens have been baptized and confirmed.

- Spirit of penance: The Second Vatican Council pointed out the importance of times for prayer and penance (Liturgy constitution, no. 105). Our penance is to be social and external as well as personal and internal (no. 110): we are called to “works of charity and self-sacrifice” (Passion Sunday, introduction).

  Lent is a time of conversion. The heart of the virtue of penance is “hatred of sin as an offence against God” (no. 109). Traditional penitential practices are described below on pages 155-156.

Means: The believing community is called to widen its view of lenten activities. As well as doing penance and repenting for our sins, we are invited to listen to God's word more faithfully, and to deepen our prayer.

- Hearing God's word: The readings in the Sunday and weekday Masses of this season are rich in their description of God's mercy for us, and in their call to conversion. During Lent, we are invited to take more time to listen to God as he speaks to us in his word. It is a good time to begin the practice of a minute of silent prayer and reflection after each reading and the homily (GI, no. 23). In morning and evening prayer, a longer reading may be chosen.
As individuals, we need to take more time for reading God's word prayerfully. Those who read the Bible each day could increase their period of reading, or make more effort to pray about what they read. People who read the scriptures only once in a while should discipline themselves by reading a chapter of the Gospel each day — slowly, reflectively, pausing often to listen to the Lord Jesus and to speak to him.

During Lent, the Church encourages us to celebrate Bible services (Liturgy constitution, no. 35: 4). Penance celebrations, which are a form of Bible service, should take place several times during Lent, so that all members of the community will have the opportunity to be reconciled and thus be ready to celebrate the paschal mystery during the Easter triduum (see Rite of Penance, no. 13).

Lent would be a good time for readers to reflect on the meaning of their ministry (see Bulletin 53, pages 86-93), and on how well they are preparing and carrying out their role (see Bulletin 56, Training for Readers). What does the word of God mean in their lives? Are they listening to him daily?

○ More ardent prayer: Prayer is our responsibility all year long, for we are God's chosen people, called to praise him and pray for the world. During Lent, however, the Church invites us to deepen this prayer. We should offer our regular prayers more fervently, and seek to find more time for prayer. It would be good for devout Christians to seek spiritual guidance on how they can grow in their prayer life.

Prayer for sinners is also important: we who have been forgiven should show our gratitude to God by asking him to send his Spirit to warm cold hearts, to soften hard ways, to invite inflexible wills to turn back to him.

During this season, we may spend more time praying for the needs of the Church and the world. Various forms of intercessions are suggested in Bulletin 69, page 115, and in no. 58, pages 101-103, and 128.

Those who celebrate morning and evening prayer should seek to renew their fervor by remembering the spirit of these hours (see GILH, nos. 38-40,1 and Bulletin 58, pages 107, 110). They could spend more time in silent prayer after each psalm and after the reading. They could also check on the way they are preparing and praying the intercessions. Bulletin 58, Day by Day We Give Him Praise, speaks of the meaning and spirit of the liturgy of the hours.

Each community could look at the general intercessions during the eucharist. Do we include them in daily Mass? How sincere are they in the Sunday celebration? How much effort goes into their preparation?

Is help being given to families and individuals so that they may grow in prayer? What is the state of the prayer life in your parish? (See Bulletin 35, pages 194-196; no. 44, People of Prayer; also Prayer life of the parish, in no. 66, pages 262-265.)

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1 GILH: This abbreviation refers to the General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours. It is a pastoral introduction and explanation of the office today. It is given at the beginning of Liturgy of the Hours (1975, Catholic Book, New York), vol. 1, pages 21-98. If we are to understand the present state of the office and celebrate it properly, we need to become more familiar with this Introduction.
Doing Penance

Our Lord told us that we are to carry our daily cross and follow him (Lk. 9: 23). He also taught us to pray for our daily bread (Lk. 11: 3).

Jesus told us that we would fast (see Mt. 9: 14-15). From the beginning, Christians have carried out many forms of penance, both in repentance for their own sins, and to share with Christ in redeeming the world: we are filling up in our lives what is lacking in Christ's suffering, for the sake of his body, the Church (see Col. 1: 24).

Traditional forms of penance: These are "the top ten" in the tradition of the Christian people. They are our daily responsibility as believers; in Lent, we concentrate on them a little more fully.

1. Giving up sin: Jesus tells us that we show our love for him by keeping his commandments, especially by loving others as he has loved us. We are called to live blameless lives as God's holy people, his Church. He wants us to turn away from our sins, our failings, our laziness in prayer, our unwillingness to do better.

2. Praying: Jesus and his apostles tell us to pray always, to be constant in prayer. Traditional times for Christians to pray are morning, evening, and mealtimes. Personal prayer is a necessary preparation for our sharing in the Church's public worship, the liturgy.

3. Fasting: Fasting means cutting down on the amount and richness of our food and drink. Done as a penance for sin, it helps us to pray better: an empty stomach can lead to fuller prayer. The money we save on food should be given to others in alms.

We are encouraged to fast often on weekdays in Lent, and are invited to join the universal Church in fasting on Good Friday and Holy Saturday (paschal fast), and also on Ash Wednesday.

4. Doing good works: Jesus went about doing good. The apostles continued to teach us to do good works, to help those in need, to give others the good example of our living, to pray for other people, and to be ready to serve them in their time of need. The list is endless, but can be summarized in a few words: we are to help Jesus and come to his aid by helping other people in a spirit of love.

5. Giving alms: We give alms to help God's poor, and to support the good works of the Church and other positive agencies. Again our help is being given to Christ in his brothers and sisters. Many Churches encourage giving 10% — the biblical tithe — as the minimum gift to God and his works. We do not give to show off or keep up with others, but to give cheerfully to God, who has given us everything we have.

6. Carrying out our duties of state: This is perhaps the hardest and most unrecognized form of penance. We serve God by living out our vocation for him each day. We do our best for him by being a good mother, father, teacher, worker, student, religious, minister, priest. God is calling each of us to be a living sacrifice, and to offer our daily life to him through Christ.

7. Meditative reading: In an age of constant bombardment by noise and sights, Christians need time to read and reflect. Believers have to nourish their faith
by reading. Prayerful reading of God's word each day opens our hearts to his Spirit, and lets God's thoughts and ways influence ours. Reading other Christian books and magazines will help us to be stronger in our faith and our living.

8. **Controlling our desires for possessions:** Jesus reminds us that our heart will be wherever our treasure is. He tells us to build up treasures in heaven rather than on earth. Today's Christian is constantly tempted to buy more and more things: everything has to be newer, bigger, better, and automatic. We should be cutting down on our possessions, eliminating frills, giving our surplus to others, lessening our wants, and sharing ourselves and our possessions with others.

9. **Abstinence:** This form of penance needs to be seen as a near cousin of fasting. We may give up meat or other desirable foods on one or two days a week during Lent, especially on Friday, the day of Christ's saving death on the cross. Our abstinence is another way of sharing in Christ's work of saving the world.

10. **Controlling our desire for entertainment:** Too much entertainment — by radio, TV, movies, spectator sports, light reading, distractions — can dull our taste for the things of God, and lead us to have no time for the works of the Lord. Christians need to be a sign of contradiction to the world, and to spend more time in serving God and his people.

A more detailed description of these penances is contained in Bulletin 42, pages 20-33. (This issue is now available in a second, revised edition.)

* * *

Throughout Lent, our Lord is calling us to believe in the Good News of our salvation, to repent of our sins, and to turn back to God (see Mk. 1: 15). Jesus is calling us back to the meaning and fervor of our baptism, when we died with him to sin, and were raised with him to new life for God our Father. Our **conversion** is the goal of each Lent.

* * *

**Helpful reading:** The liturgical texts of the season are our first resource: see lectionary, nos. 22-36 and 220-257 (both large and study editions); sacramentary, pages 154-201, and lenten prefaces (nos. 8-17), pages 440-459. Many of these texts are contained in **Sunday Mass Book**, pages 249-338 and 601-607.

As well as the lenten sections of the books mentioned on page 186, the following are useful:

* **Evening Prayer for Lent** (FDLC, 1307 S. Wabash, Suite 222, Chicago, IL 60605).


* **Not by Bread Alone: Bible Readings for the Weekdays of Lent** (1972, Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, IN 46556).


Lent with the Liturgy, by Reginald H. Fuller (1968, SPCK, Marylebone Road, London NW1 4DU).


National Bulletin on Liturgy:

- Two complete issues on Lent: no. 37, Taking Lent Seriously, and no. 42, Call to Penance.
- Penance celebrations: see Bulletins 32, 37, 42, 47, 52, 56, 62, and 67.
- History of Lent: see Bulletin 47, pages 31-33.
- Preaching in Lent: no. 60, pages 237-238.
- Lent and the family: no. 63, page 106.
- Planning lenten celebrations: no. 67, pages 26-27.
- Catechumenate: see no. 51, Christian Initiation, and no. 64, Christian Initiation: Into Full Communion.

- Many other articles on Lent are listed in Bulletin 61, pages 307-308.

NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of the Bulletin is entitled Sunday Eucharist: I. It looks at the first part of the Mass, and offers a picture of how this should be celebrated, using all the ministries fully. The issue brings together suggestions and requirements described in the General Instruction, the order of Mass, and other official documents. A later issue will look at the rest of the Mass.

Bulletin 71 helps liturgy committees, priest, and other ministers to prepare the Sunday celebration as well as possible. This issue will be ready for mailing early in November.
During the busiest week of the liturgical year, we can be so preoccupied with the Holy Week rites that we seem to have no time to reflect or pray. This problem can be resolved by better preparation and by more prayerful celebration of the liturgies of this week, as well as by a deeper understanding of what the Church is celebrating on these days.

Holy Week

The week before Easter is devoted to the Church's celebration of the paschal mystery. Christ's dying and rising are seen as one act of God's saving love. In response to Christ's love for us, the Church recalls the events surrounding his death and resurrection, and pays particular attention to the reason why he did this for us: God loved us so much that he sent his Son to save us and bring us life (Jn. 3: 16-17).

History: The celebrations of our present Holy Week date back to the second half of the fourth century. Crowds of pilgrims came to Jerusalem for the Easter celebration, and rites were gradually developed into dramatic celebrations for the days of the great week, as it was then called. More details of the beginnings of Holy Week are given in Bulletin 47, pages 34-52.

Passion Sunday: The week opens with a procession remembering our Lord's triumphant entry into the city of Jerusalem a few days before he laid down his life for his flock. Our celebration begins on a joyous note as we honor our King. Palms or other branches are blessed, and we carry them in procession, singing praises to our Lord. We place the palms in our homes as a sign of our loyalty to Christ our leader. Then the tone of the celebration changes, and becomes more somber. As we listen to the proclamation of the passion from one of the gospels according to Matthew, Mark, or Luke, we become aware of how great Christ's love is for us, and of the evil of sin — our sin. During the eucharistic prayer, we thank God in a special way for having saved us by his Son's love. Preface 19, used on this day, provides an excellent summary of Christ's attitude and action in saving us.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: These days continue the Church's reflection on our Lord's gift of himself. The first three servant songs of Isaiah are read, and the gospel passages reflect on Jesus' preparation for his death as Judas is arranging to betray him. The responsorial psalms may be prayed in the name of Christ himself, reflecting his trust in God (Ps. 27), his hope (Ps. 71), and his praise in the midst of suffering (Ps. 69). The preface for these three days, no. 18, proclaims his triumph over Satan and sin.

Holy Thursday morning: At different times in the past, this morning was the occasion for the solemn reconciliation of sinners, for the blessing of chrism, and for the commemoration of the last supper (see Bulletin 47, pages 37-40). At present, the solemn Mass of the Lord's supper is celebrated on Thursday evening, and the Mass of chrism may be moved to an earlier day, but still remaining near Easter.

In parishes, Holy Thursday morning provides a good opportunity for the celebration of community morning prayer.
**Chrism:** The present Mass of chrism is still a mixture of various themes, including the blessing of oils and the renewal of commitment by presbyters. The preface, no. 20, is on the priesthood of Christ, which is shared with his people and with their ministers.

There is no intrinsic relationship between this Mass and the rest of Holy Week. From the fifth century, the oils were blessed on Thursday since this was the last celebration of the eucharist before the Easter vigil, when the oil of catechumens and the chrism would be used. In Rome around 215, Hippolytus had a much simpler solution: the bishop exorcised the oil of exorcism and blessed the oil of thanksgiving just before the baptism began.

**Lent comes to an end:** In the Roman Catholic Church, the season of Lent now ends on Holy Thursday, before the celebration of the evening Mass of the Lord’s supper. Then the Easter triduum begins.

**Easter Triduum**

The early Church celebrated the paschal mystery as one unbroken saving act. The Easter vigil was the celebration of the death-and-rising of the Lord Jesus, and was preceded by two days of fasting (paschal fast). When separate celebrations for Good Friday developed in the fourth century, people gradually lost sight of the paschal mystery as one saving event.

The Easter triduum begins on Holy Thursday with the evening Mass of the Lord’s supper, and lasts until evening prayer on Easter Sunday. In the renewed liturgy, the Church invites us to return to the insights of the early Christians. On each day of the triduum, we look at one aspect of the Lord’s paschal mystery, but always seeing it in the light of the one act which brought about our salvation.

**Holy Thursday evening:** During the evening, the whole believing community gathers for the eucharistic celebration. As we begin the Easter triduum, a note of anticipated joy creeps in: white vestments are worn, the *Glory to God in the highest* is sung, and the church bells are rung; after tonight, these do not appear until the vigil celebration opens the Easter season.

Thursday evening remembers what the Lord did for us at the last supper. It recalls his new commandment of love in the gospel and in the washing of the feet. We obey the Lord’s command to do eucharist in his memory, as he first did “on this night that he was betrayed.” Our celebration is part of a long tradition: the Israelites eating the Passover lamb (first reading); Christ celebrating the last supper in a Passover context (gospel); Paul continuing to hand on this tradition (second reading); our celebrating eucharist as Jesus has told us to do. On this evening, it is most fitting for all to receive communion from the chalice, for this is the full sign that Christ has given us.

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2 See General Norms for the Liturgical Year, nos. 28 and 19. These norms are contained in the introductory material at the beginning of the sacramentary: pages 67-75 in the Canadian edition.

3 A triduum is a three-day period, usually of religious observances. It comes from Latin, and is derived from *tres* (three) and *dies* (days).
Following the Mass, we bring the eucharistic food to a chapel or place of repossession, where it is kept for communion on Good Friday. (This is one of the many links that bind these three days into one period of celebration.) The procession may remind us of the one on Passion Sunday: now we are closer to the events by which Christ has brought us life.

A time of prayer and adoration until midnight leads us into the next day.

**Good Friday**: Friday is the beginning of the two-day paschal fast. This morning provides another opportunity for the community to gather for morning prayer.

Around 3:00 on Friday afternoon, the traditional time of our Lord's death, the people come together in church to commemorate the suffering and death of our savior. This distinctive service is not a eucharist, but rather an extended celebration of the word.

° *Scripture readings*: After a silent procession, a time of quiet prayer is concluded with a prayer recalling the paschal mystery. The first reading is the fourth song of the suffering servant (Is. 52-53). In the responsorial psalm, we hear Christ commending his life to the Father (Ps. 31). The reading from Hebrews speaks of Christ's obedience and suffering, through which he was able to become our savior. The gospel acclamation is addressed to him as our risen Lord, King of eternal glory. Then we listen as the passion according to John is proclaimed. A brief homily may follow.

Throughout the Good Friday rites, we need to remember that Christ laid down his life freely for his flock (see Jn. 10: 11, 15, 17-18). His death is a glorification (see Jn. 17: 1-5). He hands over his Spirit to the Church as he dies (Jn. 19: 30; compare Jn. 20: 22).

° *General intercessions*: In a series of solemn prayers, we pray for the Church and for the world. This form of intercessions was the normal one in Rome until the time of Gelasius I (492-496), when they were reduced. The Good Friday liturgy retained these prayers through the centuries until the Second Vatican Council restored them to the order of Mass in 1963.

° *Veneration of the cross*: This rite comes to us from Jerusalem in the fourth century. After the wooden cross is unveiled, the whole community offers its adoration to Christ. In procession, the people come forward to venerate the cross, either now or after the service has ended.

° *Communion rite*: The communion breads consecrated on Thursday evening are carried in. All pray the Lord's prayer, and then come to receive communion under the form of bread alone.

Even in its celebration of the death of the Lord, the Church remembers that he has risen. Vestments are red in honor of our living King and savior. We do not sing *alleluia* yet, but we do look forward to celebrating the Easter vigil in honor of his resurrection.

The rest of Good Friday is spent in fasting, quiet prayer, and meditation. It is not a day for partying, shopping, or wearing Easter bonnets.
Holy Saturday: We continue the paschal fast until we celebrate the Easter vigil. Saturday is also a day for quiet meditation on what the Lord has done in his love for us. Morning prayer is a fitting way to begin the day. The final rites of preparation may be celebrated with the catechumens today. Like Friday, Holy Saturday is not a day for festivity, shopping, or entertainment.

Easter vigil: This service is the high point of the triduum and the beginning of the Easter season. There are four stages in the celebration, which takes place at night.

- **Service of light:** A fire is blessed, the Easter candle is lighted, and then carried in procession through the darkened church. Christ is acclaimed as the light of the world, and all light their candles from the Easter candle. Then the Easter proclamation of praise is sung in honor of Christ, who has saved us by his death and resurrection.

- **Liturgy of the word:** Nine readings from scripture, with the responsorial psalms and gospel acclamation, form the heart of the vigil. We listen to God as he speaks in our midst. He has made the world for us. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac, God's saving of the Israelites from the slavery of Egypt, his promise to love us for ever, his call to us to turn to him and accept the commandments of life, his promise to cleanse us from all stain: these seven Old Testament readings lead us to the proclamation of Romans 6: we are baptized into the Lord's death, and raised to new life with him. The *alleluia* is solemnly restored to our liturgy in the responsorial psalm which also serves as gospel acclamation. Then we listen to the gospel of the resurrection. The homily completes the service of the word; tonight the intercessions are replaced by the litany.

- **Liturgy of baptism:** The litany of the saints is sung, and then the priest blesses the baptismal water, recalling many of the ways in which the scriptures (including those proclaimed this night) speak of God's saving action through water. The catechumens renounce sin and profess their faith; then they are baptized, clothed in white garments, and confirmed. Then the rest of the community renews its baptismal promises, and is sprinkled with the blessed water: the Easter vigil celebrates the anniversary of baptism for all Christians. Finally, the newly baptized Christians are seated among the members of the community.

- **Eucharistic liturgy:** The first Mass of Easter continues with the preparation of the altar and the gifts. Preface 21 emphasizes the reasons why we are praising God in this eucharist. For the newly baptized, this is the first eucharist in which they are able to take part; for the rest of the community, it is a renewal of the covenant with the Father. Communion under both species is most appropriate during this celebration. The solemn dismissal sends the believing community forth to live the Christian faith in the Easter season.

Easter Sunday: The celebrations during the day continue the Church's joy at our Lord's resurrection. In the first reading we hear Peter proclaiming that the Lord Jesus is risen, and that he will forgive the sins of all who believe in him. The psalm gives thanks to God for making this day of joy. There is a choice of two texts for the second reading, both speaking of our new life in Christ. The sequence is sung, and then the gospel acclamation leads us to the gospel of the resurrection. In Canada and the United States the sacramentary includes the renewal of baptismal promises during all the Sunday Masses. With evening prayer on Easter Sunday, our celebration of the Easter triduum is completed.
Call to Conversion

The first days of Holy Week are a most appropriate time for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation. By Thursday, everyone should have taken the opportunity to be forgiven, so that the triduum can be celebrated fully by all (see Rite of Penance, no. 13).

The ceremonies of Holy Week and the Easter triduum are more dramatic and emotional than is usual in the sober and calm Roman liturgy. These rites underline the spirituality of this time: it is centered on the paschal mystery of our Lord, and on our sharing in his dying and rising through our baptism. When we were baptized, we died with him to sin, and we were raised to new life with him for God.

The baptismal thrust of Lent is described on page 153. This element continues through the Holy Week celebrations. On Thursday, as in every eucharist, we are reconciled with the Lord and renew our baptismal covenant (see Liturgy constitution, no. 10). Each of us renews our baptismal promises publicly during the Easter vigil, and once more we set out to die to sin and live for God. The eucharist is our food and drink, and nourishes us as we strive to follow Christ with fresh and renewed vigor.

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Helpful reading: The liturgical texts for Holy Week and the triduum are our first resource: see lectionary, nos. 37-43 and 258-260; sacramentary, pages 202-275, and seasonal prefaces (nos. 18-21), pages 460-467. Many of these texts are contained in Sunday Mass Book, pages 339-476 and 607-610.

As well as the appropriate sections of the books mentioned on pages 156-157 and 186, the following are useful:

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (1974, CCC, Ottawa). See also Bulletins 51 and 64, listed below.


The Paschal Meal: An Arrangement of the Last Supper as an Historical Drama, compiled by Grailville (1956, 1976, Abbey Press, St. Meinrad, IN 47577). This may be used in preparation for Holy Week or as a way of teaching about the Mass: it is not a part of the liturgy.

National Bulletin on Liturgy:

- Holy Week: see Bulletin 37, pages 32-44; no. 42, pages 54-59; no. 47, pages 34-52.
- Preaching during this time: Bulletin 60, pages 238-239.
- Christian initiation: Bulletin 51; no. 64, pages 174-177.
- Other articles and references are listed in Bulletin 61, pages 308-310.

SECOND EDITION

In the past six years, there has been a growing demand for copies of the National Bulletin on Liturgy. When necessary, we have reprinted issues to keep up with the orders. For the past few years, the Publications Service of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has promised to keep Bulletins in print from no. 35 (November 1972), to the present.

Increased demand has suggested that we reissue some Bulletins in an updated form, incorporating later references and resources.

To date, four numbers of the Bulletin have been revised and updated as a second edition. They have been reset in the same format as the present issue.

- No. 35: Parish Liturgy Committees
- No. 36: Advent and Christmas
- No. 42: Call to Penance
- No. 54: Story of the Mass.

These issues may be ordered for $1.50 ($1.75 outside Canada), plus 10% postage, from Publications Service, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1, Canada. Please enclose payment with your order to avoid delay in shipping.
**EASTER SEASON**

**Beginnings:** The Easter season is seven weeks long, and is parallel to the fifty days between the Passover and the Feast of Weeks (*Shavuoth*). St. Athanasius called this period "the great Sunday." The history of the Easter season is described in Bulletin 47, pages 52-54.

**Purpose:** This season begins with the Easter vigil, and continues until Pentecost. Its purpose is to continue the celebration of the resurrection, and to allow the Christian community to reflect more fully on the paschal mystery. The whole Church — newly baptized and veterans alike — takes part in an intense catechesis. The primary instrument of this experience is the gospel reading and homily each Sunday.

Gradually, through prayer, reflection, good preaching and by works of love, believers are helped to increase their understanding of the Christian mysteries and to deepen their relationship with the rest of the community. See *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 37-40; also *Catechesis during the Easter season*, in Bulletin 64, page 177.

The Easter season is closely related to that of Lent: it is a continuation and completion of the work of conversion accomplished during Lent. As the dying and rising of Christ have to be seen as one saving action on God's part, so too Lent and the Easter season have to be seen as closely linked and complementary. Each season helps us to understand the other.

In a particular way, we reflect on the presence of the risen Lord among his people: he is our Lord, our shepherd, our leader, and we recognize him in the breaking of bread and in many other ways (see Liturgy constitution, no. 7). On devotion to the risen Christ and his paschal mystery, see Bulletin 62, pages 16-30.

The Easter season is a eucharistic season. Communion is to be brought to the sick frequently, even daily during the year; during this season, however, the ritual suggests that daily communion for the sick is especially appropriate (see *Pastoral Care of the Sick and Rite of Anointing*, no. 46).

*Alleluia* is the song of the Easter season. We give praise to God who has saved us by the dying and rising of his Son. The Easter candle which burns from the vigil to Pentecost is a sign of the risen Lord who is with his people.

**Easter octave:** We continue our rejoicing at the resurrection of our Lord and his victory over sin and death. The days of this week are celebrated as solemnities. The daily gospel readings describe different occasions on which Jesus appeared to his followers. The octave ends with the second Sunday of the season; the gospel presents Thomas as he comes to believe in the risen Lord (Jn. 20). We who did not see Christ in the flesh are called blessed also, because he has given us the faith to believe in him.

During the Sundays of the Easter season, we listen to the Acts of the Apostles as the first reading. St. Augustine noted this custom in his time: see Bulletin 50, page 232.
Third to sixth Sundays: The post-baptismal catechesis continues for the people of God:

- **Third Sunday:** In years A and B, the Emmaus story unfolds (Lk. 24): in his word and in the breaking of bread, we still recognize the presence of the risen Lord among us. Jesus’ command to Peter, “Feed my lambs and my sheep” (year C — Jn. 21), is still carried out in this community: the homily is one of the ways in which Christ nourishes his people.

- **Fourth Sunday:** All three years emphasize that Jesus is the good shepherd (Jn. 10). Jesus continues to guide his people and protect them through the readings and through the homily. The vocation theme is only one aspect of the good shepherd gospels.

- **Fifth Sunday:** Passages from Jesus’ discourse at the last supper form the gospels for this Sunday and next. In year A, Jesus is our way, truth, and life (Jn. 14); in year B, he speaks to us of our close union with him (vine and branches — Jn. 15). The new commandment of love (Jn. 13) is the gospel in year C. Jesus is continuing to guide his people through the homily each week.

- **Sixth Sunday:** Jesus continues to teach his beloved brothers and sisters: in year A, he promises to send us his Spirit (Jn. 14). He commands us to love one another (year B — Jn. 15), and gives us his love and peace (year C — Jn. 14).

**Ascension of the Lord:** Some countries celebrate this feast on Thursday; where it is no longer a holy day of obligation, it is transferred to the following Sunday. This is the case in Canada, where the Ascension replaces the seventh Sunday in the Easter season (General Norms for the Liturgical Year, no. 7: Canadian sacramental, page 68).

- **Ascension:** Each of the three years gives the conclusion of one of the synoptic gospels. Jesus sends the apostles to preach the gospel to the world, and he returns to the right hand of the Father, where he remains in unceasing intercession for us.

On the days between the Ascension and Pentecost, we pray that the Spirit may come upon the Church and renew it in its holiness and its mission.

- **Seventh Sunday:** The gospel passage is chosen each year from Christ’s high priestly prayer (Jn. 17).

**Pentecost:**

- **Vigil:** The vigil Mass speaks of the living water (Jn. 7), echoing the promise of the third Sunday in Lent, year A.

- **Pentecost Sunday:** The concluding day of the Easter season centers on the gift of peace and the giving of the Holy Spirit to the apostles (Jn. 20).

The Easter season ends with evening prayer on Pentecost Sunday. Then ordinary time resumes. The Easter candle is placed in the baptistry, and is used in celebrating baptism and funerals during the year.

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Helpful reading: The liturgical texts for the Easter season are our primary resource: see lectionary, nos. 44-64 and 261-304; sacramentary, pages 276-335 and 466-481 (prefaces 21-28). Many of these texts are contained in Sunday Mass Book, pages 477-573 and 610-615.

The appropriate sections of the books mentioned on page 186 are also useful.


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LITURGICAL LEAFLETS

This series of leaflets has been prepared by the National Liturgical Office to promote liturgical education in Catholic parishes. Written in plain language, they may be attached to the parish bulletin, distributed at the end of Mass, or mailed out to families. They may also serve as a basis for discussion at meetings.

Four titles are now available:

- **Sunday is the Lord’s day**: Exploring the meaning of Sunday in our life as Christians;
- **The eucharistic prayer**: Its meaning and purpose, and how we take part in it;
- **Worship without words**: Expressing our worship through gesture, posture, and signs that speak for themselves;
- **Living Lent**: An introduction to the season, with practical suggestions for prayer and penance.

Except for the one on Lent, these are not tied to any date or season, and may be distributed at any time during the year.

These leaflets are 8½ by 11 inches, folded in three. They are available in packages of 100 of any one title, at $3.00 a hundred, plus postage. They may be ordered from Publications Service, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1.

The National Liturgical Office expects to prepare four leaflets each year as part of its continuing service to the people of God.
MEANING OF ADVENT

Outline of the Christmas cycle: This cycle includes a period of preparation (Advent), celebration (Christmas octave), and of continuation of the celebration (Epiphany and Baptism of the Lord). The central purpose of this period of about seven weeks is to celebrate the incarnation: God loved us so much that he sent his Son to become one of us and to save us by his dying and rising (see Jn. 3: 16-17).

Spirit of Advent

Advent is a season of expectation, hope, and joy:

- **Expectation:** We are looking forward to the coming of the Lord in glory at the end of time. He will come to complete the work of redemption by restoring the kingdom to the Father. Our present work with Jesus and his Church is helping to bring the kingdom under his rule. We are building the kingdom with our Lord, and helping this world to be his kingdom of justice, love, and peace.

  We also look forward in the second half of the season to the celebrations of the incarnation and birth of Christ our Lord.

- **Hope:** Knowing that we work with Christ, and knowing that he has given us his Spirit to guide and strengthen us, we are filled with hope. No matter how impossible the task before us may seem, God is with us and is helping us. We know his presence through our faith in his word, and we are confident in his power and trusting in his promises.

- **Joy** is the gift of the Spirit to those who love God. The Spirit who was poured into our hearts (Rom. 5: 5) continues to guide us (Rom. 8) and to give us his gifts, including that of joy (see Gal. 5: 22-23).

  Not a penitential season: Advent therefore is not a penitential season. At times in the Church's history, it had been considered in this light, but today it is not a time of penance. It is a time for singing *Alleluia*, as in ordinary time. While we do not sing *Glory to God in the highest* during Advent, this is merely an abstention so that we may sing it with greater joy at the Christmas Masses.

  These and other elements of Advent may be celebrated in the bible services which the Vatican Council suggests for weekdays (see Liturgy constitution, no. 35: 4).

  Two stages in Advent: This season has two distinct but related stages:

  - **Waiting for the second coming:** This season continues the spirit of the final weeks of ordinary time by reflecting on the end of time and the coming of the Lord's kingdom in final glory. This spirit is expressed in the gospel readings of the first two Sundays, and in every Mass in the prayer after the *Our Father*. This first part of Advent lasts until December 16.

  - **Preparing for Christmas:** On December 17 our attention turns to our preparation for Christmas as the celebration of the incarnation. Like the paschal mystery, the incarnation looks at several events as one mystery of God's love: by the
power of the Holy Spirit, the Son of God becomes one of us in the womb of Mary; Jesus is born at Bethlehem; and the other mysteries of the childhood of Christ are remembered.

During the final days before Christmas (Dec. 17-24), the daily lectionary provides Old Testament readings which give the main prophecies of the coming of the Messiah. On each of these days, the gospel text is chosen to relate to the first reading. In the liturgy of the hours, the antiphon to the gospel canticle at evening prayer is one of the “O antiphons” (see Bulletin 55, pages 200-204).

Call to conversion: Christian spirituality is always related to our baptism. Our life as followers of the cross is a continuing process of conversion, as we strive daily to die to sin and live for God. Each Sunday is a time for renewal of the covenant (Liturgy constitution, no. 10). This process is accentuated in Advent, as we hear the cry of John the Baptist: “Make straight the way of the Lord” (see Mk. 1: 3). As individuals and communities, we are being called to believe the gospel and repent. The Advent penance celebration1 is an excellent opportunity for the community to examine its collective conscience on how it is working to build up the kingdom; as well, individuals must look into their lives, and see whether prayer and action and love and mercy are as good as the Lord Jesus wants them to be.

Advent Customs

These are primarily practices for families and classrooms:

Wreath: The wreath is lighted each Sunday to mark the steps in our Advent journey. A blessing may be given at the beginning of Advent (see Bulletin 55, page 210), and a prayer said as the candles are lighted each week.

Problems may arise when priests or liturgy committees try to incorporate the Advent wreath into the Sunday liturgy. It is acceptable to carry the lighted wreath in the entrance procession, and place it without words in a suitable location; on the first Sunday in Advent, the wreath may be blessed and lighted after the homily.

It is not good liturgy to expand the already overloaded introductory rites by lighting the candle before the opening prayer. As Pope Paul reminds us: “It sometimes happens that novenas or similar practices of piety are inserted into the very celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice. This creates the danger that the Lord’s memorial rite, instead of being the culmination of the meeting of the Christian community, becomes the occasion, as it were, for devotional practices. For those who act in this way, we wish to recall the rule laid down by the Council prescribing that exercises of piety should be harmonized with the liturgy, not merged into it.”2

Jesse tree: The gospels give two stylized genealogies of Christ in Mt. 1: 1-16 (descended from Abraham) and in Lk. 3: 23-38 (descended from Adam). The Jesse tree is named after the father of David, in whose line Christ was born.

This tree bears symbols of various ancestors of Christ, and may be made at home or school. A brief story of the person symbolized will help the family to understand the practice and its scriptural background. Other symbols may be included: the

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1 Penance celebrations for Advent are included in Bulletins 36, 41, 46, 51, 55, 61, 66, and 71.

main Old Testament prophets who prophesied about Christ, the O antiphons (Bulletin 55, pages 200-204), Mary and Joseph, current symbols of hope.3

**Other practices** have been described in past issues of the Bulletin:

- **Advent calendar:** See Bulletin 41, pages 309-311.
- **Use of lights:** See no. 41, page 314; no. 55, page 213.
- **Blessing of Christmas tree:** See no. 55, pages 213-214.
- **Family crib:** See no. 36, pages 262-264; no. 41, pages 312-313. Blessing: no. 55, pages 211-212.

**Problem:** The anticipation of Christmas throughout much of Advent becomes a problem: Christmas songs and themes are echoed so often that we are almost tired of them when Christmas actually arrives. Advent is a time of preparing for Christmas, not of anticipating its particular joys.

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**Helpful reading:** The liturgical texts of Advent are our first resource: see lectionary, nos. 1-12 and 176-202; sacramentary, pages 84-117, and seasonal prefaces (nos. 1-2), pages 426-429. Many of these texts are contained in *Sunday Mass Book*, pages 33-87 and 597-598.

*General Norms for the Liturgical Year,* nos. 39-42; see Canadian edition of the sacramentary, page 71.

As well as the Advent sections of the books mentioned on page 186, the following are useful.


*Advent Evening Prayer* (FDLC, 1307 S. Wabash, Suite 22, Chicago, IL 60605).

*Family Advent Customs,* by Helen McLoughlin (The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN 56321).


*National Bulletin on Liturgy:* Three issues concentrate on the Advent and Christmas seasons: Bulletins 36, 41, and 55. Other useful references include:

- Preaching during Advent: no. 60, page 241.
- Advent in the family: no. 63, page 103; no. 67, page 23.
- Other references are given in Bulletin 61, pages 305-306.

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3 Detailed suggestions are given in the *Born of the Spirit* English Canadian catechetical series: see grade five catechist's manual, *We Walk with the Lord* (1977, CCCB Publications, Ottawa): pages 82-88.
CHRISTMAS SEASON

The heart of this season is the Christmas octave, lasting from Christmas eve to New Year's day. The celebration continues until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

Christmas Octave

What we are celebrating: The Church celebrates the incarnation of God's Son as one of us. We praise the Father who loves us so much that he sent his Son to be one of us (see Jn. 3:16). We praise God whose eternal Son is now our brother. The birth of Christ is only one aspect of this celebration, and it is seen as a remembrance or memorial, rather than a participation. The Christmas prefaces (nos. 3-5) speak of the eternal Word who brings new light into the world, and who restores the gift of eternal life to us.

Christmas is not about “Baby Jesus.” The gospel story of his birth at Bethlehem is recounted, but our devotion is given to the risen Lord, who was born for us, who suffered and died for us, who was raised for us, who ascended into heaven and now intercedes for us. We offer our honor and praise to the Lord of life, not to a baby. (See Bulletin 62, pages 18-23.)

Christmas octave: During this week we celebrate because the Son of God has become one of us, and was born to be our savior.

○ Christmas eve: The evening Mass texts speak of the coming of Jesus, who is to save us from our sins. He is in the line of David, and his coming brings us joy. We praise God for his great love for us.

○ Christmas day: The midnight Mass emphasizes that Christ is the Son of God and light of the world. He has come to save the whole human race by setting us free from wickedness. The gospel proclaims that the newborn child is Christ the Lord.

The Mass at dawn refers to our savior as light. He cleanses us in baptism and renews us by pouring his Spirit into our hearts. The visit of the shepherds is described in the gospel.

The Mass during the day gives the meaning of Christmas in its fullest sense. The gospel (Jn. 1:1-5, 9-14) and the second reading present the Lord's incarnation and coming among us as our savior; the failure of many to receive him with faith is also mentioned.

Days in the octave: The feasts of Stephen, John the apostle, and the holy innocents follow Christmas. The feast of the Holy Family is celebrated on the Sunday during the octave, or on Dec. 30 when Christmas is a Sunday.

Jan. 1: This day has the problem of trying to cope with three celebrations:

○ Feast of Mary: In the 1969 reform of the calendar, this day was assigned as the solemnity of Mary, the mother of God. This restored a celebration instituted soon after the Council of Ephesus (431) declared that Mary is the mother of God. The Greek title, Theotokos or God-bearer, was in use as early as the time of Nicaea.

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1 St. Augustine notes that Easter is a sacrament (we take part in the Lord's dying and rising), while Christmas is a memorial (we recall his incarnation and birth). See Bulletin 47, page 22.
• New Year’s day: Since 153 B.C., the Roman civil year began on Jan. 1, and this was continued when Julius Caesar reformed the calendar in 46 B.C. Although other calendars have had other days for the beginning of the year, Jan. 1 has been in possession since Gregory XIII reformed the calendar in 1582.

• Day of prayer for peace: On Dec. 8, 1967, Paul VI established Jan. 1 as the world day of peace, asking all to pray on that day for world peace.

To add to the confusion, it is a day of obligation in Canada. In popular piety, however, the day seems to have little impact; among French-speaking Canadians, it is a day when parents bless their children. (See Bulletin 67, page 6, for further ideas on this day.)

Continuation of the Season

Epiphany: This feast comes from the East, and may date back to the second century. Like the later Western feast of Christmas, it celebrates the incarnation and work of the Son of God among us. In the East, it is not limited to the wise men, but involves the incarnation, birth, manifestation, and baptism of the Lord. During the fourth century, the West adopted this feast and the East accepted Christmas.

On the Epiphany we celebrate the revelation that God makes to the world in Jesus Christ. He is the image of the God whom we cannot see. He is the light of the world (see Jn. 1: 4-5, 14), and leads us back to the Father.

Baptism of the Lord: At the beginning of his public life Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan: the Father proclaimed that Jesus was the beloved Son; the Spirit was poured upon him to send him on his mission: to free us from sin and to heal the world. He who is sinless becomes sin for us, so that we might become goodness (2 Cor. 5: 21). The Church sees our Lord’s baptism as a model of our own, particularly of adults. In the blessing of baptismal water at the Easter vigil, his baptism is referred to as one of the signs of God’s power at work among us.

The feast of the Baptism of the Lord completes the work of the Christmas season. We have recalled God’s marvellous deeds in the incarnation and birth of the savior. We have answered his call to conversion, and are ready to continue working with him for the glory of God and the salvation of his people.

With this Sunday, we end the Christmas season, and begin ordinary time.

Helpful reading: The liturgical texts of the Christmas season are our first resource: see lectionary, nos. 13-21, 203-219, and 696-700; sacramentary, pages 118-153 and seasonal prefaces (nos. 3-7), pages 430-439. Many of these texts are contained in Sunday Mass Book, pages 89-139 and 598-601.

As well as the Christmas section of the books mentioned on page 186, the following are useful references:


National Bulletin on Liturgy: Three issues concentrate on this season: see Bulletins 36, 41, and 55. Other references:

- Family activities: see Bulletin 63, page 103-106.
- Preaching: no. 60, pages 242-243.
- Preparing liturgical celebrations: no. 67, pages 24-25.
- Devotion to Jesus Christ: no. 62, pages 16-30.
- Other articles and references are listed in Bulletin 61, pages 306-307.

A LITANY FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

Blessed are you, Lord God:
Blessed are you for ever.
Holy is your name:
Blessed are you for ever.

You have sent your Son to be one of us:
Blessed are you for ever.
You love your people with deepest love:
Blessed are you for ever.

You have sent your Son to save us from sin:
Blessed are you for ever.
Great is your mercy for your people:
Blessed are you for ever.

You fill your children with joy:
Blessed are you for ever.
You call us to praise your name:
Blessed are you for ever.

Look with love on your holy Church:
Blessed are you for ever.
Send the Spirit of your Son into our hearts:
Blessed are you for ever.

Let us bring glory and praise to your name:
Blessed are you for ever.
Through Jesus Christ your Son:
Blessed are you for ever.
And in the love of your Holy Spirit:
Blessed are you for ever. Amen!
ORDINARY TIME

CELEBRATING IN ORDINARY TIME

Ordinary time is perhaps the least understood of the seasons of the liturgical year. In this article we may begin to see its value in the prayer life of the people of God.

Meaning and purpose: Ordinary time is the time outside the “strong seasons” which surround Easter and Christmas. It comes in two periods: between the Baptism of the Lord and Ash Wednesday, and between Pentecost and the beginning of Advent. During this period, the Sunday vestments are green.

• Why do we need ordinary time? We cannot live our life in a perpetual state of high moments. These should be the exception rather than the rule. Ordinary time provides us with a more quiet time to reflect on the meaning of God’s gift to us in Christ, on our attitudes toward creation (see Bulletin 50, pages 262-264), on our prayer life, and on our service to others — in other words, on our life as Church.

One season in two periods: The present Roman lectionary treats the Sundays in ordinary time as one group, with semi-continuous gospel readings. In actual practice, however, anywhere from four to nine of these Sundays are celebrated before Lent, and most of the rest after Pentecost. Some are lost completely because of feasts replacing Sundays, and others because of the varying lengths of time between Pentecost and Advent.

• Other Churches: Anglicans have observed the Sundays after Epiphany (as we did before 1969) and the Sundays after Trinity since the first Book of Common Prayer in 1549. The recent (1977) Proposed Book of Common Prayer in the U.S. and the new Lutheran Book of Worship (1978) for Canada and the U.S. provide for Sundays after Epiphany and after Pentecost. More and more major Churches in Canada and the United States are adopting a form of three-year lectionary, based on the 1969 Roman Lectionary for Mass.

We should rejoice as the Spirit is adding yet another visible sign of the baptismal bond that already links all who believe in Christ.

Following the Gospels

Heart of the Christian teaching: The Second Vatican Council called for a richer fare from God’s word for his people, particularly in the Sunday celebrations of the eucharist. The readings were increased from two to three, and were rearranged in a three-year cycle. In this way, the most important readings proclaim the teachings of the Christian faith to the people of God. (See Liturgy constitution, nos. 51; 35: 1.)

A vast but simple plan: The present Roman lectionary for Sundays is carefully arranged. Each of the cycles in the three years follows the internal plan of one of the synoptic gospels. Thus Christ and his teaching are proclaimed to us from the standpoint of one evangelist, who is allowed to speak for himself.
○ *Year of Matthew:* In year A we follow Matthew’s presentation of Christ as the great teacher; our Lord’s words are gathered in five collections or sermons. The essential parts of the first gospel are presented in the Sunday readings during ordinary time. Jesus is Emmanuel, “God-with-us.” Our risen Lord remains with us, his Church, until the end of time.

Matthew is the gospel of the Church and the sacraments. Christ is actively present through the sacraments (“by his power,” as the Liturgy constitution says in no. 7). The year of Matthew is concerned with the mystery of the Church and its sacramental life. (See Bulletin 56, page 294.)

○ *Year of Mark:* In year B, we are involved in Mark’s teaching on the person of Christ: he is the Son of God and the Son of Man, truly divine and truly human. Mark faces us with the mystery of Christ, and demands our response in believing, in following Christ, and in sharing our faith with others. (See Bulletin 56, page 294.)

○ *Year of Luke:* In year C, St. Luke brings us to the practical meaning of following Christ: he teaches us the social gospel toward the poor and needy and outcast people. God has forgiven us: we are reconciled to him in Christ. The cost of being disciples of Jesus is clearly pictured, and the Holy Spirit is with us as we try to live the gospel now. (See Bulletin 56, pages 294-295; no. 60, pages 221-233.)

○ *What about John?* Each year the Church reflects on John’s gospel during the Christmas and Easter cycles; during the year of Mark, the 17th to 21st Sundays in ordinary time are centered on the sixth chapter of John. John’s gospel teaches us that Christ is the source of our life (of grace): Jesus brings us into the life of the Trinity: see Jn. 1: 4; 14: 6 and 23. (See Bulletin 56, page 295.)

**Summary:** Father John Fitzsimmons summarizes the Sunday gospels in this table (see Bulletin 56, page 295):

- **Year A — the year of Matthew:**
  - The incarnation (Advent-Christmas)
  - The Church and the sacraments (Matthew)
  - The life of grace (John)

- **Year B — the year of Mark:**
  - The incarnation (Advent-Christmas)
  - The mystery of Christ and faith (Mark)
  - The life of grace (John)

- **Year C — the year of Luke:**
  - The incarnation (Advent-Christmas)
  - The Christian life; the social gospel (Luke)
  - The life of grace (John).

**Understanding each Sunday’s texts:** It is important for us to understand the way that the readings are interrelated on any particular Sunday in ordinary time:

○ *Gospel:* The gospel text is part of the evangelist’s overall plan. It is the primary reading, and gives the key to the Sunday’s texts.

○ *First reading:* The first reading is chosen in relationship to the gospel. It reflects on or contrasts with the gospel, and is to be interpreted in the light of the gospel passage.
• **Responsorial psalm**: The psalm is related directly to the first reading, and therefore indirectly to the gospel passage. The psalm and its refrain are a meditation on the first reading, and provide further insights into its meaning.

• **Second reading**: This text is an independent reading, and is not directly related to the Sunday's gospel text. Instead, the second reading provides a witness of how the early Church tried to follow the example and teaching of the Lord Jesus. This gives us an incentive to do the same in our day.

**Preparation**: In preparing for the Sunday celebration, readers and preachers need to be aware of the arrangement of the day's scriptures, in order to be more in harmony with the spirit of the Church's liturgy (see *Preparation is essential*, in Bulletin 50, pages 243-249).

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**Helpful reading**: The liturgical texts of ordinary time are our first resources: see lectionary, nos. 65-164, 165-173, and 305-509; sacramentary, pages 336-402, 404-411, and prefaces (nos. 29-42), pages 482-509. Many of these texts are contained in *Sunday Mass Book*, pages 717-1063 and 615-624.

As well as the sections on ordinary time in the books listed on page 186, the following are useful, particularly for the gospel passages proclaimed during this season.

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Making the Most of the Weekday Readings, edited by Martin McNamara, MSC (1977, Dominican Publications, Dublin 1, Ireland).


The Miracles of Jesus Then and Now, by Alfons Weiser (1972, Franciscan Herald Press, 1434 West 31st St., Chicago IL 60609).


National Bulletin on Liturgy:
- See Bulletin 50, Reading God's Word: The Lectionary.
- Sunday lectionary in ordinary time: The Church's catechism, in Bulletin 56, pages 293-295; see also no. 50, pages 224-230.
- Preaching: Systematic preaching from the lectionary, no. 60, pages 221-233; preaching in ordinary time, no. 60, pages 243-244.
- Planning: Planning during ordinary time, in no. 67, pages 30-32.
- Family activities: see no. 63, page 108.
- Other references are given in Bulletin 61, pages 307 and 311.

BULLETINS FOR THIS YEAR

It is still not too late to subscribe to the 1979 issues of the National Bulletin on Liturgy. Bulletins 67-71 look at these practical topics in a pastoral way:
- No. 67: Planning Our Year of Worship
- No. 68: Family Prayer
- No. 69: Eucharistic Devotions
- No. 70: Liturgical Year and Spirituality
- No. 71: Sunday Eucharist I

Subscriptions for 1979, for nos. 67-71, are $6.00 in Canada, and $8.00 in other countries; airmail to other countries, $4.00 extra. Send your cheque or money order today to Publications Service, 90 Parent Ave., Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1 Canada.
OTHER CELEBRATIONS

The liturgy is not limited to the Sundays and the seasons. As well as being expressed in the eucharist, our worship is given in daily prayer, in the sacraments, and in other rites.

MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER

The liturgy of the hours forms a setting of praise and prayer for the daily eucharist. From the beginning to the end of the day, members of the Church are continuing to pray with Christ, praying always (Lk. 18: 1) and constantly (Lk. 21: 36); see also Eph. 6: 18; Col. 4: 2; and 1 Thess. 5: 17-18.

Since the reforms of Vatican II, the Roman liturgy of the hours calls us to pray at these times: morning prayer (beginning of the day); during the day, at one or more of these hours: midmorning, midday, and midafternoon; evening prayer (as daylight is failing); night prayer (before we go to bed); the office of readings may be prayed at any time during the day, or even during the preceding evening.

Key hours of prayer: Morning and evening prayer — lauds and vespers, or the traditional form of the Church's prayer at the beginning and end of the day — form a substantial part of our public prayer. They are the key or hinge hours of Christian prayer (see Liturgy constitution, no. 89a).

- Morning prayer: At the beginning of the day, we turn to God, and give our day to him. We dedicate our hearts — our thoughts and our feelings, our work and our prayer — to our Father. Morning prayer is the first important act in our day's work. As the new day begins, we recall the rising of the Lord Jesus, and give our praise and thanks to our Father. The invocations at morning prayer helps us to consecrate the new day to God.

- Evening prayer: The day is coming to an end; its light is beginning to fade. We turn to God our Father, and thank him for all that he has done for us today and for all that we have done well with the help of his grace.

As we raise our hands and let our prayers rise like incense before our Father (see Ps. 141: 2), we recall that he — in his great love for us — sent his Son to save us by his dying and rising. We remember our Lord's last supper with the apostles, and his evening sacrifice on the cross.

We place our trust and hope in Jesus Christ — sun of justice and light of the world — and ask him to bring us into the everlasting light and joy of the heavenly liturgy. With our Lord and all the Church of God, we offer unending praise to the Father. (See GILH, no. 39.)

* * *

Helpful reading: See Bulletin 58, Day by Day We Give Him Praise; Bulletin 63, pages 87-89 and 69; no. 66, pages 262-265. Other references are given in Bulletin 61, pages 314-315.
MARY AND THE SAINTS

All are called to be holy: From all eternity, before he created the universe, God chose us in Christ to be his beloved people, holy and blameless in his sight (see Eph. 1: 3-14). The whole Church is called to be holy, and individuals are to follow Christ our Lord in love, obedience, and service.

What is holiness? God is all-holy. The acclamation Holy, holy, holy Lord at the end of the preface in each Mass is sung as a song praising God who is so holy. It is based on Is. 6: 3 and Mt. 21: 9 (see also Ps. 118: 26).

Holiness is God's work in us, not something we achieve (see Rom. 4: 1-8). Persons are holy when, with the grace of the Holy Spirit (see Rom. 8: 1-39), they let Jesus guide all their actions. Holiness is not the mere accomplishment of certain actions — Jesus condemned that (Mt. 23: 1-39) — but rather it involves our cooperation with God's action within us. A person who is truly holy is not dried up or sour, but rather is filled with the results or fruits of the Spirit's action: see Gal. 5: 22-26.

Perfect model of holiness: The Lord Jesus is the perfect model of holiness. He is the beloved Son, the image of the Father, and he is anointed by the Spirit in his incarnation and sent forth in his baptism. We are to love God and other people as Jesus has shown us: total, perfect, unselfish love, even to the point of dying on a cross in obedience to the Father's will.

Other models of holiness: In his love for us as his children, our holy Father in heaven has raised up other models or examples of holiness. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is first after our Lord himself: her holiness is due to God's special graces. The apostles, martyrs, and other saints have also been called to holiness so that we might learn from their example and their teaching, and benefit from their prayers.

“Blessed is the One Who Believes!”

Honor and respect for Mary date back to apostolic times, and are reflected in the gospels.

Mary in the scriptures: Mary is described in the gospels as the mother of Jesus and as a model for all who follow him:

○ Chosen and blessed: An angel announces that Mary has been chosen to be the mother of the savior, whose name will be Jesus. She accepts God's will, and the Son of God becomes a man. (Read Lk. 1: 26-38.)

○ Mother of my Lord: Mary visits Elizabeth, who praises her for her faith. Mary proclaims her canticle of praise: God has made her blessed for all ages. (Read Lk. 1: 39-56.)

○ Mother of the savior: Jesus is born as the savior of the world. Mary receives the shepherds and the wise men, and ponders all these things in her heart. (Read Lk. 2: 1-20; Mt. 1: 18 — 2: 12.)

○ Presentation: In obedience to the law, Mary and Joseph present the child in the temple. Simeon prophesies that Jesus will save the nations, and that Mary's heart
will be pierced by a sword, so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. The family returns to Nazareth, where Jesus grows in wisdom, age, and grace. (Read Lk. 2: 22-40.)

- **Jesus in the temple:** After Jesus becomes a son of the law at 12, he remains in the temple for several days. When Mary and Joseph find him, they are amazed at this first hint of his mission for his Father. Jesus returns to Nazareth with them, and is obedient to them, while Mary keeps all these events and words in her heart. (Read Lk. 2: 41-52.)

- **Cana:** At Mary's request, Jesus works the first of his signs, changing water into wine. (Read Jn. 2: 1-11.)

- **Obeying God's will:** Jesus tells us that all who obey the will of his Father are close to him. (Read Mt. 12: 46-50; Mk. 3: 31-35; Lk. 8: 19-21.) When someone praises his mother, he adds that all who hear God's word and keep it are also blessed. (Read Lk. 11: 27-28.)

- **Calvary:** Mary stands near Jesus' cross as he is dying. Our Lord entrusts his mother to the beloved disciple. (Read Jn. 19: 25-27.)

- **Waiting for Pentecost:** In the days before Pentecost, Mary is with the apostles and disciples as they pray constantly for the coming of the Holy Spirit. (Read Acts 1: 1-14.)

**Mary in Christian tradition:** After the completion of the New Testament, the Christian community in the second century speaks often of Mary with honor:

- **Ignatius of Antioch** (martyred about 110) emphasizes that Jesus is the Son of God, and is born from a virgin: we are to be deaf to anyone who denies that Jesus was truly born of Mary, since his birth from Mary shows that he is truly human.

- **Justin** (martyred about 165) speaks of Jesus as born of the virgin. Mary is the new Eve: Mary's belief and obedience are the opposite of Eve's behavior.

- **Irenaeus,** in the late second century, teaches that Mary is the new Eve, just as Christ is the new Adam (see Rom. 5: 15-19). Mary is described as the mother of renewed humanity.

In the late second century, Mary is seen as a symbol of the Church. By the early 200s, Hippolytus refers to Mary as the *holy virgin*. In 391, a synod at Milan refers to her as *always a virgin*.

**Early ecumenical Councils** witness to the faith of the Church in their decrees and creeds: Christ is *born of the virgin Mary* (Constantinople I, 381); the virgin Mary is the *mother of God* (Ephesus, 431; Chalcedon, 451).

**Liturgical celebrations:** After the Council of Ephesus declared that Mary is to be honored as the mother of God, the Church at Rome established the feast of Mary as the mother of God on Jan. 1. The Roman canon (our eucharistic prayer I), which dates to the end of the fourth century, refers to Mary as the *ever-virgin mother of Jesus*, our Lord and our God.

Around 690, Pope Sergius I, who was a Syrian, led Rome to celebrate four Eastern feasts of Mary on Feb. 2, March 25, Aug. 15, and Sept. 15.

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A long history: Devotion to Mary developed in the East, but was also strong in the Western Church (see Bulletin 62, pages 47-51). During the middle ages, many Gothic cathedrals were dedicated to Mary for the greater glory of God. Excesses and distortions in devotion plagued the Church, however, and were rejected by the Reformation in the first half of the sixteenth century. A moderate devotion to Mary has remained in the Lutheran and Anglican Churches to this day.¹

Vatican II: The Second Vatican Council took several steps forward with regard to sound devotion to Mary:

- **Seen as part of the Church:** In 1963, the bishops at the Council voted to speak of Mary in the Constitution on the Church instead of preparing a separate document. In this way, they show us Mary in the context of the Church, and help us to see her special relationship with the Church on earth and in heaven.

- **A clear summary of the Church's teaching about Mary:** The eighth and final chapter of the Constitution on the Church (nos. 52-69) speaks of the role of Mary in the mystery of Christ and the Church. We all need to become more familiar with the scriptural and liturgical bases of this chapter.

A model for the Church: The Second Vatican Council describes Mary and her role from the scriptures and Catholic tradition. Mary is a model for the Church and for individual Christians. What God has done in Mary he also does in us:

- **Chosen:** God chose Mary to be the mother of his Son. He chooses each of us to carry out a unique vocation on earth, within his beloved Church.

- **Gifted with faith:** The Father endowed Mary with special gifts of grace from the moment of her conception. He gives each of us grace and faith at the time of our baptism, and continues to give us gifts to work for building up his Church.

- **Called to obedience:** Mary was invited to obey God's will for her in her daily life. Jesus Christ also came to do the Father's will. We too — as Church and as individuals — are called to obey the will of the Father each day.

- **Rewarded in heaven:** At the end of her life on earth, Mary was raised, body and soul, to share in the eternal life of her Son. At the end of time, with the resurrection of the faithful, the entire Church in heaven will be together with Christ and Mary, singing the unending praises of the Father.

Paul VI: On February 2, 1974, Pope Paul issued a strong letter on sound devotion to Mary.² His clear analysis and ecumenical outlook make this document a necessary study if we are to understand Mary's place among Christians today. His study of the necessary elements of true devotion is most helpful.

Today: The Roman Catholic Church around the world celebrates feasts of the mother of Jesus on these days: Jan. 1, Feb. 11, May 31; Saturday after the second Sunday after Pentecost, July 16, Aug. 5, Aug. 15, Aug. 22, Sept. 8, Sept. 15, Oct. 7, Nov. 21, and Dec. 8.


Saturdays in ordinary time may be celebrated as Our Lady's Saturday when no other feasts occur.

**Devotion to Mary**: Sound devotion to Mary involves these qualities:

- **Related to the Trinity**: Devotion to the saints must first of all be honor and praise to the Holy Trinity, who raised up these saints in our midst.

- **Related to Christ**: The Lord Jesus is our mediator, our only way to the Father. Devotion to Mary must lead us to greater love for God and to a closer following of Jesus' way.

- **Related to the Church**: Mary is the pre-eminent member of the communion of saints. Her concern for her Son is reflected in the Church's maternal love for all people. Devotion to Mary is always in harmony with the mission of the Church: to worship God and to save the world.

Pope Paul added that our devotion must always be:

- **Biblical**: It is based on the scriptural texts concerning Mary, and is centered on our Lord's work as our savior.

- **Liturgical**: It reflects the balanced approach of the liturgy. It is in harmony with the liturgy, and leads us to greater worship.

- **Ecumenical**: It takes into consideration the Church's desire for unity among all Christians.

Our devotion is not based on sentimentality or legends, but on Mary's faith and obedience to God in her daily living.

"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." We are Christ's friends only if we do what he commands us (Jn. 15: 14).

**Other Saints**

**Liturgical texts**: One way of studying the Church's teaching on devotion to the saints is to look at the official prayer texts. These enshrine and proclaim the Church's faith.

- **Eucharistic prayers**: In the preface of each Mass, we join our worship and prayers with those of all the angels and saints. United with the Church around the world, we honor Mary and the other saints; we ask that their prayers and merits will help us to receive God's protection; we ask that we will share in their heavenly community (I). We pray that we will be able to share eternal life with Mary and the saints, who have obeyed God's will; with them we give praise and glory to the Father through Jesus (II).

  We ask the Father to let us share with Mary and the saints in the inheritance of those who are holy; we rely on their constant prayer for us (III). We ask our merciful Father to let us enter the heavenly kingdom with Mary and the saints, so that we may sing his glory with every creature (IV).

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\(^3\) *Marialis Cultus*, nos. 2-15. See also "Soberness and sense," in Bulletin 62, page 46.

\(^4\) *Marialis Cultus*, no. 39.
o Masses on saints' days: On examining the opening prayers or collects for January feasts, we find the following ideas in the liturgical texts:

The example and teaching of the saints inspire the Church (Jan. 2); their example and prayers help us to show our love for God by loving others (Jan. 4) and by denying ourselves (Jan. 17). We ask that the saint's prayers will free us from the bondage of sin, and help us to love and serve God in freedom (Jan. 7); the saint's prayers give us courage as we joyfully follow the way of love (Jan. 12, in Canada). May the saint's prayers help us to share in his faith as we give our loving service to the Father (Jan. 20). We ask for the spirit of courage of a martyr so that we may learn to love God's law and give him obedience (Jan. 20). We ask to be loyal to the faith professed by the saint (Jan. 21), filled with the Holy Spirit, and made strong in our love for God (Jan. 22).

May we be led by the saint's example to show our love for God as we serve others (Jan. 24), and to imitate the saint by giving witness to the truth (Jan. 25). We ask that the prayers of the saints will help us to live in a holy way and bring us to our heavenly home (Jan. 26). We pray that the saint's love and wisdom will help us to be faithful to the teaching of God in our daily living (Jan. 27). May the teaching of the saint contribute to our wisdom, and his faith lead us to imitation and deeper holiness (Jan. 28). On the final day of the month, we ask that God will fill us with a love like that shown by the saint, so that we may devote ourselves totally to the service of God and the salvation of the world (Jan. 31).

Example, teaching, intercession: These are the broad benefits which our devotion to the saints gives us. The sentimentality of popular piety is avoided, and petty requests are not made: we ask boldly for great gifts. Popular devotions have to be in harmony with the spirit of the liturgy (Constitution on the liturgy, no. 13), and share its soberness and sense (see Bulletin 62, page 46).

* * *

The Church honors Mary and the saints because Christ has first honored them. He has chosen them, filled them with his Spirit of grace, and called them to serve him in a particular way. Their lives are models for us in their faith, their obedience, their love, their total self-giving to Christ and his people. We do not imitate them in the particular events of their lives (in some centuries, to remain unwashed was considered to be a virtue), but in their devotion to God and to his will for them.

The saints are signs of Christ's victory over sin (Liturgy constitution, no. 103). As his paschal mystery took possession of their lives, so it can and will in ours. As they have been given the reward of eternal joy for their faithfulness, so too will we, if we remain faithful to the end, with the grace of the Lord Jesus, who died and rose to save us all.

May we learn to love as they loved, and to practise what they taught.5

* * *

5 Inscriptio in St. Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco.
Helpful reading:


Marie, mere du Seigneur: Figure de l'Église, by Max Thurian (1968, Les Presses de Taizé, Taizé).

"Le culte mariale," three articles in La Maison-Dieu 121, 1975, pages 98-121.

Bible Devotions in Honor of Mary, the Mother of God, by Lawrence Dannemiller, SS (1962, Paulist, New York).


National Bulletin on Liturgy:

• Those who follow Christ, in Bulletin 62, pages 52-54.
• Articles in past issues are listed in Bulletin 61, pages 347-348.

MARY: OUR MODEL IN PRAYER

All praise and glory are yours, almighty Father:
you have given us your Son to save us from sin.
We praise you for choosing Mary to be his mother,
for teaching her to believe your message,
for helping her to accept your holy will.

Strengthen us by your Spirit to be like Mary:
to ponder your word in our hearts,
to obey your will,
to love your Son,
to sing your praises each day.

Father,
we praise you through Jesus Christ your Son
in the love of your Spirit,
for ever and ever. Amen!

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Our basic Christian spirituality is based on our baptism. Our initiation into the dying and rising of the Lord Jesus is the beginning of our life as his followers. His paschal mystery is the center of the Church’s celebration (Liturgy constitution, no. 6), and the center of our spiritual life. See Baptism: basis of our spirituality, in Bulletin 62, pages 4-8.

Liturgy: The liturgy is the worship of the whole Christ, head and members, offered to the Father. It is through our baptism that we are enabled to take part in the liturgy, including the sacraments. By baptism, Jesus makes us sharers in his priesthood, and gives us both the privilege and the responsibility of taking part in the liturgy. Full participation in the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the true spirit of Christ.

Sacraments: By the sacraments of initiation — baptism, confirmation, and eucharist — we are freed from the kingdom of darkness. We die with Christ, and are raised with him to share in new life, to share in his total victory over sin. He gives us the Spirit of adoption, so that we may be the adopted daughters and sons of God our Father, our beloved Abba. We are members of the priestly people of God, cleansed from sin: we are his new creation. In confirmation we are signed as witnesses of Christ, and work with him in building up the kingdom. In the eucharist, we receive the pledge of everlasting life, and are enabled to remain in close union with all the people of God. Each time we celebrate the eucharist and receive communion, God is deepening our covenant with him.

○ The sacrament of penance continues Christ's victory over sin, which we first share in baptism, and continue to know through the eucharist. In the sacrament of penance we continue to deepen or return to our baptismal conversion.

○ When two Christians celebrate marriage, their union is a sharing in and a sign of Christ's love for his Church. Their faithfulness reflects our Lord's love for them, first shared when they were baptized. Their family is a little Church, as they lead their children to Christ through their prayer and example, and through the sacraments of initiation.

○ All Christians are called to be sharers in the priesthood of Christ by virtue of their baptism. Some members of the Church are called to a special ministry, as servants and leaders of the people of God. By their ordination, deacons, presbyters, and bishops are given a special sharing in the priesthood of Christ, with responsibility for the other members and for the building up of the body of Christ. The faith of these ministers, their call to holiness, and their work are all based on their first call in baptism.

○ When we are seriously sick, Jesus our brother gives us his comfort and help through the sacrament of anointing. Those whom he welcomed in baptism are encouraged in their infirmity.

○ When it is time for him to welcome us into the joy of the Father, he accompanies us with viaticum as food for our journey. He invites us to the final sharing in
his paschal mystery, and to enter fully into the eternal life we first received in our baptism.

**Litururgical year:** The Church's year is *a year of grace.* It is not another optional way of spirituality. It is our celebration of the saving work of Jesus Christ. Every Sunday we recall and celebrate the resurrection of our Lord. During the different seasons we see the entire mystery of our Lord as it is unfolded before us.

Feasts of Mary and the saints proclaim that Christ has achieved his victory in them. They pray for us, and ask God's help for the Church on earth today, as we struggle against sin, and seek to build the kingdom of God.

**A paschal spirituality:** The spirituality of the Christian people is based on baptism, and centered on the paschal mystery of our Lord. We are brought into this mystery in our own baptism, and spend the rest of our lives working with Christ to gain the fullness of his victory over sin. In our death, we leave this world, enter fully into his paschal mystery, and are, at last, in the rest and joy of the Father.

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**A PRAYER OF THANKS FOR BAPTISM**

*Lord Jesus Christ,*  
*for calling us to follow you,*  
*for being our Lord and brother,*  
*for letting us share your cross,*  
*we give you thanks, O Lord.*

*For sharing the life of the Father with us,*  
*for leading us in your light,*  
*for sending your Spirit to live in us,*  
*we give you thanks, O Lord.*

*For baptizing us into your death,*  
*for raising us to new life with you,*  
*for calling us to be members of your kingdom,*  
*we give you thanks, O Lord.*

*For marking us with your seal of life,*  
*for giving us faith and hope,*  
*for filling us with your love,*  
*we give you thanks, O Lord.*

*For calling us to give you praise,*  
*for bringing us to eternal life,*  
*for letting us be your saints,*  
*we give you thanks, O Lord.*

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As well as the many books and publications mentioned in the “Helpful reading” and the footnotes throughout this issue, the following general works are also useful in the study of the liturgical year and its spirituality:


*Discover the Bible*, a weekly leaflet (September to June) on the Sunday readings: now in its 16th year (Bible Center, 2000 Sherbrooke St. West, Montréal, Québec H3H 1G4). Also available in French. (Some parishes distribute this leaflet to the readers or to all the parishioners.)


*Scripture in Church*, a quarterly aid to understanding the scripture readings at Mass (Dominican Publications, Upper Dorset St., Dublin 1, Ireland).


*Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — Liturgical Calendar* (CCCB Publications, 90 Parent Ave., Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1). This annual key to the liturgical books helps every community to prepare and celebrate each day’s liturgy well; it also provides background material and ideas for better celebration.

### KEEPING UP TO DATE

How can you keep up to date in liturgy?

Subscribe to the *National Bulletin on Liturgy*, and read it regularly. Look up the many articles it suggests from past issues, and read some of the books it recommends in reviews and references.

Subscription information is given on the inside front cover of this issue of the Bulletin.
LITURGICAL YEAR AND FAMILY PRAYER

The Church's days and seasons are more than a convenient method of programming intended to keep everyone interested and alert through the year. The liturgical year is a reflection of Christian spirituality, which is based on Jesus' dying and rising (his paschal mystery), and on our sharing in it through our baptism. The liturgical year deeply influences the piety of the ordinary members of the Church. On Sundays, as well as on each day and season of the year, each Christian and each family should allow the graces of the liturgical year to be an influence in their prayer and practice.

Help needed: In order to do this, Catholic families need to know:

• The importance, meaning, and spirit of Sunday, the Lord's day: Some suggestions are offered on pages 149-152, and in the further references given there.

• The meaning and spirit of each liturgical season: Articles in this issue of the Bulletin describe each season and offer ideas and references for further reading and action.

• How to pray in the spirit of the season: Personal and family prayer should be related to the concerns of each season, as suggested below.

Prayer on the Lord's day: Prayer on each Sunday should be in tune with the Church's thoughts on this day. We praise and thank the Father for giving us his Son as one of us, our brother and our savior, and for raising him from the dead that we might share his life. We listen to the message of the Lord Jesus in the Sunday gospel. We praise and thank him for his glory. We pray for the Church and the world, asking for peace and salvation for all. The spirit of the individual seasons will also be reflected in our Sunday prayer.

Prayer during the seasons: Throughout the year our prayer reflects basic Christian concerns. Each season, however, looks at these from a slightly different point of view.

Participation in the prayer of the community: We can be in harmony with these seasons and feasts by practices, prayers, and hymns which reflect their spirit. Most important is our taking part in parish celebrations: Sunday eucharist, morning and evening prayer on the Lord's day and greater feasts (Liturgy constitution, no. 100), weekday Masses, prayer of the hours, and celebrations of the word.

* * *

The spirit of the liturgical year is the glory of Jesus Christ, died and risen and now in glory, and our entering more fully into this mystery.
**BRIEF BOOK REVIEWS**


This booklet sets out to introduce us to the reading and praying of the gospels. It describes the individual nature of each of the four gospels, and provides many suggestions for praying them. The author has prepared it for individuals, families, students, and study groups. She writes clearly and with deep faith.

*It is a pleasure* to recommend this booklet to everyone, especially those who want to grow in faith through reading and praying the gospels. People who use it will be able to take part more fully in the Church’s liturgy.

* * *


Each book has an introduction, the RSV (Catholic) text with commentary, and a list of references to the use of these books in the lectionary. This booklet is similar to others in Collegeville’s *Old Testament Reading Guides.* The print and layout are clear.

Recommended to all who want to study these two books of God’s word.

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*A Kit for Christian Initiation of Adults: Six Aids for a Parish to Develop a Catechumenate* (1978, Religious Education and Worship Offices, Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 5440 Moeller Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45212): 4 packets of 8 1/2 by 11 inches, 2 leaflets of 5 1/2 and 8 1/2, $9.00 a set, plus 50¢ postage. (Individual parts may be purchased separately, but it is better to obtain a complete kit.)

This kit, which is an aid to those who want to carry out the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults,* includes six parts:

- An overview of the Catechumenate for Adults, by Lawrence E. Mick: A clear outline of the process of initiation: 4 pages.
- That We Might Live a New Life — The Care and Feeding of Lent: These 26 pages provide many ideas for parish societies and community leaders to make Lent a time for contemplation and renewal.
- Sponsors: The role and selection of sponsors is described, and ideas for training them are outlined: 6 pages.
- Instructional Packet: These pages outline the principles on which the Christian initiation of adults is based, describe several methods now used by parishes, and offer a list of useful resources: 26 pages.
- Community Involvement: Positive approaches for encouraging the entire parish community to realize its responsibility and to become involved in the catechumenate; includes parish bulletin announcements: 18 pages.
- Celebrating the Rites: Helpful suggestions for celebrating the various liturgical rites during the catechumenate: 16 pages.

Recommended for diocesan liturgical commissions, and for liturgy committees and catechists in parishes who have or who are planning to have an active catechumenate.

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A clear introduction to the process of Christian initiation and its important place in the life of the believing community are contained in this booklet. Helpful suggestions for developing the catechumenate reflect the author’s practical experience. Recommended for priests, catechists, and liturgy committees.

* * *
A Child Is Baptized: Guidelines for the Baptism of Little Children in the Church of Montréal (1979, Archdiocese of Montréal, 2000 Sherbrooke St. West, Montréal, Québec H3H 1G4). Paper, 6 7/8 by 10 inches, 79 pages. $3.00 ($2.50 each for 10 or more), plus postage.

In 1978, Montréal published Porte au Bapteme. It has already appeared in Italian. This book is the English translation.

The book looks at the current situation, since views, theologies, and experiences of Church vary widely. After studying Christian tradition as a guide to our modern world, the book suggests pastoral approaches to the baptism of infants in parishes in the Church of Montréal.

Diocesan liturgical commissions will find this a useful resource as they study the needs of families in their own diocese; parishes which are trying to set up a baptismal preparation program will also benefit from this book. Recommended. (See also Bulletin 73, on Baptizing Children — March 1980.)

Baptism, A program of preparation for the parents and godparents of children who will receive the sacrament of baptism, by Sister Catherine Fenn, CSJ (n.d., Catholic Office of Religious Education, 67 Bond St., Toronto, Ont. M5B 1X5). Paper, 5 1/2 by 8 1/2 inches, 47 pages, reproduced from typed copy. $1.00, plus postage.

This booklet provides a useful outline for six sessions with parents and godparents as they prepare for the baptism of their child; if necessary, the program may be reduced to four weeks.

The ideas are good, but the booklet could be more helpful if addresses were provided for the filmstrips to be used. No indication of copyright permission is given for the quotations in the text. The typed format is not easy to read; use of italics here and there would have improved the presentation.

Helpful for those working with families in preparing for baptism (see also Bulletin 73).


This book offers to help each community to achieve a celebration which is "objectively true and responsible." After a brief introduction on the meaning of the Mass today, the author reviews its basic structure, and gives a historical survey of the Mass throughout the centuries.

In the second part of the book he goes through each part of the eucharistic celebration. Each is studied carefully, its meaning is explained, and abuses are pointed out.

This book is a practical and important contribution to the good celebration of Mass — especially the Sunday eucharist — in parishes and other communities. Every priest, bishop, seminarian, liturgy commission, and parish worship committee should own and use a copy.

The Evolving Church and the Sacrament of Penance, by Ladislas Orsy, SJ (1978, Dimension Books, PO Box 811, Denville, NJ 07834): hard cover, 6 1/4 x 8 1/4 inches, 211 pages. $11.95.

The sacrament of penance has not been the easiest area of renewal since Vatican II. In this book, Father Orsy offers some clear and acceptable steps to a full reform. He points out five questions that we need to ask ourselves:

How did our practice of reconciling sinners develop? How do ideas change? How do persons change? What is the meaning of the 1973 Rite of Penance in an evolving process? How should it continue to develop?

As he answers these questions in detail, he helps us to understand how the Church has gradually developed its practices and its teachings around the forgiveness of sins. By giving a broad context — scriptural, historical, liturgical, canonical, psychological, and practical — for this sacrament, he helps us to see where it stands today. He also offers some thoughts on directions for the coming years. An annotated bibliography provides scope for further study and reading.

This is required reading for every priest and student of liturgy.
The Roman Pontifical, vol. I (1978, International Commission on the Liturgy, Washington, DC 20005): hard cover, xvii, 384 pages. Large edition, 9¾ by 13½ inches: leather, $138.00; simulated leather (Skivertex), $76.00. Small edition, 8½ by 11½ inches: Skivertex, $51.00; plastic cover, $38.00. All but the plastic cover have slipcases. All are printed in red and black, and have five ribbons.

Available from USCC Publications Office, 1312 Massachusetts Ave., Washington, DC 20005. All prices are in U.S. dollars.

This volume contains the bishop's rites in the process of Christian initiation, including confirmation; institution of readers and acolytes; ordination of bishop, priests, and deacons; blessing of abbot and abbess; consecration to a life of virginity.

The rites are presented clearly, and careful design and layout make the celebration easier to prepare and carry out. Each rite begins with a brief outline, showing the relationship of its various parts. The prayer texts are in large boldface. The book has been designed to be held by a server. Printed and bound by the Vatican Polyglot Press in Vatican City, this volume of the pontifical is designed to last.

A copy of the pontifical should be in every cathedral and major parish. The plastic-covered edition is useful for masters of ceremonies, students of liturgy, and liturgical libraries.

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With One Voice ... Melody line edition . . . 4 3/8 by 7 inches, xxxiii, 679 pages. £1.85.

This is the Australian hymn book, prepared by an ecumenical committee representing the Anglican, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic Churches. Recently the three in the middle of this list formed the Uniting Church in Australia.

The 579 hymns are mainly traditional European, with three-quarters of the tunes written before 1900; only 100 tunes are since 1945. Not a single mention is made of guitar or folk music, and no guitar chords are provided; this seems most unusual today. Some American traditional and Negro tunes are included. Nine tunes come from Ghana, Indonesia, Nyasaland, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and the West Indies, and one is based on an Urdu melody. There are many psalms using a variety of methods.

Music without words is printed at the top of the page, with the words in stanzas below. Only in the case of irregular forms are the words printed with music. Type size for the words varies from 8 to 9½ points, and is not easy to read in dim light. Careful work has been done on copyrights and editing.

The harmony edition is intended for choir and accompanist. It stays open well, but our review copy was not strongly bound. There are 36 pages of indices. The book is heavy to hold (2 pounds, 5 ounces). The melody line edition, for the congregation, is of convenient size, but the type is 8 point, and could be difficult for older people.

Choir leaders may wish to obtain a copy of the harmony edition as a reference book. The quality of hymns is high, but there is a lack of Mass parts. (A "Catholic" edition containing 45 additional hymns is available for approximately £6.50 and £2.15.)

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As well as morning and evening prayer from the first week of the four-week psalter, this book includes help in prayer; meditations on praying to Christ, Mary, and the saints; prayers about the eucharist; rite of penance; everyday prayers; hymns and music. A 15-page summary of the teachings of Vatican II concludes the book.

This book will be useful for families, classes, retreats, study groups, liturgy committees, and other groups who want to pray together. Individuals will also be able to use it in their personal prayer. Recommended.

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This volume is one of six under the general title of "Official Catholic Teachings." It contains documents and addresses on liturgy by popes (Leo XIII, Pius X, Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII, and Paul VI)
between 1902 and 1977. Also included are decrees from Roman congregations, an excerpt from the 1917 Code (canons 1255-1257), and other official references. Some are excerpts, some are complete.

As well as retaining the original numbering system of these documents, this book has its own marginal references: 2012 paragraphs are given numbers.

The text is clear and easy to use. This volume is recommended as a valuable reference book for bishops, priests, diocesan commissions, seminarians, and students of liturgy.

Following Jesus in the Real World: Asceticism Today, by George A. Maloney, SJ (1979, Clarity Publications, 75 Champlain St., Albany, NY 12204). Paper, 6 by 9 inches, illustrations, 30 pages. $1.55 (includes postage); bulk prices available.

The message is good, although it seems to neglect the baptismal basis of all Christian spirituality. But to get the message you have to wade through a lexicon of Greek, Latin, French, and German terms; a cramped layout; an excess of boldface type; and a text that seems more suited as a university lecture than a simple presentation of exciting insights into the teaching of Jesus.

Recommended for patient priests, religious, and seminarians. Though also intended for laity, the booklet is beyond the attention span of most people: it needs a total revision to be of any use to most.


Positive thoughts on family prayer form the introduction of this book, along with some sample plans for using this book in families. Many prayers are offered for our choosing on many occasions. It is unfortunate that we have prayers for each week of Advent but none for Sunday or Lent or the Easter season. Helpful for families who want to grow in their experience of prayer.


Intended for celebrations at home and at school by children from 5 to 15 years of age, this book offers practical ideas for 24 religious and civil celebrations during the year. Each one provides background ideas, suggestions for making symbols (usually with construction paper), and a brief celebration on the theme. It is a pity that a paper cutout replaces real bread on Corpus Christi, but this is an apt reflection on the "bread" used in many communities.

A useful resource for parents and catechists.

Family Retreat Program, by Mary F. Reardon and Sr. Suzanne Lachapelle, RSM (1979, Twenty-Third Publications, PO Box 180, West Mystic, CT 06388). Paper, 8½ by 11 inches, illustrations, 86 pages. $6.95.

This book offers practical help in organizing 24-hour family retreats for groups of five to fifteen families. Program ideas, organizational details, prayers, menus, and many other details are discussed. Separate material is provided for each of six age groupings: adults, high school, junior high, intermediate, primary, and pre-school.

Recommended for parish liturgy and education committees.


Christ has overcome the power of death, and promises us eternal life. Both in secular and Christian circles, our generation continues to face death. This booklet offers the opportunity for the family to prepare the funeral liturgy with an aged or dying person, or for one who has just died. The readings and psalms are from the New American Bible.

Strengths: It is the Church's desire that the family be involved to some extent in the preparation of the funeral liturgy and the selection of the liturgical texts. This booklet offers a practical means of doing this. (Have you faced the reality of your death by selecting the texts for your wake and funeral?) An effective use of the book would be to distribute it personally to each family in the parish.
Weaknesses: This booklet is for a one-time use, with blanks for listing the selected texts, and a folder to pass on to the priest "the night before or at least several hours before the Mass." This means that the priest has to prepare the homily at the last minute! Families are encouraged to choose readings, prayers, special music, and other texts, "selecting the one from each category which best expresses your sentiments at this moment." It would seem that it is also important at times to have the community and family hear the message it needs rather than what it feels like hearing. This method would tend to tie the hands of the pastoral team who are sent to preach the gospel. It would be better for the family to suggest texts and then discuss them with the priest who celebrates the funeral. Also no mention is made of the fact that a funeral may be celebrated at times without the eucharist.

A further problem is the suggestion that the presentation of gifts include "symbolic gifts" expressing "the main interests, loves and efforts of a deceased person." This proposal misunderstands the nature of the procession with the gifts, and could point the way to a PR effort by the family to package the life of the loved one as a whitewash job.

Summary: The idea of the book is a good one. When the weaknesses are removed, we are willing to endorse the book.


The Ryans provide a practical and useful book of ideas for every family that wants to observe Lent. Forty-nine topics, ranging from scriptural meditations to ideas for prayer to recipes for hot cross buns, provide a lively source of lenten activities. Recommended for parishwide distribution.

The Holy Week Book, edited by Eileen Elizabeth Freeman (1979, Resource Publications, PO Box 444, Saratoga, CA 95070); paper, spiral bound, 8 5/8 x 11 inches, illustrations, 200 pages. $19.95.

This book consists of many brief articles by various writers, and provides many resources for planning and celebrating Passion Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter vigil. Ideas are suggested for extra-liturgical celebrations, such as the stations of the cross. Thought-provoking insights are provided for some of the liturgical rites (including ideas for procession banners, for baking bread, for making a cross, for lighting the fire, for making white robes).

Many of the articles seem to begin with the basic assumption that the rites in the sacramentary and lectionary are useless, and then set out to do better. This is an unfortunate attitude. While these articles provide useful ideas, the celebrations they present are not to be used in churches in place of the authorized liturgies of the Roman Catholic Church.

With this proviso, the book is recommended for liturgy committees and catechists.


This statement is a pastoral reflection on the place of people with handicaps in the ministry of Christ and his Church. Many practical suggestions are described for parishes, communities, and dioceses. Some blunt points are raised about obstacles put in the way of persons with handicaps: "Structurally inaccessible buildings are at once a sign and a guarantee of their isolation from the community" (page 7). Going far beyond architecture, this statement discusses attitudes, liturgy, catechetics, and ministries.

Recommended reading for ministers, liturgy committees, catechists, clergy, and for all who work at diocesan levels. [See also the review of Let Everyone Celebrate, in Bulletin 60, page 255.]

Mainstreaming Handicapped Persons, a study paper prepared by the Art and Architecture Committee of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission (Diocesan Office of Worship, 100 South Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14202): paper, 8 1/2 x 11 inches, illustrated, 10 pages. $1.25.

Our community worship should be open to all members of the Catholic community. This booklet discusses both attitudinal and physical barriers that hinder people with handicaps. Positive suggestions are offered for helping people with disabilities in walking, seeing, or hearing.

This publication is recommended for diocesan liturgical commissions, for communities which are building new facilities, as well as for every parish or community that wants to make its buildings more accessible to all.