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ECUMENISM AND LITURGY
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 for all who are involved in preparing and celebrating the community liturgy.

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Bulletin 78 is addressed first of all to Roman Catholics. Its goals are to help them to become more involved in ecumenical action. This Bulletin sets out to:

- Help Catholics understand the meaning of ecumenism today and the Church’s position on it;
- Discuss the implications of ecumenism in our liturgy;
- Consider steps that we should be taking now to work for Christian unity; and
- Encourage work and prayer for unity among Christians. This is not a luxury or an option that we can take or leave: it is our duty.

*May the Lord Jesus guide us all in our efforts to become one in him.*
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EDITORIAL

WORKING FOR UNITY IS OUR DUTY

The Lord Jesus is our only way to the Father. Jesus is the sole mediator between God and the human race: there is no other way to God. Jesus is our unique savior; he is our Lord and our brother. There is only one Lord Jesus, one faith, one baptism, one God who is our loving Father. Jesus prays for unity among all his followers, and gives us his Holy Spirit as the source of unity in the Church.

We Catholics have grown up in an age of accepting the scriptural truths contained in the above paragraph, but we have often been puzzled about the means for achieving this kind of unity among Christians.

Disunity and failure to reach for the ideal were already showing up in the pages of the New Testament, and have always been present to some degree. While many events and situations have contributed to the weakening of unity among Christians in the past 2,000 years, two particular events stand out: the separation of Eastern and Western Christians in 1054, and the divisions among Western Christians in the first half of the 1500s.

A spirit of ecumenism — both desiring the unity willed by Christ, and praying and working for it — has been growing in this twentieth century. First promoted by Anglicans and Protestants, the ecumenical movement was finally accepted by the Catholic Church: restoring unity among all believers in Christ was one of the main purposes of the Second Vatican Council (see Liturgy constitution, no. 1; Decree on ecumenism, no. 1).

In its Decree on ecumenism (Nov. 21, 1964), the Council offers us helps, directions, and ways of working to restore unity: this is seen as a response to the will of Christ.

The Council calls all Catholics to recognize the signs of our times, and to take part in ecumenical work, both in eliminating unjust words and actions against other Christians, and in taking part in dialogue with them. We are to renew ourselves and to work vigorously for reform and renewal of the Church according to the will of Christ. We are to thank God for the gifts and graces he has given other Christians, and we are to learn from them (Ecumenism decree, no. 4).

All members of the Catholic Church are to be concerned about restoring unity. We all contribute to this by our daily Christian living, but we need to go further, and work toward the full unity among Christians that is God’s will (Decree on ecumenism, no. 5).

With the clear marching orders provided by the Council, by subsequent Roman documents, and by the popes from John XXIII to John Paul II, we must continue to work for unity among all who believe that Jesus is Lord (Rom. 10: 9; 1 Cor. 12: 3).

Working for unity among Christians is our duty! Individual believers, parishes, religious communities, and dioceses need to examine their priorities, and make sure that ecumenism is high on their list, as the Lord Jesus desires.
When we speak of ecumenism, it is important to know what we mean and what others understand by this term.

What Are We Talking About?

Sometimes it seems that every person, organization, and Church has a different — and, at times, contradictory — idea of what ecumenism means. For the sake of clarity, we begin by saying what the Roman Catholic Church means when it encourages ecumenism.

Model of unity: During his high priestly prayer, our Lord asked the Father that his followers would be one as he and the Father are one (Jn. 17: 21). The Spirit is the source of unity and of building up the Church (see 1 Cor. 12: 1-31; Eph. 4: 1-5). Jesus wants this unity so that the world may see it (see Mt. 5: 16) and be led to believe in our Lord (Jn. 17: 21). The Second Vatican Council points out that the holy Trinity is the greatest model and source of unity among the people of God (Ecumenism decree, no. 2).

Scandal of disunity among Christians: From all eternity, God has called us in Christ to be his holy people, dedicated to singing the praise of God’s glory and to living blameless lives in his presence (see Eph. 1: 3-14). We are called to be children of light (Eph. 5: 1-21).

Sinfulness among Christians is a scandal, against Jesus’ command that our love for one another should be a sign to all that we are his disciples (Jn. 13: 34-35). Though we are sinners, we are called to establish one body of Christ including all who are God’s people in any way (Decree on ecumenism, nos. 3-4).

Meaning of ecumenism: We may describe ecumenism as working to restore unity among all Christians (see Decree on ecumenism, no. 1). In a broader sense, it also involves working for better relations with Judaism, Islam, and other non-Christian religions: see pages 64-68.

Ecumenical movement: The ecumenical movement includes activities and projects undertaken to promote unity among those who believe in Christ. Aided by the Holy Spirit, individuals and groups work in the Church in which they heard Jesus’ gospel. As faithful members of their own Church, they work to restore unity among all Christians, until there is one, universal, visible Church on earth. This one Church is sent by the Lord to preach the gospel, to lead people to turn back to the Father. In this way, all nations will be led to salvation for the greater glory of God. (See Ecumenism, nos. 1, 4.)

Work of the ecumenical movement: Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Ecumenism, no. 4), the ecumenical movement uses the prayers, speech, and actions of Christians to achieve the unity desired by the Lord Jesus. Catholics are urged to

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1 This word is derived from the Greek oikoumene, a noun meaning the world, its inhabited parts, all humanity, the (Roman) empire. In current dialogues, ecumenical refers to the relationships among Churches or other bodies which are working toward unity in Christ.
read the signs of the times, and to take a much more active part in the work of ecumenism. [Further ideas are included in the second half of this paragraph of the Church's teaching.]

Who takes part in ecumenism? Who should be working to restore unity among all Christians?

- The first document of the Second Vatican Council, the Constitution on the liturgy, was issued on Dec. 4, 1963. Its opening paragraph notes that one of the four goals of the Council is to foster all things that lead to unity among Christians; another goal is to strengthen all things in the life of the Church that can invite all men and women into the Church (Liturgy constitution, no. 1).

- All Catholics are to take part in the ecumenical apostolate by avoiding improper attitudes or accusations against other Christian Churches; by dialoguing with other Christians; by praying with members of other Churches; and by working for the renewal and reform of the Catholic Church (Ecumenism, no. 4).

- Self-reform comes first: Our first task is to reform us, not them. We have to work and pray so that the Catholic Church is truly reforming, renewing, and witnessing according to the teaching of Jesus Christ. We are still — and will always be — a Church needing renewal and reform (Ecumenism, no. 4).

- Unity and freedom: While the Christian Church must always be one in essentials, there is room for freedom and variety in rites, forms of spirituality, and theological thinking. Variety should be seen as positive enrichment rather than decoration or frills; we should learn to appreciate the insights of other Christian communities instead of considering them as mere deviations from "our" way. We accept the wisdom of activity of the Spirit of God in these signs of the unlimited beauty of our God (Ecumenism, no. 4).

- Seeing God's hand at work: The Holy Spirit is active in the hearts of all. Catholics are to recognize and respect the elements of Christianity which other Churches have preserved, sometimes even better than we have. We are to take an active part in the work of ecumenism (Ecumenism, no. 4).

Emphasizing What We Have in Common

The Holy Spirit has his own ways of doing things. In October 1958, who would have thought that a pudgy peasant prelate would succeed Pius XII, and become Pope John XXIII? Who expected the announcement of the Second Vatican Council on January 25, 1959?

Recognizing our differences: Until the 1960s, it might be said that we Roman Catholics generally emphasized the differences between ourselves and others. Pope John and the Council help us to recognize and admit our differences, but the emphasis is on what we share.

We have many things in common: Though we are separated at present, it is important for Christians to realize that we have more things in common than we have differences. There is one body of Christ, held together by the one Spirit; we are called to one hope in Jesus. There is one God and Father of all (see Eph. 4: 4-6).
Some of the graces that all Christians share are these (Decree on Ecumenism, nos. 2, 19-24):

○ Our faith: We share our faith in the Holy Trinity; in Jesus Christ as our Lord, savior, shepherd, and brother; in the Church as the body of Christ and the people of God; in baptism; in the Lord's supper; in the word of God; in the life of grace; in the virtues of faith, hope, and love; in a variety of gifts and ministries; in the graces and fruits of the Spirit.

○ Our living for God: We show our love for God by loving and serving others, seeing and meeting Christ in them. The commandment of love of God and neighbor is the basis of all Christian living.

○ Our weaknesses: We recognize that we are poor, helpless, feeble; we are always in need of God's saving grace in Christ. We are weak, and liable to temptation and sin; we remain constantly in need of God's mercy.

○ Our strengths: God is always with us. He gives us the Spirit of Jesus to live in us, to guide us, to teach us to pray. The Spirit encourages us and helps the Church on earth — living in each community — until each individual member is able to fulfill the meaning of his or her baptism: each of us must die and enter the fullness of the paschal mystery, the dying and rising of Jesus.

○ Our goal: We long for one visible Church of our Lord Jesus Christ on earth, where we can share the eucharist fully as one undivided family (Ecumenism, nos. 1-2).

○ Our liturgical roots: See pages 69-70.

True Ecumenism

False ecumenism: There is no instant path to unity. For Catholics, it would be false ecumenism to give up essential Catholic teachings, or to gloss them over, or to put them on a back shelf: they need to be explored more fully. (See Ecumenism, no. 11.)

True ecumenism involves a change of heart and a return to the gospel. We work for Christian unity by doing God's will, by deepening our bonds with the Trinity, by public and personal prayer for unity among Christians. The Council goes so far as to say that these elements are "the soul of the whole ecumenical movement" (Ecumenism, no. 8).

Another important element in the work of ecumenism is that we must recognize the deep values in one another's heritages, and learn from one another (Ecumenism, nos. 4 and 9).

As each Christian and each Church make sincere efforts to come closer to Christ, we will find ourselves coming closer together. We may envisage a wheel: as the spokes come nearer to the hub, they are closer to one another.
Our Goals

Why are Christians involved in ecumenism today?

Ecumenism is the work of the Lord: The followers of Jesus are to be sensitive to the work of the Spirit as shown in the signs of the times. Our Lord's prayer for unity (Jn. 17: 1-26) is our charter.

The Second Vatican Council stated its goals most clearly:
• To help Catholics to live a more intense Christian life;
• To adapt Church practices to the needs of our time;
• To foster whatever builds up Christian unity;
• To make the Church more attractive to all people.

(Liturgy constitution, no. 1)

If we are sensitive to the Spirit of Jesus, we must work now for unity among all Christians. As John Paul II urges us, it is our first job in the Church today.

Our goal is eucharist celebrated in common: We must always remember what we are seeking: it is the removal of “obstacles to perfect ecclesiastical communion,” until we are able to come together in a common celebration of the eucharist, a sign of the unity of the Church given by Jesus (Ecumenism, no. 4). The eucharist is both the sign and cause of unity (Ecumenism, no. 2; see also page 78, below).

Letting the Spirit lead us: In our eagerness to move toward unity, we must be careful that it is God's work we are doing. We must continue to be open to the action of the Holy Spirit, to test our initiatives against God's word, and to be sensitive to the needs, fears, and concerns of all our brothers and sisters in Christ. (See Constitution on the Church in the modern world, no. 11; Liturgy constitution, no. 43.)

Our first job: Speaking to the delegates from national ecumenical commissions on November 23, 1979, John Paul II pointed out that the work of ecumenism is a pastoral responsibility of the bishops, so that the gospel may be preached more clearly. He continued: “A high priority attaches to this pastoral work. The Vatican Council clearly stated the urgency of the ecumenical task. Disunity is a scandal, a hindrance to the spread of the gospel; it is our duty to strive by God’s grace to overcome it as soon as we can. The inner renewal of the Catholic Church is an indispensable contribution to the work of Christian unity. We must therefore present this call to holiness and renewal as central to the Church’s life. Let no one delude himself that work for perfect unity in faith is somehow secondary, optional, peripheral, something that can be indefinitely postponed. Our fidelity to Jesus Christ urges us to do more, to pray more, to love more. The way may be long and demands patience....

“For it is the work of the Church. The Vatican Council's commitment of the Catholic Church to work for ecumenism has been frequently reaffirmed by both Paul VI and myself. To work for unity is not simply to follow one's own fancy, one's personal preference; it means being faithful to and truly representative of the position of the Catholic Church.”

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Helpful reading:


- Decree on ecumenism: see Abbott, pages 336-370; Flannery, pages 452-470; later documents in Flannery, pages 471-563.
- See also “Ecumenism” in indexes: Abbott, page 764; Flannery, pages 1049-1050.


MAKE US ONE, O LORD

Lord Jesus Christ, our Lord and our brother,
you have called us to be your one Church.
Make us one in our faith and hope,
and one in our loving service.
Make us one in worship and in daily living.

Lord Jesus,
send your Spirit to make us one
as you want us to be.

We ask this, Jesus,
for you are our Lord and our savior for ever. Amen!

NEXT ISSUE

Bulletin 79 is concerned with an area of Catholic Church life that has been growing in importance during this past decade. How can members of a community best worship God when they have no priest to lead them in the eucharist?

Sunday Liturgy: When Lay People Preside is the title of the May-June issue. Practical ideas and models for community celebrations are provided for those who plan and lead these services. Creativity is encouraged and aided.

Bulletin 79 will be ready for mailing in May.
DIFFERENT DEGREES OF UNITY

All who are baptized belong in some way to Christ and his body, the Church. Though they are separated by some of their beliefs and disciplines and ideas about the structures of the Church, they are still our brothers and sisters in Christ. All who are baptized share in God's word in the scriptures; in God's living gift of grace; in the virtues of faith, hope, and love; in the gifts of the Spirit. (See Ecumenism, no. 3.)

The relationships and dialogues between the Catholic Church and other Christian Churches vary with the ways in which we preserve and practise the full Christian heritage.

Catholics and the Orthodox Church

In its decrees on Ecumenism and on the Eastern Catholic Churches, both issued on Nov. 21, 1964, the Second Vatican Council tried to face the present situation of separation, and to take some first steps toward communion between Catholics and the Orthodox Churches.

Sister Churches: In the East, there are many local Churches, sharing in faith and love (Ecumenism, no. 14). This means that structures are different, and that discussions have to be carried on in many countries.

Spiritual heritage: The Western Church has received much of its liturgy and spirituality from the Eastern Churches. It was in the East that the Christian dogmas of the Trinity, the incarnation of the Word of God, and the place of Mary as the mother of God were defined. Many of the Fathers of the Church are Eastern. Eastern monasticism contributed greatly to Western communities. Eastern Christians have suffered much through the centuries to preserve the faith and to bear witness to Christ in many lands. (See Ecumenism, nos. 14, 17.)

Separation: In July 1054, the legate of Pope Leo IX and the Patriarch, Michael Caerularius, pronounced mutual excommunications against each other, leading to a division between East and West. [Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I or Constantinople repealed these excommunications in 1965.]

The conditions leading to the break were complex, and built up over several centuries. They include: "liturgical differences, divergent theological positions, different credal formulas, festering political situations, cultural variances, different understandings of history and tradition, and clashing personalities. The center of the argument is not the use of leavened bread (*artos*) or unleavened bread (*azyme*): rather, this became the focus of all the other pressures and differences."1

Some Eastern Churches are in full communion with Rome. The Second Vatican Council says that these Churches have a special duty to work for unity, especially with Churches of the East. This will be done by their prayer, example, respect for the traditions of the East, mutual understanding, co-operation, and respect for others' feelings and attitudes. (See Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches,

1 A detailed study of the controversy is given in *And Taking Bread... Caerularius and the Azyme Controversy of 1054*, by Mahlon H. Smith III (1978, Editions Beauchesne, Paris). The quotation above is taken from a review of this book by Patrick Byrne in *Église et Théologie*, vol. 10, no. 1 (1979, St. Paul University, 223 Main St., Ottawa, Ontario K1S 1C4): see page 94.
At the same time, however, one Orthodox expressed another view in 1966: "The very existence of the 'Uniate' Eastern Catholic Churches has always been considered by the Orthodox as one of the major obstacles to any sincere theological confrontation with the Roman Catholic Church." Working for unity requires much prayer of us all, as well as good will, openness, and a willingness to listen to the prompting of the Spirit today.

Moving toward communion: In November 1979, Pope John Paul II and Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I met in Istanbul (Constantinople), and agreed to set up an authoritative commission of theologians to look at the things that still separate us. In the meantime, pastors and people should continue to pray for unity, and try to become more friendly with neighbors who are Orthodox (Ecumenism, no. 18). Other positive steps include respect for the true sacraments and orders of the East; study of the history, theology, and spirituality of the East and West; and a growing familiarity with the liturgies of the East. (See Ecumenism, nos. 15-17.)

Some first steps: Unity will be achieved by a growing mutual consensus. The Catholic Church has moved to eliminate some obstacles to unity, and is trying to help its members become more sensitive to the feelings and issues involved. When Paul VI proposed a common date for Easter for all Christian Churches, the World Council of Churches agreed; since the Orthodox felt that some of their Churches were not ready for this yet, the Western Churches postponed the move in a spirit of sensitive understanding and love.

Helpful reading:


*Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue*: The Moscow Statement (agreed by the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission, 1976, with introductory and supporting material), edited by Kallistos Ware and Colin Davey (1977, SPCK, Marylebone Road, London NW1 4DU).


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3. See the declaration at the end of the Constitution on the liturgy: Abbott, pages 177-178; Flannery, page 37. See also Bulletin 34, page 171; no. 38, page 87; no. 51, page 336; and no. 61, page 283.


*La Célébration de la Parole dans la Liturgie Byzantine, étude historique,* by Juan Mateos, SJ; *Orientalia Christiana Analecta,* no. 191 (1971, Pontificium Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, Piazza S. Maria Maggiore, 7, 00185 Roma, Italia).


*The Byzantine Ukrainian Rite* (1975, CCC, Ottawa).

**Catholics and the Protestant Churches**

**Background:** There are many remote causes in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that formed the age in which the Protestant Reformation took place. These include the constant struggles for power between Church leaders and the civil states which were developing a new sense of nationalism; crusades and wars and plague; Christendom; the papal states; the fallout from the great schism or Babylonian captivity (1308-1378); taxation systems; medieval superstitions; the voyages of discovery to Africa, India, China, the Americas; the development of printing and the rapid spread of books; earlier attempts at reform by Wyclif, Hus, Savonarola, and others; the Renaissance; Humanism; the deep need of reform in the lives of churchmen, in the liturgy, in the formation of the clergy, in teaching the faithful. In 1516, for example, the Fifth Lateran Council condemned many abuses that abounded in the preaching of the time.4

**Beginnings:** A German prince, who already had two bishoprics, wanted a third and more important one. He borrowed 10,000 ducats to give to the Holy See, which in turn helped him to recover the money through the preaching of an indulgence in his territories: half for the prince and half for building the new St. Peter's in Rome.5 In 1517, Martin Luther rejected the exaggerated claims made by those who preached the indulgence, and went on in his 95 theses (i.e., questions for discussion) to question the doctrine of indulgences and the power of the pope to grant them. Religious, civil, and political factors contributed to the growth of his revolt against the Catholic Church. Luther wrote many books, and composed liturgies and hymns. In June 1530, the Augsburg confession was proclaimed. Luther died in 1546.


Reformed Churches: In Switzerland, Zwingli went further than Luther, and accepted only what the Bible specifically commanded. He attacked fasting and abstinence, images, music in worship, and the sacraments, keeping only infant baptism and the Lord's supper (as a mere memorial).

Anabaptists went even further, rejecting infant baptism, and refusing to bear arms for the state. They were widely persecuted, and eventually led to the foundation of the Mennonites and Hutterites.

John Calvin published his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in 1536. Deeply moved by the majesty of God, Calvin saw humans as called to obey God. Praise and obedience to God were more important than concern over one's personal salvation. In Geneva he set up a form of theocracy, uniting Church, state, and school in promoting the upright and godly life. John Knox carried his influence to Scotland and helped to develop Presbyterianism there.

Further developments: In so short a space it is impossible to cover subsequent developments in any detail. Many Churches and religious bodies have developed since the Reformation.

Movement toward unity: The twentieth century has seen the movement back toward unity. Various meetings and conferences on unity, the ecumenical movements, the founding of the World Council of Churches, the week of prayer for unity among Christians, the gradual muting of strident voices, the greater openness to the will of Christ and to the promptings of the Spirit: these have marked the first six decades of this century. At the same time, the horrors of the Holocaust, the realities of worldwide war, and the constant possibility of nuclear doom have helped some to look beyond their own limited horizons and to begin to see things from a worldwide perspective.

Vatican II: The Decree on ecumenism speaks of the Reformation in nos. 13, and 19-23. Rather than trying to describe each Protestant Church and religious body, the Council looked at similarities and differences in order to form "a basis and motivation" for dialogue (no. 19).

Helpful reading:

*Peace, Print and Protestantism*, by C.S.L. Davies (1977, Paladin, St. Albans, Herts. AL2 2NF): covers the period from 1450 to 1558.


Catholics and the Anglican Church

History: The Catholic faith was brought to parts of Britannia in the early days of Christianity, when Roman troops were stationed there. Later, the Irish and the Romans sent missionaries to Christianize all its areas and to establish the Church there more strongly. The Celtic and Roman approaches to liturgy and calendar (including the date of Easter) clashed, and eventually were resolved in favor of Rome at the Synod of Whitby in 664. In 1066, the Normans conquered England, and replaced Saxon bishops with Normans.

In the ensuing years, the English developed a strong Christian life, though slightly bawdy by our current standards. (Read Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, for example, written about 1386.) English kings and Rome had various difficulties over taxes and appointments. The Sarum rite at Salisbury and other local variations of the Roman rite were developed before 1500.

After Luther's 1517 theses, the teachings of Protestantism began to come into Catholic England. Henry VIII, who ruled from 1509 to 1547, wrote his Defence of the Seven Sacraments in 1521, and Rome granted him the title of "Defender of the Faith." A series of events led to his break with Rome, including the attempt to get an annulment of his marriage with Catherine of Aragon, anticlerical legislation, and the declaration by the convocation of the clergy that the pope had no jurisdiction in England. In 1534, Parliament's Act of Supremacy declared that God had made the king the supreme head of the Church in England. Monasteries were closed and confiscated by the crown. The council to guide the young Edward VI was mainly Protestant.

Subsequent history: There were times of persecution under Mary (against Anglicans and Protestants) and Elizabeth (against Catholics). In 1896, Leo XIII declared that Anglican orders were invalid. Studies since that time, in history as well

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as the theology of ordination, plus the fact that some Anglicans have received ordination from Orthodox bishops, plus the teaching of Vatican II on the primary duty of priest and bishop being first the teaching of God's word — all this has reopened the question. Anglicans and Catholics continue in dialogue: see pages 84-85.

**Book of Common Prayer:** It was in 1549, during the reign of Edward, that the *Book of Common Prayer* was introduced. Thomas Cranmer's book has proved to be a masterpiece. It was used around the English-speaking world while England conquered and maintained an empire, and has since been adapted in many countries and several languages, including Latin. One book has served as calendar, lectionary, sacramentary, ritual, pontifical, and catechism. Printed in large type, it was a ritual book. In smaller type, it was the people's book; sometimes the hymn book was incorporated into this edition. The current revision by the Episcopal Church in the United States of America is an excellent example of renewal within tradition.8

**Special place:** The Second Vatican Council noted that among the Reformation Churches, the Anglican Church has a special place because it retains traditions and practices of the Roman Catholic Church (Ecumenism, no. 13). Among these we might mention most of the sacraments, the liturgy of the hours, the calendar and lectionary, hierarchical orders, canon law, and synodal structures.

**After Vatican II:** Since the Council, the various Archbishops of Canterbury have visited the pope on a number of occasions, and relations are becoming warmer. International dialogues are mentioned on page 84, below.

**Liturgal renewal:** One of the first examples of modern liturgical renewal is to be seen in the Church of South India. A combination of Anglicans, Congregationalists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, this Church began in 1947. In the past few years, Anglican liturgical books have shared with others in returning to our common liturgical roots and calendars (see pages 69-74, below).

**Action:** Anglicans and Catholics are not far apart: we have much more in common than we have differences. Catholic parishes, communities, organizations, and individuals should make a special effort to enter into common prayers and actions now (Ecumenism, no. 12): see pages 87-91, below.

**Helpful reading:**

*Wycliffe and English Non-Conformity,* by K.B. McFarlane (1972, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Mdx.).


*Worship in the Church of South India,* by T.S. Garrett (1958, John Knox Press, Richmond, VA).

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Conclusion

Only God can give a clear evaluation and judgment on the past thousand years.

• We must beware that we do not continue the ecclesial Hatfield-and-McCoy feuds of the past. Even if we cannot ignore or forget them, we can and must forgive.

• We must ask God to send his Spirit upon all Christians in every ministry, so that our hearts may be open to his action and may grow in the desire for unity in love; eventually we will be able to express this in our common celebration of the eucharist.

• A new beginning: These words of John Paul II may be applied to all Christians:

“The second millennium has seen our progressive separation. The opposite movement has begun, however. It is necessary, and I pray urgently to ‘the Father of wisdom from whom every perfect gift comes’ (see James 1: 17), that the dawn of the third millennium will rise on our full communion rediscovered.”9

9 Address to the plenary assembly of the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity, Feb. 8, 1980: see Origins, March 6, 1980 (vol. 9, no. 38), pages 619-620.

WORSHIP '81: THE EUCHARIST

The Canadian Liturgical Society is sponsoring a symposium on the eucharist from May 12 to 15, 1981, in London, Ontario. The keynote speaker this year is Bernard Cooke. The five major talks planned for the week are:

• Christian community and eucharist: keynote address by Bernard Cooke.

• Theology of eucharist: David Hay.

• Eucharist and ministry: Bernard Cooke.

• Twenty-five years of eucharistic development: Marion Hatchett.

• Transforming power of the eucharist: Monica Hellwig.

A special evening presentation on music in the eucharist, including music from different Christian traditions, will be part of the program. Panel discussions and book displays will also be of interest to participants.

Registration and payment must be completed by April 20, 1981. For information and registration forms, please get in touch with:

The Canadian Liturgical Society
117 Bloor St. East
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 1A9

Telephone: (416) 929-0811
Ecumenism is taken today to be the relationships between various Christian bodies who are working toward the goal of unity that Christ wants for all who believe in him and who are baptized in his name (see page 52, above).

Relationships between Christians and others who are not followers of Jesus have been influenced by the developments of Vatican II: a new spirit of tolerance, respect, brotherhood and sisterhood is beginning to affect attitudes at all levels.

Vatican II

The teaching of the Vatican Council on the kind of relationships that should exist between Catholics and those who are not Christians is clearly stated in the Declaration on the relationship of the Church to non-Christian religions. This document needs to be read carefully if we are to understand the Council’s teaching about our relationships with other religions and its strong stand against all forms of prejudice in the past, present, and future.

Unity of the human race (Non-Christians, no. 1): God has made us all, and his Son died to save everyone. We are all under God’s loving providence. We are stirred to ponder the eternal questions about life and death, good and evil, the here and the hereafter.

Hinduism and Buddhism (no. 2): These two world religions are mentioned with respect, as are other religions which propose a creed (teachings), a code (a way of life), and a cult (forms of worship of God). Catholics are to recognize the truth of God that is reflected in these religions, to promote the positive moral values they stand for, and to dialogue and work with those who follow these religions.

Islam (no. 3): The Council points out what Christians and Muslims have in common. Muslims adore one God, the creator and merciful One. As followers of Abraham, they seek to obey God’s will. They honor Christ as a prophet, and respect his virgin mother Mary. They believe in the resurrection, in judgment, and in God’s rewards. Their worship involves prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Past hostilities: The Council urges that all Christians and Muslims should forget the wars and hatreds of the past centuries, and work now for sincere understanding. Christians and Muslims are invited to work together to promote “social justice, moral values, peace, and freedom.”

Judaism (no. 4): Abraham is the common root for Christians and Jews. He is our father in faith; his faith in God became the source of blessing for all nations (Gen. 12: 3). God made his covenant with the Jewish people through Moses (Exod. 19: 3-8), and sent them his prophets to help them to remain faithful. The word of the Lord and his mighty deeds among his people are recorded in the Hebrew scriptures.

Christians indebted to Judaism: Jesus is a Jew according to the flesh (Rom. 9: 4-5). So too are the apostles, Mary the mother of Jesus, and the first disciples. We have accepted the Jewish scriptures as the inspired word of God, instructing us in the ways of salvation and leading us to Christ (2 Tim. 3: 14-17). Many aspects of Chris-
Christian worship are based on and derived from the practices of Judaism: see pages 69-74, below.

Christianity is not a rejection but a fulfillment of the old covenant (see Mt. 5: 17-19). The wild Gentile branches are grafted onto the chosen olive tree, God's vine, Israel (see Rom. 11: 17-24). In Jesus, we are reconciled and made one people of God (Eph. 2: 11-22).

- Salvation of the nations: Jesus told his apostles to go and preach his gospel to Jerusalem, Samaria, and the rest of the world (Mt. 28: 19-20; Acts 1: 8; Lk. 24: 47). This is a continuation of the role foreseen for Israel by the prophets, who promised God's salvation for all the nations.2 (See Is. 42: 10-12; 66: 23; Jer. 4: 2; Ps. 66: 4; Psalms 67, 96, 117.)

- The death of Jesus: The authorities of the Jewish people at the time of Christ plotted his death (see Jn. 11: 49-53; 19: 6). The Vatican Council warns us not to extend the blame for our Lord's death to all the Jewish people of that time or any other. This is contrary to the spirit of Jesus and the teaching of his Church. Christians must not teach bad things about the Jewish people.

- Condemnation of anti-Semitism: All forms of hatred and persecution against the Jewish people are rejected by the Council, no matter when they took place in our history or from what source. (Included among these are anti-Jewish writings such as The Epistle of Barnabas, John Chrysostom's sermons against the Jews, and even decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council3 in 1215.)

Condemnation of all forms of discrimination (no. 5): The declaration closes with a total condemnation of "all persecutions against any man" (no. 4). God is the Father of every human person, and everyone is made in his image. Love of neighbor and God go hand in hand (1 Jn. 4: 7-8); Christians will be known by their love for others in obedience to Jesus' new commandment (Jn. 13: 34-35).

Any form of discrimination against others because of their race, color, creed, or state in life is rejected by the Council as foreign to the mind of Christ.

Later Actions

As a result of the Vatican Council's teaching, the Secretariat for Non-Christians was established by the Holy See, and continues to promote the Council's aims.

Dialogue with the Jewish faith: Several positive steps have been encouraging dialogue at various levels:

- Commission established: In October 1964, Rome set up the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

- Guidelines: Important guidelines on our religious relations with the Jewish people were developed by the Commission, and were issued on December 1, 1964.4 This document speaks of dialogue, the scriptures, liturgy, religious teaching and education, and joint social action. In all these areas Christians and Jews can seek.

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4 Contained in Flannery's Vatican Council II: document 57, pages 743-749.
ways to understand themselves and one another more fully, to share their common heritage in the Hebrew scriptures, and to pray the psalms of David together.

- New Testament times: The New Testament uses the word "Jews" in several senses: sometimes it refers to the members of the Jewish faith or nation; sometimes, to the people of Judea; and sometimes, to Jewish authorities who are opposed to Jesus. This latter meaning is strongly evident in chapters 8, 11, and 12 of John, as well as in his passion narrative.⁵

- Today: While the gospel according to John was being developed and written, the Church and Synagogue of the day were in conflict over the meaning of Jesus. The strong feelings against those who opposed Christ come through clearly in John's gospel. But when it is proclaimed today, at a long distance in time and space from the original conflict, we can be misled, and be tempted to understand "Jews" in the more general sense, the people rather than their authorities. To avoid such misunderstandings (and the sad persecutions of Jews that stain our Christian history), the Commission says that we should use a more explanatory translation when the text requires, particularly in liturgical proclamation.⁶

- In Canada: Jewish-Christian dialogue is active in Canada. Some examples are given here:

  - National level: The episcopal commission for ecumenism maintains contacts with Judaism through The National Tripartite Liaison Committee (of the Canadian Jewish Congress, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Canadian Council of Churches). Recent annual conferences have been concerned with positive topics, such as: affirming positive values of our own and other faiths in faith education (as well as not transmitting prejudices), and religious values in a secular society.

  Elements in the Canadian catechetical program help grade school students and their families to explore the Jewish roots of our faith and its practices, and to grow in their respect for the richness of the Jewish tradition.

  Through its national publications, the CCCB is promoting further understanding of Jewish feasts and liturgy: in both French and English editions, the liturgical calendar and the National Bulletin on Liturgy continue to help readers appreciate Jewish feasts and aspects of Jewish liturgy.

  - Statements on Holy Week: In 1979, the Archbishop of Toronto issued a lenten statement on Holy Week and the Jewish Passover.⁷ In 1980, Most Rev. Eugene LaRocque, chairman of the Tripartite Committee, issued a statement asking Christians to guard against transmitting anti-Semitic prejudice unwittingly during Holy Week celebrations.

  - MI-CA-EL Center, 4661 Queen Mary Road, Montréal, Québec H3W 1W3. The Sisters of Sion provide the background for the information on Jewish feasts contained in the liturgical calendar each year: see Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy — 1980-1981 Liturgical Calendar, note 30, pages 48-49.

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⁶ See Flannery, document 57, section II, Liturgy, pages 745-746, and note 1 on page 746.

• *Room for local action:* Local groups that want to become involved in Jewish-Christian relations may begin by studying the Vatican II declaration on relationships with non-Christian religions, and the 1974 guidelines. These documents contain many practical suggestions.

• *Some points for sensitivity:*

  □ Dates: In Jewish circles, the years since Christ (our AD, *anno Domini*, or year of the Lord) are referred to as CE (common era). The years before Christ (our BC or before Christ) are called BCE (before the common era).

  □ Bible: For Jews, the bible is what Christians call the Old Testament or the Hebrew scriptures; Jews refer to the New Testament as the New Testament. Christians use the word bible to mean both the Jewish bible and the New Testament together.

**Relations with Islam:** Rome continues a worldwide dialogue with Muslims. In a letter to the Muslim world at the end of Ramadan (an annual month of fasting) in 1980, Archbishop Jean Jadot, Pro-President of the Secretariat for Non-Christians, noted: "Faith in God remains our common ideal for the building of a society in which all men recognize each other as brothers walking toward good in the light of God. Is this not a pressing reason for engaging Muslims and Christians in frank and open collaboration for the progress of man and the extension of peace and fraternity, in the free profession of the religion proper to each?"

**Other religions:** In seeking to learn about the spiritual values of other faiths, we learn about their sacred books, their calendar of feasts, and their spiritual values.

**Helpful reading:**


*Christians and Jews Today/Chretiens et Juifs aujourd'hui,* A Canadian Newsletter, published by Le Centre MI-CA-EL Notre Dame de Sion (4661 Queen Mary Road, Montréal, Québec H3W 1W3) and League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith (Suite 107, 4480 Ch. de Liesse, Montréal, Québec H4N 2R1, and Suite 250, 15 Hove Street, Downsview, Ontario M3H 4Y8).


The Lord's Prayer and Jewish Liturgy, edited by Jacob L. Petuchowski and Michael Brocke (1978, Burns & Oates, 2-10 Jerdan Place, London SW6 5PT).

Covenant or Covenants? A Historical Reflection on the Notion of Covenant (1979, Los Angeles Priest-Rabbi Committee, Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, 1531 W. 9th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90015; or Committee on Interreligious Activities, Board of Rabbis, 6505 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048).

Caring for the Dying Person: Catholic-Jewish Reflective Statement (1979, same addresses as above booklet).


Bulletin, Secretariat for Non-Believers, Vatican City.

Ateismo e Dialogo/Atheism and Dialogue, a quarterly review published by the Secretariat for Non-Believers, Vatican City.


CORRESPONDENCE COURSES IN SCRIPTURE

The Divine Word Center in London, Ontario, continues to offer JOURNEY, its guided study program in the scriptures:

○ Lessons 1-20 deal with the Old Testament;

○ Lessons 21-40 are on the gospels and other principal writings of the New Testament.

For further information and application forms, get in touch with:

Guided Study Programs
P.O. Box 2400
London, Ontario N6A 4G3
Telephone: (519) 439-7211

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IMPLICATIONS FOR LITURGY

As Christian Churches of every tradition examine their worship and spirituality, they are coming to realize that we all share many things in common. Some of these are discussed in the following articles.

OUR COMMON LITURGICAL ROOTS

From Judaism: The Jewish roots of Christian worship are an important part of our Christian inheritance. We are beginning once more to appreciate these roots in their depth. We use the Old Testament scriptures, including the psalms, as God's word. We use Hebrew or Aramaic words in our worship: Amen, Alleluia, Abba. The eucharistic prayer follows the form of a developed berakah or prayer of blessing (see Bulletin 68, pages 73-74). The synagogue service has influenced the shape of our liturgy of the word, and the times of daily prayer are still reflected in our liturgy of the hours. From the Jewish people we have inherited the practice of fasting with prayer, and our basic attitudes toward God and creation (see Bulletin 50, pages 262-264). Certain aspects of our calendar are derived from Judaism (see pages 71-74), as are some ritual gestures and actions.

New Testament: From the New Testament we all have baptism and the Lord's supper, and Sunday is our special day for public worship. We are called to give praise and thanks to the Father through the Lord Jesus in the Spirit: we are the people of praise and intercession. Certain times of the day are appropriate for personal and community prayer. We also pray at mealtimes. We share in the priesthood of our Lord. The Spirit calls us to many ministries and gives us many gifts for building up the Church of God. Some people are called to ministries of authority in a spirit of service.

Early centuries: The basic liturgies of the Churches developed in the first three centuries, and were expanded in the fourth. Documents like the Didache, Justin's Apologia, and Hippolytus' Apostolic Tradition show us the basic Christian patterns of worship, patterns we still follow.

Modern renewal: After five to ten centuries of sniping and suspicion, all Christian Churches are beginning to return to our common roots in Judaism, the New Testament, and the early Christian centuries. These liturgies — by actions as well as by words — enshrine our faith, express it, and deepen it.

- Balance between word and eucharist: Catholics have begun to re-emphasize the liturgy of the word as a preparation for the liturgy of the eucharist. Other Churches have come to see that a Sunday word service that is not regularly completed by the eucharistic celebration can be inadequate. We are all beginning to realize how closely word and eucharist are related in our worship (see Liturgy constitution, no. 56).

- Return to the prayer of the hours: Some Churches have retained the eucharist every Sunday; others have kept the prayer of the hours on the Lord's day; some have retained both. The major Christian denominations are taking a fresh look at the
liturgy of the hours for public use and for personal prayer. All are moving toward a pastoral form that is more for parish than monastery. (See Bulletin 58, pages 112-116; no. 72, pages 35-43.)

○ **Signs and symbols**: For the past five and a half centuries, Catholics have retained these, but often in a minimal way: we replaced blessed water with damp sponges, anointing with a dab on the forehead, listening with reading; we placed symbol on top of symbol. In general, the Reformation rejected this minimalistic approach, and replaced it with a strong emphasis on the reading and preaching of the word. Today, thank God, we are meeting in the middle: we are finding the meaning of our signs and symbols (often from the scriptures: Liturgy constitution, no. 24), and are returning to the generosity of their use in the early Church; at the same time, others are rediscovering the richness of symbols and signs.

**Something familiar**: When we look at the most recent liturgical books of other Churches, we find ourselves quite at home: all the major Churches are recovering the fullness of Christian tradition and worship. A Catholic who looks at the recently revised books of the Episcopalians, Lutherans, or United Methodist Church, for instance, would find most of the contents quite familiar: a comparison with earlier books of worship (including Roman Catholic ones) would show how far the Spirit has led us all in the past two decades.

All the major liturgical renewals in these years have been a return to the spirit of our earlier traditions. More scriptural theologies of the Church have also helped us to see more clearly the Church that we are.

As we return to and rediscover our common liturgical roots, Christians are feeling a greater longing to be reunited at the table of the Lord.

* * *

**Helpful reading:**


*The Book of Common Prayer* (proposed): see footnote 8 on page 62, above.


SHARING OUR LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Most people accept any calendar — civil, religious, community, or neighborhood organization — without much thought. When questioned, we are puzzled: "It's always been that way!"

It is interesting to find out the roots of the calendar that we share as Christians.

Jewish calendar: Some elements that have affected the Christian calendar include a weekly day set aside for God; the annual celebrations of Passover and Pentecost; days of fasting; morning and evening prayer; and prayers at meals.

Early Christians: There are some strong developments of the Christian calendar during the first three centuries:

• Lord's day: Sunday, the first day of the week, is celebrated as the Lord's day. This is the day of Jesus' resurrection (Lk. 24: 1-7, and parallels); of his appearance to Simon (Lk. 24: 34) and to the Eleven (Lk. 24: 36-49); it is the day when the disciples at Emmaus recognized him in the breaking of bread (Lk. 24: 28-32). The following Sunday Jesus appeared to Thomas and the other apostles (Jn. 20: 26-29).

Pentecost comes seven weeks after Easter, and the Spirit is poured out on the Church (Acts 2: 1-41). Sunday is the day of Paul's eucharistic sermon at Troas (Acts 20: 7-12); each Sunday the Corinthians were to set aside money for the Church in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16: 2). The last appearance of the Lord recorded in the New Testament is on a Sunday (Rev. 1: 10). Sunday as the Lord's day and the time of assembly for public worship is mentioned in the Didache (as early as the year 100), and by Justin of Rome (around 150).

• Pascha: The celebration of the paschal mystery — the dying and rising of the Lord Jesus, seen as one saving event — was firmly established in the second century. The paschal fast on Saturday, and Friday if possible, is mentioned by Hippolytus around 217; during the Easter vigil celebration, the catechumens were fully initiated into the Church. The words of 1 Cor. 5: 6-8 could suggest a Christianized Passover celebration as early as the year 57, or might refer only to the Jewish feast.

• Station days: Fasting and praying on Wednesday and Friday (to replace the Jewish practice on Monday and Thursday — see Lk. 18: 12) are mentioned in the Didache.

• Lent: Mention is made in the third century of a period of preparation for the pascha. This time is called the Tessarakonte (from the Greek for 40 days).

• Easter season: This period, called Pentekoste (50 days), is mentioned during the third century.

• Anniversaries of martyrs were celebrated at the tomb in the place where they died for Christ.

Expansion in the fourth century: Once the Church was allowed freedom of worship by Constantine, the scene was set for the construction of many great basilicas (see Bulletin 74, pages 106-107) and for the gradual expansion of the liturgical calendar. The changes described below took place in various areas and in different years. Gradually, however, they spread to most Christian centers.
○ **Sunday**: The Lord's day became the public weekly feast. In 321, Constantine ruled that courts and markets would be closed on this day.

○ **Christmas**: This feast was first celebrated around 336 in Rome. It commemorated the incarnation of the Son of God as one of us, and was not limited to the memory of his birth. The celebration spread gradually throughout the Roman empire in the next hundred years.

○ **Epiphany**: This is the Eastern parallel to the Western celebration of Christmas. It commemorates the Lord's incarnation, epiphany, and baptism, and the wedding feast of Cana. Some think that its origins may go back to Ephesus in the first century.

○ **Lent**: This season expanded gradually in different parts of the Church. St. Athanasius encouraged the Church at Alexandria to adopt the Western practice. Even in the time of Gregory the Great (590-604), Rome observed 36 days of Lent, a "tithe" or tenth of the year.

○ **Holy Week and Easter triduum**: In Jerusalem, elaborate rites were developed to mark the days of the Great Week. Good Friday and Easter were celebrated as distinct events more than as elements of one saving action. These rites spread slowly around the Christian world.

○ **Ascension and Pentecost**: Both part of the one paschal mystery, these were split into separate celebrations at Jerusalem according to Luke's timetable.

○ **Advent** as a time of preparation for Epiphany began in Gaul in the second half of the fourth century. Sometimes it was considered as another Lent. Eventually it became a period of preparation for Christmas, lasting from four to six weeks.

○ **Feasts of martyrs**: Many Churches adopted martyrs from other places, and added their feasts to the local calendar.

○ **Ember days and rogation processions**: These days of prayer and penance developed from the early station days. They were held in Rome, and later spread throughout the Latin Church.

By the end of the fourth century, we can recognize many celebrations which will remain, though slightly modified, in our current calendar.

**Middle ages**: Few major developments took place in this period:

○ **Lent**: This season forgot its connection with Christian initiation. After being used as a period of repentance for penitent sinners, its penitential practices were taken up by the people in general.

○ **Feasts of saints**: Various calendars cross-fertilized one another. Pope Sergius I brought four feasts of Mary from the East in the late 600s. The right of canonization was transferred from the local bishop to Rome. There were many holy days which were public holidays — more than one a week on the average.

○ **Sunday was submerged** by many lesser celebrations. Despite several reforms of the calendar, the feasts kept swarming in and overcoming the Lord's day liturgy. (A similar thing has already begun to occur since the 1963 Liturgy constitution: nos. 106, 108.)
• **Eastern Churches:** Their calendars remained relatively undisturbed by Western calendars, both before and after 1054. They share with us in the earliest feasts and celebrations.

**Reformation:** There were various reactions to the disordered Roman calendar in the Reformation period and in the founding of later Churches and religious bodies:

- Some accepted the Roman calendar, but purified it and made it much simpler: an example is the *Book of Common Prayer* of 1549.
- Some abolished the Roman calendar, and just kept Sundays.
- Some retained a few other celebrations, such as Easter and Christmas.

**Today: Sharing Calendar and Lectionary**

**Lectionary:** After a number of years of consultation and testing (see Bulletin 23, *Particular Lectionary*), the Roman Catholic Church issued the *Lectionary for Mass* in 1969. This was actually a series of lectionaries for Sundays, weekdays, saints' celebrations, sacramental occasions, and other celebrations. (A detailed study of the elements of the lectionary is given in Bulletin 50, *Reading God's Word: The Lectionary*)

- Today, some of the major Churches in the United States and Canada have begun to use most of the Sunday readings in the Roman lectionary, although with minor adaptations.

**Calendar:** As soon as we begin to work on the lectionary we realize that we need to work on the calendar also, since both go hand in hand.

- Today, some of the major Churches have adopted the *strong seasons* (Advent-Christmas, Lent-Holy Week-triduum-Easter season). As we begin to share the Sundays, the major seasons, and the more important feasts, we are coming closer together.

- **Taking inventory:** Today we need to see where each Church is at with regard to its calendar. Where are the Orthodox, the Roman Catholics, the Anglicans, the Lutherans, and the other major Churches? What seasons and Sundays do they observe? What system of readings is each Church using for the major seasons and feasts? What are they using for the other parts of the liturgical year? Are they on a one-year, two-year, or three-year calendar? (See Bulletin 76, pages 208-209.)

- **Moving toward unity:** Before any Church tries to impose its calendar on others, or adopt others' calendars for itself, we need to sit down to do two things:
  - Understand our own calendar and lectionary in the light of our own tradition and of the present currents of reform;
  - Begin to understand the calendar and lectionary of other Churches in the light of their tradition and of current movements of renewal.

- **No more unilateral moves:** Until the past decade or so, it mattered little when one Church changed its lectionary or calendar. From the movements of the past dozen years, however, it is quite evident that no major Christian community can
make independent changes in its calendar or lectionary from now on. Changes need to be negotiated among national Churches, international federations, and the worldwide, multilingual Roman Catholic Church. What one Church does now has worldwide effects.

Helpful reading:

“General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar,” in the sacramentary (Canadian edition, pages 67-81).


*From Ashes to Fire: Services of Worship for the Seasons of Lent and Easter — Supplemental Worship Resources*, no. 8 (1979, Abingdon, Nashville, TN; in Canada, G.R. Welch Co., 310 Judson St., Toronto, Ontario M8Z 1J9): see review in Bulletin 74, pages 142-143.

*Sunday Is the Lord’s Day*: Liturgical leaflet (1979, CCCB, Ottawa).

National Bulletin on Liturgy:
- No. 43: *Sunday Belongs to the Lord*
- No. 47: *Year of Praise*
- No. 58: *Day by Day We Give Him Praise*
- No. 67: *Planning our Year of Worship*
- No. 70: *Liturgical Year and Spirituality.*
- Issues on Lent and Easter: nos. 37 and 42.
- Issues on Advent and Christmas: nos. 36, 41, and 55.


MOVING TOWARD COMMON WORSHIP

It is through our baptism that we are made sharers in the priesthood of Jesus. When we are baptized into his Church, he gives us the privilege and responsibility of full, intelligent, and active participation in his worship and in that of his Church. This kind of participation is the primary and indispensable source of the true spirit of the Lord Jesus. (See Liturgy constitution, no. 14.)

The goal of ecumenism is to have all Christians be able to share in the same eucharistic celebration (Ecumenism, no. 4). As we move gradually toward this, there are many ways in which we can share our prayer and worship even now. These in turn will help us to come closer to one another as we let God's word and our worship shape us more according to the mind of Christ.

Liturgies of the Word

A liturgy of the word may be described as involving three simple steps:

- We listen to God's word as it is proclaimed to us;
- We reflect and pray about his word and its implications for us;
- We respond in silence, song, prayer, and action.

Value and power: Today we Catholics are beginning to recognize the importance and value of celebrations of the word. Restored by the Vatican Council (see Liturgy constitution, no. 35: 4), these liturgies of the word may be celebrated on any occasion when Christians gather together for prayer and worship. God speaks to us through his word, deepens our faith and our love, and leads us to work more fervently in his service. Services of the word also prepare us to take part more fully in the official liturgy of the word, especially in the Lord's day gatherings of the people of God.

All Christian Churches have several forms of the liturgy of the word in their public worship:

- Liturgy of the hours: This is a more developed form of the liturgy of the word: see below, page 77.

- Liturgy of the word: Before we celebrate the eucharist or another sacrament, we prepare by a service of God's word. This service prepares us for and leads us into the sacramental celebration. Several readings (usually Old Testament, epistle, and gospel) are followed by silent prayer. After the first reading, a responsorial psalm is sung, and an acclamation to Christ is sung in preparation for the gospel. A homily or reflection on the word leads into intercessions for the Church and for the world.

- Bible services: Many worship services take the shape of a less formal celebration of the word: families, groups, or congregations may listen to the word of God, reflect on his teaching, and respond by silence, song, and Christian action. Penance celebrations are a form of bible service, and lead us to respond to God's word by repenting for our sins.
Renewal: The reforms of Vatican II have led us to several areas of renewal and development:

- **Ministry of reading:** This ministry was alive and strong in the early Church, but was eclipsed for centuries; eventually it became the monopoly of the presiding minister. The past two decades have witnessed a restoration of this role in the Church. Now — from parishioners to the presiding bishop or priest — listen as God’s word is proclaimed. Greater care is spent on the preparation and training of readers (see Bulletin 56).

- **Book of readings:** When the Roman lectionary was issued in 1969 in response to the Council (Liturgy constitution, nos. 51 and 35: 1), the Catholic world settled down to explore the richness of God’s word as proclaimed in the liturgy, especially on the Lord’s day (see Sunday lectionary, in Bulletin 50, pages 224-230). As lectionaries were produced in the early 1970s, serious efforts were made by episcopal conferences and publishers to produce worthy instruments for good proclamation. In North America, other Churches adopted the Roman lectionary, but then proceeded to alter the Sunday readings slightly; as a result, we now have about five slightly different lectionaries based on the Roman order, and people are trying to work back to one form again. (See Bulletin 76, pages 208-209.)

- **Place of the word:** Today we are all learning to have more concern for the importance and dignity of the lectern from which we proclaim God’s word: it is a sign of our faith in and respect for the word. (See Place of the word, in Bulletin 74, pages 128-131.)

- **Presence of God:** Today we are recognizing that God is speaking to us when his word is proclaimed with faith in the liturgical celebrations, and when we listen with faith. God’s word is a living power among all who believe it (1 Thess. 2: 13; Liturgy constitution, no. 7; GL, nos. 9, 33).

**How we can share:** We can reflect on the signs of respect that we show for God’s word in our liturgical rites and symbols and in our personal and family prayer and customs. We can share these with members of other Christian Churches, and in turn learn from their practices of reverence. We can try to grow in our own respect for God’s word. When taking part in the liturgy of the word in another Church’s celebration, we can give our full attention to God’s teaching, and let the Spirit speak through the inspired writings and the reverence of the community and its ministers.

- **Sunday readings:** Clergy can share their insights and reflections on God’s word as they prepare for their Sunday celebrations. Lay members may share their prayers and meditation with their neighbors, and learn to see God’s hand as he touches us all in his love.

- **Community celebrations:** When preparing for an event like the week of prayer for Christian unity, or for local celebrations, clergy and laity may share their traditions and develop a liturgy of the word that will both proclaim the Christian faith and build it up in all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord.

**Helpful reading:**

Liturgy of the Hours

Before 1963, Roman Catholics retained the divine office, but it was mainly reserved for the clergy and some religious communities, most frequently as an individual devotion or obligation, and in Latin; it was usually recited rather than sung or celebrated. The Anglican Church kept mattins and evensong as public offices in sixteenth century England, and continues them today in parish churches.

**Vatican II:** In 1963, the Council urged the return of the liturgy of the hours to the people of God. Morning and evening prayer are the most important hours. (See Liturgy constitution, nos. 100, 89a.) Already we are beginning to see the results of this renewal:

- **Morning and evening prayer:** Christian communities are returning to or renewing the celebration of morning and evening prayer. At the beginning and end of the day, we turn to God, praise him for his glory, and ask his help for us, for the people of God, and for the world. (See Bulletin 58, *Day by Day We Give Him Praise*; no. 72, *Music in Our Liturgy*; no. 75, *Praying the Psalms.*

- **Signs of renewal:** Many Churches are renewing or developing forms of morning and evening prayer in keeping with the Christian tradition. The Roman Catholic Church has renewed its official liturgy of the hours, and many popular versions of it have appeared in the past decade. Episcopalians in the United States, and Lutherans in Canada and the U.S.A., have also developed excellent forms of the prayer. The Consultation on Common Texts (CCT), an informal meeting of Catholics, Anglicans, and Protestants in the U.S. and Canada, is working to develop a common office for use at ecumenical gatherings.

- **Prayer on many occasions:** The office of one Church or a combined or popular form may be prepared and celebrated whenever Christians come together to pray and work and study.

Sacraments

All major Christian Churches recognize two gospel sacraments, baptism and eucharist or the Lord's supper. Some recognize more sacraments, even the seven held by the Roman Catholic and Eastern Churches. All, however, accept that these moments are important and sacred in the lives of individuals and of the believing community. This common ground can be explored more fully, but first of all we must ask what our Church practises and teaches in this area.

**Baptism:** The Second Vatican Council called for a reform in the Catholic celebration of initiation (Liturgy constitution, nos. 64-70), and reminded us that when someone baptizes, it is really our Lord Jesus who baptizes (no. 7). In baptism we are reborn by water and the Holy Spirit (Jn. 3: 5). Since Vatican II, Catholics have been more willing to recognize baptism celebrated by other Churches, and have ceased the abuse of rebaptizing those baptized in another Christian Church. Common baptismal certificates are now possible (see Bulletin 73, page 92).

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1 "This is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 1: 33; see Mt. 3: 11). See St. Augustine, *In Johannis Evangelium Tractatus CXXIV,* treatise VI, 7 [re Jn. 1: 33], in *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina,* vol. XXXVI, Aurelii Augustini Opera, Pars VIII (1954, Brepols, Turnhout), pages 56-57: "If Peter should baptize, it is he [Christ] who baptizes; if Paul should baptize, it is he who baptizes; if Judas should baptize, it is he who baptizes.”
The Christian initiation of adults is now seen as the norm for our baptismal practices. A strong emphasis is placed on faith in preparing for and celebrating baptism: adults prepare for initiation by a long journey, in which they grow in faith and love and action with Christ and his Church; when children are to be baptized, their parents need to develop their own faith and prepare for their child's journey toward full initiation (see Bulletin 73, Baptizing Children.)

The mutual recognition of baptism by major Christian Churches and the realization that we are brothers and sisters in Christ through this sacrament are important, and are steps toward ultimate unity among Christians.

Helpful reading:


Eucharist: Christians have continued to obey Christ’s command to remember him: we take bread and wine, bless, break, and give/receive the body and blood of Christ in communion. All major Christian Churches have a form of the Lord’s supper. The past few decades have seen serious movements of renewal among Christians. Those who have not been in the habit of celebrating the eucharist frequently are gradually moving toward celebration each Sunday. Catholics are placing greater emphasis on the Lord’s day celebration, and are gradually developing the liturgy of the hours as a background of praise to the Sunday eucharist. As noted on pages 75-76, the liturgy of the word in the eucharist is being given more vigor.

- Eucharist and unity: The eucharist is both the cause and the sign of Christian unity (Ecumenism, no. 2). Gradually, the desire for sharing eucharist — which is the goal of ecumenical activity (Ecumenism, no. 4; see page 55, above) — is growing among Christians. This is surely a sign of the Spirit’s action, moving us ever closer in Christ.

- There are two extremes to be avoided. One is to emphasize that the eucharist is a sign of unity, and to avoid any opportunity for intercommunion, leaving aside that it is also a cause moving us toward union. The other extreme is to overemphasize that the eucharist is a cause of unity, and promote intercommunion indiscriminately, forgetting that we are not yet one. Catholic ecumenism sees a balance between the aspects of sign and cause.

- Experiencing the pain of disunity: The lack of unity among the Christian Churches is a scandal and an obstacle to the preaching of the gospel. As we work and pray for unity, we should begin to experience more fully the pain of separation. The fact that we are separated at the table of the Lord, where we should be most closely united to Christ and to one another, should motivate us all to work and pray harder for full and complete unity among Christians.

- Divisions: Pope John Paul II has expressed the hope that we may be united by the year 2000 (see page 63, above). What is keeping us apart? Different beliefs and theologies — of the Church, about ministries, and about the eucharist and other sacraments — seem to be the main things that keep us from being one. We need to ask ourselves in prayer before God: Are some of these differences because one or
other group has departed from the teaching or example of Jesus? Are some of them natural developments because of different cultural approaches or because of the passage of the centuries? Are they differences which are merely human barriers, or are they also barriers in the eyes of God? Are some differences based on hardened human attitudes? As dialogue continues among Christian Churches (see pages 84-85), we are beginning to see more signs of agreement and fewer real divisions: for this we should be grateful to God, and be encouraged to work and pray even harder for unity.

What Are Our Theologies Today?

The Second Vatican Council has led Catholics back to the theological insights of the scriptures and the early Christians. We have renewed our way of looking at the Church (more as the people of God than as a juridical organization); at the liturgy (worship by Christ and his holy baptized people); at the scriptures, ministries, sacraments, prayer and praise. As Catholics we need to digest these insights and apply them in our worship, personal living, and in our ways of expressing our faith by word, action, and sign.

In order to be able to understand ecumenical dialogue and developments, we need to explore our own faith more fully, and to see where the Spirit of God is leading us.

Helpful reading:

Vatican II, Dogmatic constitution on the Church; Dogmatic constitution on divine revelation; Constitution on the liturgy; Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world.


*Catholicism,* by Richard P. McBrien: see review on page 92 of this issue.

*This is the Church,* in Bulletin 73, pages 51-52; *We are the Church,* in no. 74, pages 100-102.

Suggestions for Further Study

These points have been contributed by Dr. J. Frank Henderson of Edmonton, chairperson of the National Council for Liturgy. A parish or diocesan group wishing to become more aware of the meaning and implications of ecumenism and liturgy may use this outline for setting up a program of study.

Introduction:

- **Present situation re ecumenism**: Increased theological understanding and convergence; increased liturgical convergence; increased common service and witness; increased common life, e.g., through mixed marriages.

- **Present needs re ecumenism**: More understanding; more sensitivity; higher priority in Catholic life.

- **Promotion of ecumenism through the regular Catholic liturgy**: Personal renewal and change of heart; expression of renewed ecclesiology; emphasis on scripture; prayer for Christian unity (specific suggestions for general intercessions at every eucharist).
Opportunities for common worship: General; participation of non-Catholics at regular Catholic services; participation of Catholics at regular non-Catholic services; the special position of the Orthodox; participation in and promotion of ecumenical services.

Sacraments and rites: Ecumenical implications, needs, opportunities, and problems.

- **Eucharist:** Brief statement on meaning of eucharist in different Churches; brief statement on liturgical celebration of eucharist in different Churches.

- Participation of non-Catholics at Catholic eucharists: requirements of hospitality; ministerial role at special event eucharists, e.g., as readers; eucharistic hospitality.

- Participation of Catholics at non-Catholic eucharists: Attitudes; degree of participation; eucharistic hospitality.

- **Baptism:** Brief statement on meaning of baptism in different Churches; brief statement on the liturgical celebration of baptism in different Churches.

- Baptism in a Catholic church with a Catholic priest presiding: Where both parents are Catholic; where one parent is Catholic, the other not; at eucharist, outside the eucharist; godparents and witnesses; eucharistic hospitality; participation of non-Catholic clergy; other participation of non-Catholics.

- Baptism in a non-Catholic church with non-Catholic minister preaching; where one parent is non-Catholic and the other is Catholic: godparents and witnesses; participation of Catholic clergy; other participation of Catholics.

- Baptism of adults.

- **Reception into full communion with the Catholic Church:** Ecumenical sensitivity of the rite; mutual recognition of baptism; not 'converts.'

- **Marriage:** Brief statement on meaning of marriage in different Churches; brief statement on liturgical celebration of marriage in different Churches.

- Marriage of two Catholics: Witnesses and attendants; other participation of non-Catholic friends and relatives.

- Marriage of a Catholic and a non-Catholic in a Catholic church: Witnesses and attendants; participation of non-Catholic clergy; other participation of non-Catholic friends and relatives; choice of texts and design of service; at eucharist, not at eucharist; eucharistic hospitality; other aspects of service, e.g., music.

- Marriage of a Catholic and a non-Catholic in a non-Catholic church: Witnesses and attendants; participation of Catholic clergy; other participation of Catholic friends and relatives; other aspects of service.

- **Funerals:** Brief statement on liturgical celebration of funerals in different Churches.

- Funeral of a Catholic: Participation of non-Catholic clergy (wake, church, grave); other participation of non-Catholics (wake, church, grave); eucharistic hospitality.
Funeral of a non-Catholic conducted by a Catholic priest: Occasions; other points, as above.

Funeral of a Catholic and a non-Catholic together conducted by a Catholic priest: As above.

Funeral of a non-Catholic conducted by a non-Catholic minister: Occasions; other points, as above.

Ecumenism, liturgy and the Orthodox: Participation of Orthodox Christians in Catholic services; participation of Catholics in Orthodox services.

- Re: Baptism and chrismation; eucharist, weddings, penance, anointing, viaticum, ordination, funerals, etc.

Ecumenical sensitivity and hospitality at other Catholic services: General principles.

- Occasions: Seasonal feasts; installation or ordination of bishops and pastors; religious profession; others.

Ecumenical services: General statement regarding common prayer.

- Suggestions regarding ecumenical services: Occasions; content and format; respect and sensitivity required.

- Specific examples: Week of prayer for Christian unity; Ash Wednesday; lenten penitential services; Passion (Palm) Sunday procession; way of the cross; Pentecost; Reformation Sunday.

- Suggestions for ecumenical prayer groups; for prayer in ecumenical groups.

Catholics and Jews:

- The problem of anti-Semitism in Catholic liturgy: Brief general statement and history; guidelines for preachers, especially in Lent.

- Participation of Catholics in Jewish services: Brief general introduction.

- In Jewish homes: Shabbat; Passover Seder.

- In synagogues: The Shabbat services; the Holy Days; Bar Mitzvahs.

- Catholic celebrations related to Jews and Judaism: General statement; Yom HaShoah (commemoration of the Holocaust); Passover Seder.
The Council of Jerusalem tried to solve the problem of various groups who imposed extra burdens on converts to the faith (Acts 15: 5-29). The Council suggested that the way into the Church should not be made more difficult: *only essentials were required*. But when we read of these four “essentials,” we realize how time-conditioned the Council members were: refraining from blood and from the flesh of strangled animals, for example, has nothing to do with our faith as Christians; Paul discussed eating meat sacrificed to idols in 1 Cor. 8: 1-13, and considered it wrong only if it hurt a person of weak conscience. Avoiding fornication is the only one of the four “essentials” that would be considered part of the Christian gospel today.

Christ’s desire: In the seventeenth chapter of the gospel according to John, we hear the attitudes of our Lord concerning unity among his followers: read Jn. 17: 1-26. After we hear the desires of our Lord Jesus, can we seek or promote anything that goes in the opposite direction?

Our responsibility: As believing communities, we must begin to discern our responsibilities as members of the Christian Church. How should we help our people to apply the gospel to their daily living of the message of our Lord Jesus? We use our talents, our abilities, our graces, and our gifts to spread the kingdom of God and to increase growth in the body of Christ.

Temptations: It is only human for every group to canonize its position, to consider this as the norm, and to want to impose this position (and the structures that maintain it) on others. In every dialogue there may be room for power struggles to avoid supposed loss of face. How much of this is human rather than Christian? How much of our discussion is based on the principles of Machiavelli’s *The Prince* rather than of the gospel?

Self-reform comes first: Ecumenism is not trying to reform other Churches or change them. It first of all demands that we ourselves return to the sources of our faith, that we be converted fully to Christ, that we give witness to our faith in our daily living, and that we try to understand our faith more fully. Reformation must come about in ourselves as individuals and in our own Church, according to the gospel teaching and according to our tradition — insofar as this is in harmony with the gospel.

Rearranging our priorities: Christ is calling all his people to unity in our day, just as he has done since the beginning. Each Christian Church has to open its heart and its life to Christ’s Spirit, and to reorder its priorities to accommodate and obey Christ’s will. For Catholics, working for unity is no longer a luxury but is rather a responsibility that takes first place (see *Working for unity is our duty*, page 51, above).

Rethinking our structures: All Churches have to rethink their structures in the light of the gospel and of the practices of the early Church. Are we letting some humanly designed structures stand in the way of God’s call for unity among his people?

- *In the liturgy:* We recognize today that there are several ways of celebrating the liturgy of the word. Roman Catholics already have a variety of formats: Sunday
and weekday Masses, morning or evening prayer and the office of readings, sacraments outside Mass and penance celebrations, and other forms of bible services. Recent years have seen the Churches coming closer in the varied forms of celebrating the word: see pages 75-77, above.

- **Ministries:** Churches are becoming more aware that Christ is the first servant and minister of God, and that all our ministries are based and modelled on Jesus. Do our present arrangements bring us closer to God? Are there ways in which we can improve or be more flexible in the spirit of the gospel message? Is there room for other models of ministries in the Churches?

**Our next steps:** There are several steps that we can take now:

- **Dialogues:** Among the various Churches, there are many forms of dialogue already in progress: we need to pray for all who are involved in dialogue, and to study their agreed statements and studies: see pages 84-86, below.
- **Action:** A variety of suggestions is contained in *Action we can take now:* see pages 87-91, below.

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As we come closer to Christ and his ideals, we begin to realize that we are closer to one another.

**Unity and diversity:** We are working for unity, not uniformity. We can be one in Christ without being identical and doing exactly the same things in the same way. Our structures, ceremonies, approaches, churches, vesture, music, prayers, and furnishings can vary, even widely, while we remain one in the essentials.

**We are called to change:**

— Not our liturgies or structures or titles,
— but first of all ourselves.

Then we will be ready to move with Christ in the directions that he wants us to take.

**Helpful reading:**

*Modern Ecumenical Documents on the Ministry* (1975, SPCK, Marylebone Road, London NW1 4D7).


*Gifts That Differ:* Lay Ministries Established and Unestablished, by David N. Power: see review on page 95 of this issue.

**ECUMENICAL ACTION**

**DIALOGUES AND DIRECTORIES**

**Dialogues**

Dialogues between theologians of different Churches are encouraged by the Second Vatican Council (Ecumenism, nos. 4, 11). Many official dialogues are already under way at various levels. Some of these are listed here.

"The primary purpose of dialogue is for each participant to learn from the other."¹

**International:** The Holy See, through its Secretariat for promoting Christian unity, has dialogues in progress with various Christian bodies, including the Orthodox, the Anglicans, and the Evangelical Lutherans. A joint working group has been established with the World Council of Churches.

Other countries also carry on dialogues at their own national level. In the United States, for example, many dialogues are being carried on between Catholics and other religious bodies.²

**In Canada,** the Catholic Church is taking part in dialogues through the episcopal commission for ecumenism. Current dialogues are being held with the Anglicans, Lutherans, and the United Church. There is a joint working group between the Canadian Council of Churches and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Christian Churches are also exploring the possibilities of a new ecumenical association in Canada. The tripartite committee is described on page 66, above.

○ **Action:** In Canada there are more than fifty coalitions and action groups sponsored by the Christian Churches, such as the PLURA group (Presbyterians, Lutherans, United Church, Roman Catholics, and Anglicans). These actions are mainly in the field of applying the social aspects of the gospel.

**Local action:** What can ordinary Catholics do? We can pray for Christian unity, and for those who are working for it in dialogues, conferences, and action groups. We can read statements and agreements, and try to understand what they mean. We can work for unity at our own level: see *Action we can take now*, on pages 87-91.

**Helpful reading:**

*Unité Chrétienne*, no. 52: "L’œcuménisme au Canada" (November 1978, 2, rue Jean-Carriès, 69005 Lyon, France). *This issue is now out of print.*


Directories and Guidelines

Following the general thrusts of the Council documents, the need was soon felt for the guidance and reassurance of official directories or guidelines for local action in ecumenical matters.

**Roman documents:** Among the most important we may mention these:

- *Directory Concerning Ecumenical Matters* (Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity):
- *On Admitting Other Christians to Eucharistic Communion* (Secretariat, June 1, 1972): in Flannery, document 43, pages 554-559; see also document 44, pages 560-563.
- *Ecumenical Collaboration at the Regional, National, and Local Levels:* Secretariat, February 22, 1975 (1975, Vatican Polyglot Press; reprinted in 1980). “What really matters is... the collaboration of Christians in prayer, reflection and action, based on common baptism and on a faith which on many essential points is also common” (no. 6c).

**Local action:** Some dioceses have commissions on ecumenism and some parishes have ecumenical committees. Where these are active, they can do much to promote practical ecumenism among the people of God. Where they have not been developed, or where they have become inactive or dormant, concerned people — who know and practise the Catholic faith and who are eager to work with the Church for unity among Christians — may be chosen to begin this work.

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A careful study of the directives and guidelines listed above, along with the directions and references in this Bulletin, would be a good starting point for any group working in ecumenism.

Association: The North American Academy of Ecumenists is open to people who are engaged in academic teaching related to ecumenism or who are involved professionally in ecumenical relationships. For further information, contact Rev. John Brandon, Treasurer, NAAE, 228 Alexander Street, Princeton, NJ 08540, U.S.A.

Helpful reading:


Oecumenisme / Ecumenism: a quarterly bulletin published by the Canadian Center for Ecumenism, 2065 Sherbrooke Street West, Montréal, P.Q. H3H 1G6. Also available in French.

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PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

In its decree on ecumenism, the Vatican Council reminds us of the need for prayer as a means to unity. Some key thoughts for further considerations:

Unity with the Churches of the East: Catholics should be making serious efforts to work to restore or preserve communion and unity with these Churches; this is to be done through our daily activities and organizations, especially by prayer and by dialogue on current pastoral needs. In the West, priests and people should work together in a friendly way with members of the Eastern Churches. (See Ecumenism, no. 18.)

Unity with the Churches of the West: Faith in Christ nourishes the Christian way of life of the Churches of the West. Their members are our brothers and sisters. God's word and the grace of baptism give them strength. Some of the fruits of their way of life can be seen in personal prayer, reflection on the scriptures, in family life, and in their community worship and praise. Their faith in the Lord Jesus leads them to thank God for the gifts he has given them, and to express their faith through true justice and love for others. (See Ecumenism, no. 23.)

Inspired by the Holy Spirit: Throughout the world, the Spirit of God is inspiring many people to pray, speak, and act in order to achieve the full unity desired by Christ. The Vatican Council urges all Catholics to accept the signs of our times, and to take part in the work of ecumenism. (See Ecumenism, no. 4.)

Praying together for unity: The essential element of ecumenism consists of conversion — a change of heart, a holy life — together with community and personal prayer for unity among Christians. Catholics should join their Christian brothers and sisters in ecumenical gatherings and in services of prayer for unity. Common prayer services are effective, and express the genuine bonds among all Christians. Christ prays with us when we gather in his name to pray for unity among his followers (see Jn. 17: 21; Mt. 18: 20; Ecumenism, no. 8).
ACTION WE CAN TAKE NOW

We do not have to wait until the day when the Ecumenical Patriarch, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of Rome concelebrate the eucharist. Right now each one of us is able to take some action that will contribute to and build up the unity of the body of Christ on earth. Some of these actions are described here; it is up to each local community, parish, and diocese to put them into practice.

The most important ecumenical action among Christians today is not at the level of official dialogues, encounters, and discussions: these are important and necessary, but their ultimate effect will depend on the ways that ordinary Church members are able to meet one another, and work and pray together. Many suggestions for experiencing Christian unity are offered in this article.

Meeting one another: How well do we Catholics know our Anglican, Protestant, or Orthodox neighbors? How often do the clergy from different Churches gather on a social basis to get to know one another? How often do members of various organizations (parish councils, liturgy committees, women’s organizations, youth groups) get together with their counterparts in the neighboring churches? Until we begin to meet one another openly (with Here I am instead of This is what I am trying to prove to you), we will not be able to dialogue freely.

Prayer: As Christians we share the same Spirit, and so we are able to pray together and to ask our Lord for the unity he desires among his people.

• Sharing prayer: We can meet with other Christians informally in our homes and in small groups. We can come together for prayer services on special occasions. We can agree to pray together for peace in the world, for the people of God, for our spiritual and civil leaders, for people suffering from disasters, sickness, depression.

• Praying for one another: We can pray for our local community, and for our own parishes or congregations. We can pray that Christ will send his Spirit to move all Christians toward unity. We may also pray for individuals and for neighbors. The more we pray for one another, the less we will feel apart and disinterested. As we pray in this way, the Spirit will draw us closer together in faith and love, closer to the will of Christ.

• Becoming familiar with others’ prayer forms: While we all have the same background of prayer to the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit, different Churches have developed different traditions and forms of prayer. We can share information about our forms of liturgy, personal prayer, and family devotions; we can share these not in a spirit of “Ours is better,” but rather of opening our hearts by saying, “This is how and why we do it.” By trying to enter into the spirit of other communities’ prayer, we will be able to learn and to share in the many ways that the Spirit leads God’s people.

• Week of prayer for unity among Christians: During the week leading to the feast of the conversion of St. Paul (Jan. 25),1 Christians around the world pray to-

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1 In Canada, this week is generally observed between the two Sundays surrounding this feast. Another suitable time is around Pentecost.
gether for the gift of unity. Though the achievement of unity may seem humanly impossible after so many centuries of separation and disunity, we must trust God and pray that his will may be done in us.

What action am I going to take?

**Working together:** God’s people are followers of Jesus Christ, and they are eager to do good works (Titus 2: 14). With our Lord Jesus Christ, we have to be concerned about justice and peace for all (see Lk. 4: 18-19): during the past century, the popes have constantly called the Church to realize the implications of the gospel in the modern world.

- **Preaching the social gospel:** See Bulletin 40, pages 244-251.
- **Areas of common concern:** Any community which dares to call itself Christian must share the compassion of the Lord Jesus for all who are in need: read Mt. 25: 31-46, and pray about it. Many of these people and situations are present in your community. How can you get together with other Christians to meet these needs now?

  — People in need: The aged and shut-ins (see Bulletin 33, pages 70-73); victims of addiction; the unemployed;2 those with handicaps;3 immigrants and refugees;4 the poor; victims of disaster (see Bulletin 39, pages 136-138; no. 48, page 139); lonely or disturbed persons (have you ever thought of working with or founding a telephone listening service?); talented children being bored, numbed, and totally unchallenged by some local school systems.

  — Situations needing attention: Safety hazards; poor housing;5 manipulation by various forms of advertising; anti-life programs; are community centers needed for various situations?

  — Other areas of concern: Get together with other Christians and share your concerns; then decide what you can do to face these concerns.6

  — Simple activities can be shared: a community census by all area churches (including taking notice of families needing special help); this could be kept up to date each year; bees for working, building, maintaining, cleaning up, quilting, sewing, with people from various churches working together for one another and on community projects; planning and working with one another to overcome negative situations and to promote and improve positive ones in the town or neighborhood.

  — See also Many possibilities of service, in Bulletin 53, pages 115-119.

What action am I going to take?

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3 Further references on helping those with handicaps are given in Access for all, in Bulletin 74, page 121. See also Bulletin 38, pages 106-110.

4 See Strangers in Our Midst (1977, CCCB, Ottawa).

5 See Decent Housing for All (1976, CCCB, Ottawa).

6 See Witness to Justice (1979, CCCB, Ottawa).
**Strengthening family life:** The pressures and stresses of modern society make it harder for Christian families today. How can the followers of Christ in each area help young people as they prepare for marriage? What help can be given to families as they face the various stages in life and growth? Christians can work together to celebrate the goodness and sacredness of marriage, to promote family prayer, and to encourage sane public attitudes toward morality. At the same time, believers need to work with others in promoting good mental health and in offering community help to those with marital problems or to persons trapped by addictions.

Christians who are faithful to the example and teaching of Christ cannot be indifferent to others in their need.

☐ What action am I going to take?

**Growing in our own faith:** In the area of ecumenism, it is important for Catholics to deepen their own faith and strengthen their religious practices. A workshop can encourage parishioners to move toward better personal and family prayer. Morning and evening prayer can begin in the parish for those who wish to take part, even if only a handful come at the beginning. We can keep trying to improve the quality of our Sunday celebrations of the eucharist. An extra program on growing in the faith — talks, discussions, prayers, sharing of faith experiences — could be held in spring and fall for those interested in taking part. There is always room for better preaching on Sundays and weekdays.

Read about the Church, and pray about it. See *This is the Church*, in Bulletin 73, pages 51-52; and *We are the Church*, in no. 74, pages 100-102.

☐ What action am I going to take?

**Knowing our own traditions:** Most adult Catholics know little of their history and traditions. It would be helpful to explore some of our background through lectures, discussion groups, parish bulletin inserts. How much do we know about our Christian devotions? See Bulletin 62, *Liturgy and Devotion*.

☐ What action am I going to take?

**Coming to know the traditions of other Churches:** Neighboring congregations could arrange to share with one another their traditions of prayer, devotion, and also their liturgical books. We can come to appreciate the prayers and practices that we have in common. Catholics have much to learn from other Christians' devotion to God's word.

☐ What action am I going to take?
Visiting church buildings: Christians of different denominations could visit several churches, and have a guided tour of the facilities in each. Sufficient time for questions would help all to understand a little more fully the meaning of the church building in the worship life of the congregation. Catholics would probably benefit from a tour of their own parish church, with an up-to-date explanation of where the Church is moving and what theology is expressed by the way we arrange our furnishings: see Bulletin 74, *House of the Church*.

What action am I going to take?

Taking part in other liturgies: See pages 75-81, above.

What action am I going to take?

Sharing church buildings: When a church burns down, neighboring congregations offer to share their facilities. Here and there across Canada and in other countries, different congregations are sharing the same building and facilities. Before building a church these days, we should ask ourselves if it is not possible to share other facilities.

What action am I going to take?

Sharing other resources: Even if they do not occupy the same building, congregations should be willing to share hymn books, equipment, bulletin inserts and covers, and other resources, at least on occasion.

What action am I going to take?

Knowing other books of worship: Neighboring clergy could share their basic liturgical books — in pew or study editions, perhaps — with one another; sometimes parish organizations are willing to cover the cost of these exchanges. Each Church could share its insights into these books as they reflect their tradition and practices. In this way, the clergy may grow in their understanding and respect for the different traditions, as well as see how much we do share in common.

What action am I going to take?

Christian education: Each local community of believers should examine its program of religious education for both children and adults, and make sure that a true spirit of ecumenism is being fostered. Resource materials should always reflect the present attitudes of the Church in working toward the unity that Christ wills for all his people.

What action am I going to take?
Liturgical seasons and calendars: See pages 71-74, above.

What action am I going to take?

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Other actions we can take: When Christians of different denominations know their own tradition and respect those of others, and meet in a spirit of prayer, they should remain open to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, and grow together in faith and love and service. In this way, Jesus builds up the kingdom of God on earth.

ECUMENISM IN PAST ISSUES

The place and importance of ecumenism in the life and worship of the Christian people have been discussed in many of the past issues of the Bulletin. For the convenience of our readers, these references are summarized here:


More recent articles include:

Haiku prayers: Bulletin 62, page 64; no. 63, page 85; no. 64, pages 190-191.
Christian Initiation: Into Full Communion: Bulletin 64.
Liturgy and ecumenism: no. 66, pages 292-298.
Common baptismal certificate: no. 73, pages 92-93.
Praying the Psalms: Bulletin 75.
Worship '80: Eucharist: Bulletin 76.

Book reviews of ecumenical importance are included in no. 63, pages 125-126; no. 68, pages 92 and 94; no. 74: pages 142-143 and 144; and no. 75, page 190.

A HAiku PRAYER

Father, make us one:
one with Jesus and with you
and with your Spirit.
**BRIEF BOOK REVIEWS**


These two simple coloring and activity books — one on the alphabet and the other on the numbers from one to twelve — are intended for preschoolers at home and in religion classes. They encourage children to praise God for his wonderful creation.


Fr. McBrien, who is chairman of the department of theology at Notre Dame University, has written a clear and competent study of the Catholic Church and its faith. He helps us to explore our faith in history and in the present, and encourages us to meet the challenges facing the Church as it moves toward the future.

Clearly written, the book covers five major areas: human existence, God, Christ, the Church, and the ethical and spiritual dimensions of Christian existence. Each of the 30 chapters concludes with a clear summary and some suggested readings. An appendix of statements, indexes of personal names and topics, and a glossary are repeated in each volume. The clear printing and sturdy binding make it a pleasure to study these two volumes.

The author presents each of the major subjects as it is in the Church today, as well as following it in the life and teaching of the past centuries. He traces the gradual movement of the Church — as the people of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit — from being culturally limited to its present state of becoming a truly worldwide Church.

The Church's liturgy is seen as an expression of its faith in practice, and is a source of our theology. The meaning and importance of the sacraments and Christian spirituality in the life of God's people are shown clearly.

Everyone who teaches or preaches the Christian faith or who is a student of the Church in history will benefit from the insights of *Catholicism,* and will be better prepared to take his or her part in the continuing renewal of Christ's Church. Highly recommended.


This devotional booklet seeks to provide sound foundations in the scriptures and in the documents of Vatican II for devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Bible services are provided for the novena of preparation for the feast (December 12), and nine biblical meditations are developed around the devotion to Mary under this title. Recommended for those who work with Spanish-speaking Catholics.


This book is based on *Liturgy Begins at Home,* by Earnest Larsen and Patricia Galvin (see review in Bulletin 70, page 192). It speaks of the new directions in religious education for children and adults, and of the renewal in the liturgy. Many practical suggestions offer helps for parents and teachers to lead children into a deeper faith through better celebration of the eucharist, the sacraments, and the Church year, and through more constant prayer. Recommended for parents, catechists, clergy, and all concerned with helping children and families to grow in their Christian living.

1 Prices for U.S. publications are given in U.S. dollars, unless otherwise noted.

Translated from Le Pain du Dimanche, this book provides a book of commentaries on the Sunday readings and a few other major feasts. For each day, about four pages of commentary are given, with separate sections on each reading: the text of the readings is given at the back of the book in the NAB version.

The commentaries on each reading are good, but tend to be self-sufficient, and do not reach out to the other two readings for that day or to the spirit of the season. The text of the psalm is omitted, and plays little part if any in the commentaries. It would have been better if a page of ideas were added for each season on using these readings in its spirit.

As far as the book goes, it provides useful helps, but the homilist who uses it needs to remember that the homily should lead into the eucharistic celebration. Recommended with reservation to homilists and to those who want to reflect on the scriptures for the Lord’s day.

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In 1956, this work was issued to cover the first hundred years of the story of St. John’s Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minnesota. Since 1980 is the 1500th anniversary of the birth of St. Benedict, this book has been updated by an epilogue covering the last quarter century to 1980.

This history of St. John’s touches the Church in the United States and in Canada in many ways. By founding missions and abbeys (St. Peter’s Abbey in Muenster, Sask., was founded in 1903), by education, and by its solid and varied work for the liturgical renewal, St. John’s has contributed strongly to the growth of the people of God. Throughout the book, the development and growth of the liturgical movement as part of the life of the Church in English-speaking North America is recorded.

Worship and Work helps all who are interested in the life and worship of Catholics to deepen their appreciation of the work of the generations before us. This well written volume leads us to praise God for his goodness in our history, and encourages us to continue to pray and work in the spirit of St. Benedict. Recommended.

* * *


Twelve simple stories about Jesus — including his childhood, adult life, death, resurrection, and post-resurrection appearances — lead to various activities and playlets that may be used or adapted by families and early grades in school. Similar activities could be developed around the gospel selection for Sundays throughout the liturgical year. Recommended as helpful for families and catechists.

* * *


A strange order is followed in the book: the weekdays of Advent and Christmas seasons, and then the Sundays and feasts of these seasons. It would seem that the Sundays should be given more prominence in accord with the Liturgy constitution of Vatican II (no. 106).

Each Sunday lists the three readings (without mention of the responsorial psalm), and provides three or four pages of reflective commentary. Similar reflections are provided for each weekday and feast, and each day’s meditation ends with a brief prayer. While not intended specifically for preachers, the book will be helpful to them. Recommended to clergy, religious, and all who wish to reflect on the scriptures of the Christmas cycle.

* * *

This is a Spanish-language adaptation of Discovering the Bible, reviewed in Bulletin 64, page 187. Eight themes lead us through the Hebrew scriptures and the New Testament, and encourage us to use them in our prayer. References, discussion questions, and a brief prayer service are included for each theme. Recommended for scripture study groups.


Dr. Searle presents a practical and pastoral study of the rite of the baptism of children, seen in its context of the rites of Christian initiation. Moving with ease through the scriptures and the twenty centuries of Christian tradition, he helps us to appreciate more fully the power and meaning of the symbols and rites used. After a brief history of Christian initiation, the book explores the baptism of children today in detail. The final two chapters look at confirmation and eucharist as completing our initiation in Christ.

This book provides a good guide to the liturgy of the baptism of children, and is recommended for clergy, liturgy committees, catechists, and parents.


In Bulletin 66, page 312, we reviewed Poverty: Who Needs It, by the same author. In this new booklet, he looks at the place of conscience, responsibility, and obedience in the lives of lay persons and of religious, and offers many provocative thoughts for further reflection and discussion.

Tableprayerbook, by Gabe Huck (1980, Liturgy Training Publications, 155 East Superior St., Chicago, IL 60611): illustrations, 47 pages, $1.25 (bulk prices available for ten or more copies).

This little 4½ by 5 inch booklet provides prayers and ideas for praying at meals. Drawn from Christian and Jewish sources, the prayers are brief and easy to use. A delightful booklet that could be of benefit in every home. Recommended for wide distribution.


When you first see this 4½ by 11 inch booklet, you wonder why someone didn’t do this long ago. For each Sunday of year A (1980-1981) it presents the three scripture readings in The Jerusalem Bible version, and on the facing page, a series of brief thoughts and questions to help family members dialogue with one another in the light of the weekly readings. The book is also useful for all who plan liturgy, for shut-ins, and for ministers to the sick, although the elderly may find the print size of the readings too small. We hope to see a new one for each year. Recommended.

Celebrating Liturgy: The Book for the Liturgy of the Word (1980, Liturgy Training Publications, 155 East Superior St., Chicago, IL 60611): paper, 8½ by 11 inches, v, 139 pages. $6.50 (bulk prices for five or more).

Each year this guide is prepared to help readers, homilists, liturgy teams, musicians, and catechists prepare for the Sunday eucharist. For each Sunday the three readings are given in two versions (NAB and JB), along with ideas and suggestions for understanding and applying God’s word in our lives. Seasonal introductions and the seasonal responsorial psalm are also included. The pronunciation guide for proper names is reprinted for the Canadian study edition of the Sunday lectionary. Celebrating Liturgy continues to be a useful planning guide for parishes desiring to have good Sunday liturgies. Recommended. (A review of the previous year’s edition is given in Bulletin 72, page 45.)

This book is volume 8 in Pueblo's Studies in the reformed rites, under the direction of Father Aidan Kavanagh, OSB. Clearly written, this study examines the present situation of ministries in the Church in the light of scripture, history, and theology, as well as in current needs and practices. Fr. Power goes on to look for a theology in which new developments can continue. The relation of liturgy and ministries is discussed, and lay ministries are seen to be based on the Spirit of God possessed by individual members of the Church. Recommended as an important and helpful study for all involved in promoting and developing ministries in the Church of today and tomorrow.

* * *


The past two decades have seen much renewal in the liturgy; similar developments have been taking place in moral theology. This book reflects on the meaning of sin, conversion, and faith, and looks at the contributions of the scriptures and the teaching Church to our moral insights. The book will be of interest to professors and students of theology, and those concerned with reconciliation and with the catechumenate. It takes time to read and grasp the message.

* * *


The introduction of this book describes it as a "practical journey" through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. It presents the successive steps of the rite clearly, and offers detailed practical suggestions for introducing the process in a parish. Many practical references — including Bulletin 64 — are mentioned and described, and addresses are given. When used as a companion to the rite, this book will be of help to pastors, liturgy commissions and committees, and members of the catechumenate team. Recommended.

* * *


The author sets out to use the modern social sciences to help us to understand more fully the meaning and place of the sacraments in the life of God's people today. He studies ritual and symbol, and the crises in our culture and in the Church which affect them. Sacraments are defined as "symbols arising from the ministry of Christ and continued in and through the Church, which (sic) when received in faith, are encounters with God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (page 123). The sacraments are situated in the context of the Church's duty of preaching God's word. They are best understood when seen under the model of celebration.

The book is concise, and requires careful reading, but will prove of value to clergy who want to grow in their understanding of the sacraments, and to students of theology and liturgy. Recommended.

* * *


Book one of this guide to the bible and prayer was reviewed in Bulletin 64, page 187; a Spanish edition is reviewed below on page 94. In book two, the author continues his simple presentation of eight biblical themes: community, hospitality, faith, worship, holiness, justice, suffering, and discipleship. Each has a background section, scripture references to explore, discussion questions, and a brief prayer service. Recommended for liturgy committees, discussion groups for high school students and adults, and for individual study.

* * *

95

These notes provide Sunday homily helps and children’s celebrations for three months. The homily section contains a scripture commentary, application of the scriptures to current events, suggestions for families and individuals, suggestions from the readings, resources, and questions for reflection (30 pink pages). The yellow section contains 27 pages of notes on a variety of celebrations for children according to age groups. Parish and family celebrations are described in 24 green pages, and ideas and resources for ministry renewal are in the final 15 white pages. The pages are 8½ x 11 inches, three-hole punched, and come wrapped in plastic to protect them while in the mail.

The presentation and contents seem quite practical and useful. Parishes may wish to try the service for three months to see if it helps them to improve their liturgical celebration.

* * *


It is surprising to see how much is being written on the liturgical year. This 8½ by 11 inch booklet, punched for a three-ring binder, contains hundreds of references for the liturgical year, Sunday, and the Advent-Christmas cycle. Reference for each season and feast include history, meditations, prayers, planning, music, liturgy of the hours, prayer and penance services, liturgies with children and youth, family practices, dance and drama, symbols and banners, filmstrips and slides.

The editor has listed resources from many books and magazines, including many references to articles from this Bulletin. Vols. II and III are expected to be ready by the time this review is printed, and an updated supplement will be issued every two years. Recommended for parish committees, catechists, diocesan commissions, and editors.

* * *


Adapted from the Spanish, this simple booklet provides many scenes from the inspiring life of this modern worker for God. Each chapter is brief, dramatic, and is easy to read. Information is also provided for those who want to be co-workers with Mother Teresa. Recommended for parishes, schools, parents, and all who want to grow in love of neighbor.

WAYS OF USING THIS BULLETIN

Bulletin 78 may be used in a variety of ways in your parish or community:

○ Use it as a means of promoting discussion with parish liturgy committees and ecumenical committees.

○ Share a copy with clergy in neighboring churches.

○ If your parish or community has no ecumenism committee, form a small task group to study this Bulletin and discuss the need and possibilities of a committee on ecumenism.

Extra copies of this issue may be ordered from Publications Service, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1.