GESTURES AND SYMBOLS
This Bulletin is primarily pastoral in scope. It is prepared for members of parish liturgy committees, readers, musicians, singers, catechists, teachers, religious, seminarians, clergy, and diocesan liturgical commissions, and for all who are involved in preparing, celebrating, and improving the community liturgy.

Editorial commentary in the Bulletin is the responsibility of the editor.
GESTURES AND SYMBOLS

The gestures we make express our personality, our inner feelings, our beliefs; at the same time, they have the power to influence ourselves and others.

The symbols we use say much, and speak to our inner selves. They have deep meaning, but often we take them for granted.

This issue of the Bulletin looks at some of these gestures and symbols, speaks of their meaning and power, and invites us to reflect on and explore their good use in our liturgical celebrations and in our daily living. Bulletin 94 looks first of all at our human body and our gestures as a primary source of our symbols in liturgy.

As worshipping people, we are invited to become more sensitive to what our liturgies are saying, and to continue working to let them become more expressive of our love for God and God's love for us, as shown in the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are we saying?</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bodies and Senses</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our bodies and our senses</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heads and faces</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arms and hands</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feet and seats</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our senses</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembled for worship</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Notes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liturgical skills</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents in hospital</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief book reviews</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Next issue            | 146  |
| Bulletins for this year | 186  |
What are we saying?

Saving souls or people? Our God continues to call us to share in God's life with our whole being: "whole and entire, body and soul, heart and conscience, mind and will." This is the victory won for us by Christ when he died for us and was raised to new life. God loves each person entirely, not just our soul. It is through our whole embodied being that we give praise and worship to the Father, through the incarnate and risen Lord Jesus, in the Holy Spirit who dwells within our bodies.

All creation is in God's hands. The whole person is the object of God's love: with St. Paul we can proclaim that "Christ loves me, and died for me, to save me" (see Gal. 2: 20).

We believe in the resurrection of the body, and embodied everlasting life. Our bodies are part of us, sharing in our life of testing on earth, and after the resurrection, in our eternal joy in heaven. (See 1 Thess. 5: 23; Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world, nos. 3, 18; Bulletin 40, pages 249-250; no. 52, page 28; no. 68, page 66.)

Embodied prayer: Humans are not angels. We have to embody our prayer and worship, to express it by and through bodily actions and through things that reach and touch our senses. This is why our liturgy is made up of words, rites, actions, gestures, movements, vesture; of song, color, light, environment, atmosphere; of smells and bells, smoke and clapping, walking and standing and kneeling: we use these to express the faith and love that are in our hearts.
Signals

Everything we do in our liturgy sends signals — some evident, some less noticeable — and expresses our faith, our love, our caring, our concern. Our words and our actions flow from what is in our hearts (see Mt. 12: 34).

Some bad signals: Sometimes, however, the signals we give are not good. Ministers sitting with crossed legs, failing to bow or genuflect, yawning, coming late or without sufficient preparation, taking short cuts, reading or speaking or moving too fast, wearing tattered vestments or robes: these send messages to people that the faith or pastoral concern of their ministers is not as strong as it should be. Members of the assembly give similar signals when they are late, fail to listen or take part in the praying, singing, and other community actions. Other bad signals are evident in communities where liturgy is done as cheaply as possible; where Masses are short and not leisurely; where there is buying and selling in the temple; where everything in it is dirty, cluttered, or sloppy; where there is no singing, or very little, or where everything is sung too high for the people, or where the musicians constantly choose music that the people do not know well.

• Effects: The effect of such signals and attitudes? Gradually, people stop trying. They begin to share the “couldn’t-care-less” attitude or the weak faith of their leaders. Their faith does not grow stronger. Some stop coming. Others who want better liturgy fight against the current for a while, and then go elsewhere. The community becomes lukewarm at best (see Rev. 3: 16).

Some good signals: A community reflects its faith and love when it shows that it cares consistently for good liturgy. Some of these signs are the normal human courtesies: being on time, welcoming people, smiling, looking at people when speaking to them. Further signs of this care are seen when ministers are trained well and dress respectfully. Signs of reverence are given for the book of God’s word. Respect is shown to the eucharistic food. Christ is recognized in his many ways of being present: in the word that is proclaimed, in the ministers, in the whole assembly (Mt. 18: 20), in the eucharistic food, in the poor and needy (Mt. 25: 40; see Liturgy constitution, no. 7 [7]). A community that cares for good liturgy helps people to prepare for it, to share more fully in the riches of God’s word, and to appreciate the values of each liturgical season and feast.

• Effects: The feeling of concern — true love of God’s people — is evident, and encourages all to grow in this love. The love shown by the ministers and people is encouraged and deepened. All members of the assembly are invited to share this love with others in their daily living. They continue to carry the songs of joy into their life at home, work, and school.


132
Ceremonies: The ritual actions in our liturgy are intended to be both simple and beautiful; as well, they lead us to mature in our Christian vocation and to give greater glory to our God. (See Liturgy constitution, nos. 33-34 [33-34]; Decree on the ministry and life of priests, no. 6 [261].)

* * *

This issue of the Bulletin looks at many ways in which we embody and express our prayer and worship, helps us to see what we are saying by our actions, and invites us to do even better.

* * *

Helpful reading:

Postures and gestures in our prayer, in Bulletin 68, pages 66-69. The illustrations from that article are reprinted on page 139, below. Many other helpful titles are listed in Bulletin 68, page 69.


Rediscovering Ritual, by Paul D. Jones (1973, Newman/Paulist, New York; and 545 Island Road, Ramsey, NJ 07446).


The Challenge of Change, a 20-minute film (16mm or video cassette) on visuality and art in the liturgy. 1983. For further information, contact Maison Bouvier, 391 Hanlan Road, Woodbridge, Ontario L4L 3TI. Telephone (416) 851-1146.


Experiencing symbolic actions, in Bulletin 89, pages 117-118.


* * *

A prayer

Jesus, our brother and our Lord,
you accepted your human body
as the way to become one of us and save us.

Help us to use our talents and gifts and abilities
for the honor of God and for the salvation of your people.
Teach us to work together to build up the kingdom of God,
and to obey the will of our Father.

Lord Jesus, our savior,
help us to love you each day
and show our love by serving all your brothers and sisters,
for you are our brother and our Lord for ever and ever. Amen.
BODIES AND SENSES

Our bodies and our senses

The way we come to know God, the world, ourselves, and other people is through our bodies and our senses. The way we express our feelings, our love, and our respect for others is through our bodies and our senses. We usually take our bodies for granted as long as they are working well, and rarely reflect on what wonderful creatures God has made us: just a little lower than the angels (Ps. 8: 5). We are given many powers in order that we may live and may serve our God in our daily living.

You called, you shouted,
and you broke through my deafness.
You flashed, you shone,
and you dispelled my blindness.
You breathed your fragrance on me;
I drew in breath and now I pant for you.
I have tasted you;
now I hunger and thirst for more.
You touched me,
and I burned for your peace.¹

Our Wonderful Bodies

Humanly speaking: Though the word “wonderful” (full of wonders) is overused in advertising today, it remains an appropriate word for describing our human bodies. Any book of anatomy or good health helps us to appreciate the intricate workings of our senses, our limbs, our organs. Medicine and other sciences continue to make new discoveries about the complexity of

our bodies, the interrelated workings of our systems, and the tremendous wonder of the conception of new life, the development and growth of the fetus, and the birth of a child.

Each of us is a unique individual, with unduplicated personality, talents, and fingerprints. We live at a particular time and place in creation, and have many gifts to share generously with others. No one else can replace our particular contribution to the world; if we do not make this gift, humanity will be poorer because of our neglect or failure. When we do make our personal donation, our gift of ourselves, we enrich creation and all its people. For many, this contribution is that of being a good citizen and good worker, raising a family to be generous sharers of themselves with others, working to make the world a better place by their lives.² For a few, their contribution becomes famous, and touches the life of many: the inventors of the light bulb and the telephone over a century ago are two examples.³

- We are far more than animals: we are embodied spirits, conscious of ourselves and of one another. Though we have great powers and gifts, we often use them for evil purposes, to harm or control others instead of helping them; this is a misuse of our faculties. As we grow and mature, we have to learn to become ourselves, to be our own persons, and yet to be able to live and work in harmony with others. Growing up is a lifetime task!

In the scriptures: God created the human race, and “saw that it was good” (Gen. 1: 31). When the fullness of time had come (Heb. 1: 1-3), God sent the Son to become one of us: the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (Jn. 1: 14), one of us, like us in all things but sin (Heb. 4: 15). The letter to the Hebrews describes Christ’s attitude in coming into the world: God has given him a body, so that he could offer a pleasing sacrifice to the Father (Heb. 10: 5-7; see Ps. 40: 7-8). At the last supper, Jesus took bread and wine, and told us: “This is my body, handed over for you. This is my blood, poured out for you.” (See 1 Cor. 11: 24-25; Mt. 26: 26-29; Mk. 14: 22-25; Lk. 22: 17-20.) On the cross he bore our sins in his body in order to free us from sin and let us live for God (1 Pet. 2: 24).

God is always near us: we live, move, and have our being in God (Acts 17: 27-28; see also preface 34). Paul compares our embodied life on earth to

---

² Lord Baden-Powell of Gilwell, founder of the Scout and Guide movements, encouraged each member to make the world better. His final message to members throughout the world suggests: “The real way to get happiness is by giving out happiness to other people. Try to leave this world a little better than you found it and when your turn comes to die, you can die happy in feeling that at any rate you have not wasted your time but have done your best … and God help you to do it.” See Scouting for Boys, by Lord Baden-Powell of Gilwell (n.d., Boy Scouts of Canada, Box 5151, Station F, Ottawa, Ontario K2C 3G7): page 326.

³ Speaking of the creative and important role (‘ministry’) of inventors in the world, Alexander Graham Bell said: “The inventor is a man who looks around the world and is not contented with things as they are. He wants to improve whatever he sees, he wants to benefit the world; he is haunted by an idea, the spirit of invention possesses him, seeking materialization.” (See Many possibilities of service, in Bulletin 53, pages 115-119; this quotation is at the top of page 119.)
living in a tent, a temporary dwelling (2 Cor. 5: 1-5; see Is. 38: 12). He also describes the Church or temple of God as the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12: 27). Our bodies are the temples of the Spirit (1 Cor. 3: 16-17; 6: 12-20), and God dwells in us (Jn. 14: 23). Jesus lives in our hearts by faith (Eph. 3: 17), and the love of God is poured into our hearts (Rom. 5: 5). All our actions — eating, drinking, or whatever we do — can be done for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10: 31; see also Col. 3: 17; 1 Thess. 5: 18). During our life on earth we are to try, with God's help, to grow to our full stature or maturity in Christ (Eph. 4: 13): to grow in wisdom, age, and grace before God and the people of God (Lk. 2: 40, 52). At the end of time, our bodies will be raised, immortal and changed, and we will live with Christ for ever (1 Cor. 15: 1-58).

In the liturgy: The traditional liturgy of the Christian Church — both Eastern and Western — has always been a blend of symbols, gestures, and words. We do not merely talk about sorrow and forgiveness of sins: we kneel or prostrate, we strike our breast; we place ashes on our forehead, we fast, we confess; we lay on hands, we listen to the scriptures; we rejoice, and we sing praises to God who is so merciful. Our Christian liturgy is celebrated with bodily actions, actions which express and deepen the inner feelings and movements of our minds and hearts.

It is Catholic practice to pray that we may have health of both mind and body. (See, for example, the opening prayer for the 32nd Sunday in ordinary time.)

As is mentioned several times in this issue of the Bulletin, our physical actions reveal and express what is in our hearts. While we are expressing these inner feelings we are deepening them, and at the same time, we are helping other members of the celebrating community to recognize and echo our faith, in the spirit of Mt. 5: 16. In our liturgical celebrations, when the rites are celebrated well, in a spirit of faith, all are helped to believe more firmly; if it should happen that a priest or minister or member of the community does not celebrate in a spirit of faith or love, this lack becomes apparent all too soon, and affects the rest of the community.

The deeper our faith, the better we try to celebrate our liturgy. The better we celebrate, the more our faith and that of our fellow celebrants is touched and influenced and deepened.

- Resurrection of the body: We proclaim our faith in the resurrection of the body each time we receive communion or proclaim the creed. Our funeral liturgy celebrates our faith: “In my flesh I will see my saving God.” In our penances, especially during Lent, we complete the sufferings of Christ for the Church, which is his body (Col. 1: 24; 2 Cor. 4: 7-12).

In our family life: When a man and woman marry, they promise to be faithful to each other for the rest of their lives on earth, in riches or poverty, in sickness or in health. In their living from day to day, Christian families experience their daily efforts to live with Christ, to love and serve one
another, to carry their daily cross (Lk. 9: 23) and to need their daily bread from God (Lk. 11: 3). In the daily effort to serve, to express love, to help little ones grow to their full human and Christian maturity (Lk. 2: 40, 51-52; Eph. 4: 13), parents are continuing the cocreative work God is sharing with them. They are helping their family to grow and to take their place in the continuing work of building the kingdom of God in this generation and for all eternity. (See also Bulletin 93, pages 88-93.)

Helpful reading:


* Sacred Signs, by Romano Guardini (1979, Michael Glazier, Inc., 1210A King Street, Wilmington, DE 19801).


* To Make Rite, by Fred Hall (1977, Winston Press, 430 Oak Grove, Minneapolis, MN 55403).


Reprinted from *Postures and gestures in our prayer*, in Bulletin 68, pages 66-69. The individual pictures are described there more fully.
Heads
and faces

Our heads and our faces are most expressive of what is in our hearts.

Heads

Humanly speaking: Our head is the most important part of our body. Healthy and strong people carry their head erect, and are alert. Our head may be bowed with sorrow, heavy work, weariness, shame, embarrassment, age, or loss of freedom, or we may bow it out of respect. Heads may nod in agreement or in drowsiness, or shake in rejection.

The importance of our head is reflected in the ways our language uses the words "head," or "capital" (from Latin) or "chief" (from French). Many idioms are listed under these words in any large dictionary. Someone can be at the head of the class, or head a delegation or an organization. A ship or a person can be heading in the right or wrong direction. We try to move ahead. In moments of panic or fear, we may lose our head.

In most generations, tidy hair is a sign both of self-respect and of respect for others.

In the scriptures: Though we are sinners, we have been freed by Jesus, and yet we are and remain fragile. Still Jesus tells us to lift up our heads (Lk. 21: 28), for he is always with us (Mt. 28: 20). In the psalms, our shepherd Lord is described as anointing our heads (Ps. 23: 5), a sign of welcome (Lk. 7: 46) and healing (Mk. 6: 13).

• We are sinners: One of the first steps for salvation is to admit that we are sinners who cannot save ourselves. To think that we do not need God's help is to be in a miserable state indeed (Rev. 3: 17).

• Jesus has come to save us: Out of love for us, God sent the Son to become one of us, so that we might be saved (Jn. 3: 16-17). God's mercy brings us life in the midst of death (Rom. 2: 4-10). By his dying and rising, Jesus has rescued us from the power of Satan and sin, death and darkness, and has brought us into the kingdom of light (Col. 1: 12-14).

• We are still fragile: We are always in need of God's grace to keep us from falling, for we have the spiritual treasure of God's grace in fragile and lowly clay vessels (2 Cor. 4: 7). God has deliberately chosen the weak to share in glory (1 Cor. 1: 27). We have to remain firm in our faith, trusting in God's
love; if we trust in ourselves, we will quickly fall (1 Cor. 10: 12-13). But Christ has promised us that his grace is sufficient for us, especially in our weakness (2 Cor. 12: 9). As Irenaeus tells us, God was patient with us when we fell, foreseeing the victory to be won by Christ: “Weakness allowed strength its full play, and so revealed God’s kindness and great power.”

- **Bowing:** We may bow our head in awe or reverence (Ps. 5: 7), or as a sign of our shame and repentance for our sin (Lk. 18: 13).

- **Hairs of our head:** Jesus reminds us that God knows us so well that our hairs are counted (Mt. 10: 30). God knows when even a single hair falls to the ground (Lk. 21: 18). When we are doing penance, we are to keep our hair neat and not dishevelled (Mt. 6: 17). Jesus also tells the people of his time not to swear by their own heads, since they cannot even change their hair’s color (Mt. 5: 36). When a woman poured expensive perfume over Jesus’ head, he said that she was preparing his body for burial (Mt. 26: 6).

- **Jesus is the head of his body:** God has made the Lord Jesus the firstborn of all creation and of humanity. Everything has been made through, for, and in Christ, and God has made him the head and Lord of the universe (Col. 1: 15-17; Eph. 1: 10). Our Lord is also the firstborn from the dead, the first in all things. By his death and rising, Jesus has reconciled the universe, including all people, and has made peace between God and creation. We are now God’s friends, beloved children, called to be pure and spotless. This is the Good News of our salvation, that God loves us and has saved us in Christ (Col. 1: 18-23; Eph. 1: 3-10). Our task is, with God’s grace, to co-operate with Christ in our salvation.

St. Paul teaches us that we — the Church, the people of God — are the body of Christ: he is the head, and we are the members. Each of us is a part of Christ’s body, the Church. We are baptized into this body by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12: 12-13, 27).

**In the liturgy:** We may bow our heads at different times in the liturgy to indicate our various interior feelings:

- A bow may indicate reverence and respect: it is common to bow at the name of Jesus (see Col. 2: 10-11, in contrast with Mk. 15: 19), and at the name of the Trinity. In the liturgy of the hours, we may bow during the doxology (Glory to the Father). In some countries, such as Japan, a bow is used as the sign of peace (see Bulletin 34, page 134).

At the narrative of institution in the eucharistic prayer, it makes more sense for people to watch the priest and listen as he says these words of Christ and shows them the eucharistic bread or cup. Then they bow as he genuflects, and look up again. Too often people have carried over the old practices, and bow instead of looking while the priest is showing the elements to them.

---

We may bow in sorrow: In the first penitential rite, it is not inappropriate to bow our heads slightly during the I confess and May almighty God (see Lk. 18: 13). This would also be true while saying a prayer of sorrow (act of contrition) in any form of the rite of reconciliation. Bowing our head combines with our words and the striking of our breast in the first penitential rite (see page 150, below) to express our sorrow and to help us to deepen it.

Our bow may be a sign of openness to and humble acceptance of God's grace. We bow our head for the laying on of hands in sacraments (as in absolution in the sacrament of reconciliation), and for blessings (blessings at the end of Mass and other celebrations). We are showing that we are aware of receiving richly of God's generous love.

A variety of bows: Guidelines for bows of the head and of the body in the celebration of the eucharist are given in GI, no. 234 [1624].

In community life: A growing spirit of “democratization” in North American society and elsewhere has affected the style of leadership in dioceses, parishes, and religious communities. The universal Church also encourages a more mature style through collegiality and subsidiarity:

- **Subsidiarity**: Pope John XXIII encouraged people and groups to handle things at an appropriate level. If it could be decided in a parish, it didn't need to be settled at the diocesan level; if it could be decided in a diocese or in a nation, it didn't have to go to Rome. Properly used, this principle encourages sound leadership at every level, and reserves the time and energies of leaders for things that matter and need their attention.

- **Collegiality**: Vatican II encouraged people at a particular level to share in the concerns and needs of others at their level. Bishops are responsible for their own diocese, but also share in the concern for all the Churches (2 Cor. 11: 28). This has been so from the early centuries, especially in the East. In a country or region, bishops work together in an episcopal conference to provide for common decisions and needs. In a diocese, there are to be a pastoral council (canons 511-514) and a senate or council of priests (canons 495-502); in a parish, a pastoral council (canon 536).

---

2 A bow may also be a sign of humility: see John Paul II, Vatican City, March 4, 1979, in L’Osservatore Romano, weekly English edition, March 12, 1979, page 2, no. 1; also in Servant of Truth: Messages of John Paul II, compiled and indexed by the Daughters of St. Paul (1979, St. Paul Editions, 50 St. Paul’s Avenue, Boston, MA 02130): volume II, pages 497-498, no. 1.

3 GI: General Instruction of the Roman Missal. This is a pastoral introduction and explanation of the rites of the Mass, and is contained in the beginning of the sacramentary: see pages 11-54 in the 1974 Canadian edition. New Introductions to the Sacramentary and Lectionary (1983, CCCB, Ottawa) is available with the 1983 reprint of the sacramentary or as a separate book; this edition contains the same text as in Documents on the Liturgy, document 208, pages 465-533 [1376-1731].

4 Together with the pope, who is the Bishop of Rome, the bishops of the world have “supreme and full authority” over the Church around the world (Dogmatic constitution on the Church, no. 22; see also no. 23). The bishops are “jointly responsible for the whole Church” (Decree on the pastoral office of bishops, no. 6; see also nos. 3-7). See also Documents on the Liturgy, nos. [2602-2603, 483].

Parish councils, liturgy committees, and liturgical commissions have been working along these lines for some 15 years now. See Bulletin 36, *Parish Liturgy Committee*, and no. 66, *Diocesan Commissions and Parish Committees*.

These moves toward shared leadership help us to live in accord with the teaching of Jesus, who came as a servant and savior. He wanted his apostles (and their successors) not to lord it over others but to serve them as he himself did (Mk. 10: 42-45): Jesus is among us as one who serves (Phil. 2: 7; Lk. 22: 27).

**In our family life:**

- **Imagery:** The imagery that Paul used to describe family life, with the husband as the head of the wife (Eph. 5: 22-33), is based on the patriarchal society of his time and of the Hebrew scriptures. The fact that today's society - in many countries - does not reflect this setup should not cause us to lose sight of the positive teachings in this passage.

  These positive things include: Christ is the head and savior of his body, the Church (verse 23); the Church obeys Christ as its Lord (24); Jesus loves us and gave his life for the Church (25); he consecrated the Church to God by his teaching and by washing the Church in water (26) and making it beautiful and pure (27); he nourishes the Church and takes care of it (29-30). Husbands ought to love their wives (25, 28); they are two in one flesh (31). Husband and wife ought to love and respect each other (33) and submit to each other because of their reverence for Jesus Christ (21).

  In celebrating the liturgy, consideration has to be given to the changed social basis of the imagery in this passage, to the sensitivities of women today, and to the positive teachings that must not be lost.

- **Family leadership:** Parents can help their children to prepare for life in the modern Church by inviting them to learn to make decisions that require judgment within their competence: in choosing clothing, sharing in family decisions, in choosing how to spend their allowance. The advice of Eph. 6: 1-4 is still applicable today.

- **Coping with styles and fads:** An important area of leadership needed in each family today is this: helping children to cope with styles and fads, with TV and ads. In an age when peer pressure is heavy, and when merchandisers seek to woo or seduce young people with their goods, parents have to be strong in helping their children to have minds and wills of their own. Learning to apply Christ's standards rather than those of the world to all things - use of money and time, hairstyles and clothing, possessions and jewellery, recreation and work - is a slow but necessary part of life. Parents have to be the models and set the standards, encouraging children with love to follow their example. Paul's advice in Rom. 12: 1-2 has to permeate our thinking today. What help is the parish community giving parents and young people in this regard? (See Bulletin 89, pages 138-139.)

143
Faces

Humanly speaking: A smile tells you that this person is friendly, interested in you, welcoming. A frown, a grouchy look, a sad visage, a blank stare, an angry or malevolent look, nose in the air: each of these speaks volumes, for the face mirrors what is in our heart. A child's face can quickly cloud as he or she changes from a happy mood to a sad or pouting one. By our faces we show our interest or boredom, our happiness or sadness, our joy or sorrow. A slap in the face is an insult against our person, and spitting in a person’s face is supremely crude and disgusting.

Adults, particularly those from an Anglo-Saxon or Nordic background, often learn to be poker-faced, with a stiff upper lip, not showing their feelings or emotions. Others let their feelings hang out much more readily. Self-control is good, but repression or suppression of all feelings is bad, and can have ill effects at a later time in one's life. Balance is certainly needed here.

- A kiss: In our society, a kiss is a sign of love, friendship, or respect. Some families are more public in their displays of affection, some are more reticent. In some societies, such as India, kissing in public — even in the movies — is not socially acceptable, and is considered offensive and shocking.

As with “head,” the importance of the word “face” in our language may be seen by consulting a large dictionary for idioms and metaphors. We face a trial, or face the music, or face reality. We face up to the consequences of our actions.

In the scriptures: Cain’s countenance fell or was downcast when God did not accept his gift (Gen. 4: 5-6; see Mk. 10: 22); after murdering his brother, Cain was cast away from God’s face — out of God’s presence, as it were (Gen. 4: 16). God looks with favor on those who are humble and ready to receive mercy (Lk. 1: 48).

We are encouraged to seek the face of the God of Jacob (Ps. 24: 6; Ps. 11: 7). We pray that God’s face will shine on us (Num. 6: 25-26). Jesus tells us that the pure of heart will see God (Mt. 5: 8). Our goal in this life is to seek God’s face (Ps. 42: 2); we reach it when we enter the joy of our Lord (Mt. 25: 41) and see God face to face (Rev. 22: 4), as clearly as God knows us (1 Cor. 13: 12).

Jesus looked at the young man who kept the commandments, and loved him (Mk. 10: 21). He looked at the paralytic, and saw his helpers’ faith, and healed him (Mk. 2: 1-12). He looked at Peter and Nathaniel and invited them to follow him (Jn. 1: 42-47). In the agony in the garden, Jesus prayed with his face to the ground (Mt. 26: 39). His tormentors spat in his face (Mt. 26: 67; see Job 30: 10) and slapped him (Mt. 26: 67-68).
Paul describes the face of Jesus as shining with God’s glory (2 Cor. 4: 6; see also Mt. 17: 2; 28: 3). For Matthew particularly, the comparison to Moses would not be lost (Exod. 34: 29-35).

- A kiss: Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss (Mt. 26: 48-49). The early Christian communities used the “holy kiss” to greet one another (see Rom. 16: 16; 2 Cor. 13: 12), as a sign of their mutual love and peace in Christ.

In the liturgy: The face influences our liturgy in a number of ways:

- Facing the people: Ever since Mass facing the people was restored and became quite common during the 1960s and early 1970s, presiding priests and people had to become familiar with new dynamics which reflected a change in theology. Instead of saying Mass with his back to the congregation, now the priest faced the people all the time. He had to learn to look directly at the community members when he greeted them and spoke to them at other times in the celebration, instead of looking downward as directed by the former rubrics. A similar effort was required when the texts moved from Latin to the language of the people.

- Seating: Another change is felt when people are standing facing one another (in a small group celebration) or when the chairs or pews are arranged in a flexible pattern or around three sides of the altar. People see the faces of the others present instead of their backs, and are able to react and pray together more humanly, for they are in direct contact with members of this praying assembly. See further notes on pages 155-157, below, and in Bulletin 74, pages 113-114.

- Looking at one another: As ministers of Christian hospitality, the ushers may give a smile to individuals as they arrive to form the assembly. In the kiss of peace and when giving or receiving communion, people are able to look into each other’s eyes. This direct contact — which may be embarrassing at first to some — enables the action to be more frank and to have deeper meaning.

In a room for reconciliation, the penitent may choose to celebrate the sacrament face to face with the priest or anonymously. (See Bulletin 52, pages 55-59; no. 74, page 137; no. 88, page 89.)

- God’s face: Paul’s reference to seeing God face to face (1 Cor. 13: 12) is picked up near the end of the third eucharistic prayer (and slightly in the fourth one), and in some of the prayers and psalms in the funeral ritual. In one solemn blessing (no. 10), we ask that God’s face will shine upon us (see Num. 6: 24-26).

- A kiss: After proclaiming the gospel, the deacon or presbyter kisses the book as a sign of the community’s respect for the word and presence of Jesus Christ. The priest and deacon also kiss the altar at the beginning and end of the celebration.
In community life: Christians — especially those dedicated to God's service in religious life (see Bulletin 90, Religious Communities Celebrate Liturgy) or in other forms of ministry — might consider how a smile and a friendly greeting on many occasions could reflect the Spirit's gifts of joy and peace (Gal. 5: 22-23). When the Spirit controls our life, we will avoid irritability and other feelings that go against love (Gal. 5: 25-26). Though smiling is not mentioned in the New Testament, it is certainly in accord with the Spirit of Jesus.

In our family life: A standard image in our language is the upturned and shining faces of children. Happy children are more inclined to smile and sing. Parents, relatives, teachers, catechists, priests, and other friends should try to encourage children to see the positive side of life as the stronger side, since Christ has won the victory for us. In the long years of childhood and adolescence, young people need the support and good example of all adults. In this way, they are better able to face their past, their present, and their future.

* * *

A prayer:

Lord Jesus,
in our times of discouragement,
raise up our heads and our hearts
so that we may serve you in joy.
In times of elation,
raise up our hearts to sing the praises
of God our Father.

Lord Jesus,
fill us with your Spirit of love,
and guide us toward your kingdom,
where you are Lord for ever and ever. Amen!

NEXT ISSUE

We have been asked by the Second Vatican Council to adapt the liturgy to the spirit and needs of our culture.

Bulletin 95 is entitled Culture and Liturgy. This Bulletin presents some reports of what is happening in other cultures today, and invites us to look at our own culture.

This issue will be ready for mailing in September.
Arms
and hands

Arms

**Humanly speaking:** With our arms we can express many of our feelings and moods. We can stretch out our arms to others in greeting, in helpful action, in reaching to assist. We can use them to embrace someone with love or sympathy, to wave goodbye, to attract attention, to invite someone to come closer. In sports we often see players throw their arms in the air when their side gains a goal or a point, or wins the game. We use our arms to hold a baby, to hold on to our possessions, or to give them to someone else. We can use our arms to give and to receive.

We can cross our arms to show we are disinterested, or that we disagree, or that we do not wish to become involved. We can also use our arms to hurt others by seizing or striking them. Though the words are distinct in their derivations, arms or weapons can be seen as an extension of the human arm: this is physically so in the case of a stick, club, or sword, and practically so in the case of a gun or bomb.

**In the scriptures:** The Hebrew scriptures picture God as saving the people of Israel from the slavery of Egypt “with outstretched arm and mighty hand” (see Deut. 7: 10). God lifted up the people on eagle’s wings (Exod. 19: 4), protecting them from all harm. God’s people lifted up their arms and hands in praise (Ps. 134: 2) or supplication (Ps. 28: 2), and waved branches as they went in processions in the temple (Ps. 118: 27; see also In. 12: 13). We still praise God for scattering the proud (Lk. 1: 15).

The gospels show Jesus reaching out to touch and heal a leper (Mt. 8: 3), curing the man who stretched out his withered hand (Mt. 12: 13), upsetting the tables of the moneychangers and merchants in the temple (Mt. 21: 12). He wanted to embrace the people of Jerusalem in his arms as a hen shelters her chicks (Mt. 23: 37; see Ps. 17: 8; Ps. 36: 7; Ps. 91: 4). He carried his cross to Calvary (Jn. 19: 17; in the synoptic gospels, Simon of Cyrene was forced to take over this task: Lk. 23: 26, and parallels). Nailed to the cross, Jesus’ outstretched arms embraced the whole universe of which he is the head (Eph. 1: 10).

---

1 The English word “arm” comes from the Latin *armus*, an animal’s shoulder, while “arms” comes from *arma*, meaning armor, shield, arms, weapons.
In the liturgy: As early as the year 215 in Rome, Hippolytus describes Jesus as freely stretching out his arms on the cross to save us. Our present second eucharistic prayer, which is based on this earlier text, uses the same expression.

The early Church used the orans or “praying” position in prayer (see diagram 6 on page 139, above). Though restricted and stylized in the rubrics of the 1570 Roman missal, this position is now used by the presiding priest during presidential prayers and the Lord’s prayer. He lifts up his outstretched hands as he invites the people to raise their hearts to the Lord. (The Latin and Greek are much blunter: “Hearts up!” is used, in the same direct way a robber would say “Hands up!” today.)

The traditional gesture of extending arms and hands over the assembled community is now used in the solemn blessing at the end of Mass (compare Lk. 24: 50-51).

In community life: In parishes, religious communities, and families, we need to listen to Jesus’ invitation to bring to him the heavy loads we are carrying: he wants to exchange our burdens for his lighter yoke (Mt. 11: 28-30), including a daily sharing in his cross (Lk. 9: 23). Contrast this with the picture in Mt. 23: 4! We are to help bear one another’s burdens (Gal. 6: 2). God listens to us when we call for help (Ps. 81: 6-7), for when we are weak, God is able to work wonders in us (2 Cor. 12: 9-10).

In our family life: It is in our homes that we first experience love by being embraced and hugged by our parents, brothers and sisters, and relatives. The bumper sticker that asks, “Have you hugged your child today?” is reminding us of an important symbol of parental love. Through this love we begin to sense the all-embracing love of our God for each of us and for all of us.

Hands

Humanly speaking: Our human hands are capable of many complicated functions. We can wash, weave, write, type, or soothe with our hands. Artists can carve or paint skillfully, carpenters and cabinetmakers can fashion beautiful objects, builders can build, surgeons can heal. We can caress or slap with our hands. We clap to approve a person or an action. We wring our hands in emotion or helplessness; we drum our fingers in impatience.

We hold hands with another person to show love, sympathy, concern, encouragement. We place our hands on someone’s shoulders to show trust or concern. We shake hands to give a sign of welcome, agreement, congratulations, forgiveness, reconciliation, sympathy, farewell. We lend a helping hand to complete a community project. Our hands can hold guns and pull triggers, or lift up and soothe a fallen child, or hold a lamp to those who are in darkness.
Hilda Woolnough, one of the artists represented in the Canadian bishops' art collection, described her picture of Mary in this way: Mary's hands seem large in this painting “because a mother shows her love for her children by her hands: she embraces her children, feeds them, washes them, changes them, tucks them in with her hands.”

In the scriptures: God is pictured as an artist forming us out of clay (Gen. 2: 7): we are the work of God's hands (Is. 64: 8; Ps. 8: 3-5). In God's hands are all power and might (1 Chron. 29: 12). Jesus referred to the Spirit as the finger of God (Lk. 11: 20).

The gospels portray Jesus’ hands often: he took sick persons by the hand and helped them up (Mk. 1: 31; 5: 41; 9: 27). He anointed one blind man's eyes with saliva (Mk. 8: 23), and another with mud (Jn. 9: 6-7). He touched a deaf-mute's ears and tongue, and healed him (Mk. 7: 32-37). He healed a leper by his touch (Mk. 1: 41). He laid his hands on children when he blessed them (Mt. 19: 15). He sent his followers to lay their hands on the sick (Mk. 16: 18), and they anointed them with oil (Mk. 6: 13). Sick people wanted to touch Jesus so that they would be cured (Mk. 3: 10; 5: 25-34; see also Mt. 14: 36). Jairus asked Jesus to place his hands on his dying girl (Mk. 5: 23). Jesus describes himself as tying up Satan (Mt. 12: 29), and warns us that external signs — such as washing our hands ritually — mean nothing unless our hearts are pure (Mt. 15: 18-20).

Our Lord told his disciples that he would be handed over to those who would put him to death (Mt. 17: 22; 20: 18-19), and warned his followers that some of them also would be handed over for his sake (Mk. 13: 12). On the cross, he entrusted himself into his Father's hands (Lk. 23: 46; Ps. 31: 5). Stephen followed Jesus’ example as he was being put to death (Acts 7: 59).

We see Jesus breaking bread in Mt. 14: 19; 16: 9; 26: 26; and parallels; see also Lk. 24: 31, 35. Thomas was invited to touch Jesus' hands and put his hand in Jesus' side to see the reality of his resurrection (Jn. 20: 25, 27).

At the command of the Spirit, the Church of Antioch fasted, prayed, and dedicated Saul and Barnabas to God's work by laying hands on them (Acts 13: 1-4). Paul speaks of the handshake of agreement or fellowship (Gal. 2: 9). The good Samaritan used his hands to give first aid to the wounded traveller (Lk. 10: 34). The disciples laid their hands on the sick (Mk. 16: 18) and anointed them with oil (Mk. 6: 13; James 5: 14-15).

The scriptures mention hands spread forth (Is. 1: 15); stretched out in prayer (Ps. 143: 6); lifted up in prayer (1 Kings 8: 22, 54; Ps. 28: 2; Ps. 141: 2; Lk. 24: 50; 1 Tim. 2: 8); laying on of one or two hands (Gen. 48: 14; Num. 8: 10; Mt. 19: 13, 15; Acts 13: 3). Clapping is mentioned in Ps. 47: 1; Ps. 98: 8; Is. 55: 12. Striking of the breast is referred to in Nahum 2: 8 and Lk. 18: 13.

---

2 “Mary the Mother of God,” in Sunday Mass Book (1976, CCC, Ottawa), facing page 816; see also Art Collection/Collection d'Art (1976, CCC, Ottawa), pages 44-45. The quotation is from the artist's conversation with the editor on April 7, 1976, in Ottawa.
In the liturgy: During the eucharist, people bring their gifts to the altar in their hands (see Tob. 8: 11), and the priest and his assistants receive them with their hands. The presiding priest washes his hands — not because they are dirty — but as a symbol of the purity with which God's people ought to approach the sacrifice they are offering (see G1, no. 52 [1442]). In our country, the kiss of peace is usually expressed by shaking or clasping hands with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The “breaking of bread” is the earliest name for the eucharist (Acts 2: 42, 46; 20: 7). The symbolism is based on St. Paul’s teaching (1 Cor. 10: 17): we share in the one loaf, the bread of life. As we share in Christ’s body, we become one body in him. This teaching is also picked up in the third eucharistic prayer: “one body, one spirit in Christ” (see G1, no. 56c [1446]).

When people are receiving communion in the hand, they place one hand on the other, reverently. Cyril of Jerusalem describes this as preparing a throne for the Lord. They do not grab or snatch the eucharistic bread from the priest or minister, but wait for it to be placed on their hand.3

Other gestures made with the hands include the striking of the breast during the first penitential rite, and the making of the sign of the cross at the beginning of the celebration and during the final blessing. When the gospel is announced, we make a small sign of the cross on our forehead, lips, and heart, symbolizing our faith, and our readiness to hold and proclaim the Christian Way. (This should also remind us of the signing with the cross during the catechumenate and in the baptism of children: we are marked with the cross of Jesus, who claims us publicly as his followers.)

In night prayer, we pray — in union with Jesus, Stephen, and the psalmist — and entrust ourselves into the hands of the Father (Ps. 31: 5). At the beginning of the gospel canticles in morning, evening, and night prayer, we make the full sign of the cross. In the celebration of marriage, the couple join their right hands as they say their vows in the presence of the Church; the joining of their hands symbolizes the joining of their lives, when two become united in one flesh (Mt. 19: 5; Gen. 2: 24).

During the renewed rite of ordination of a bishop, presbyters, or deacons, the community is invited to show its assent by an acclamation. Up to now, this has usually taken the form of clapping, new enough in Roman Catholic experience. Recently a member of the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy suggested that we learn from the Byzantine practice, and conclude this applause by singing a brief but strong acclamation or anthem. [Some examples could be found in CBW II, nos. 632, 633 (refrain), and 428 (refrain).]

When celebrating blessings of people, we may lay our hands on the head of the ones being blessed; this could also be done, when appropriate, while blessing things. A similar gesture is seen in the epiclesis of the eucharistic prayer, when the priest places his hands over the bread and wine as he asks the Father to send the Spirit upon these gifts. During the words of absolution, the priest is encouraged to lay his hands on the head of the penitent; a similar gesture could be appropriate at the end of a service of general absolution, inviting individuals who so wish to come forward for the imposition of hands in silence.

**In the family and community:** We are taught that we must show our love for others in a practical way (James 1: 27; 2: 14-17). It is by giving food and drink (Mt. 10: 42), clothing and shelter, and by visiting the sick that we show our love for Jesus in our neighbor (Mt. 25: 40). Read again the insight of artist Hilda Woolnough on page 149 above: it is by our helping hand, our willingness to do things and get our hands dirty for others, that we truly show our love.

In our communities — civil, religious; schools, hospitals, workplaces, playgrounds — how ready are we to help others in a practical way? Is there room for improvement in our daily practice of our religion?

* * *

**Helpful reading:**

*Please Touch,* by Edwin M. McMahon and Peter A. Campbell (1969, Sheed and Ward, New York).

"Liturgical Objects," in *Assembly* (September 1981, Notre Dame Center for Pastoral Liturgy, Box 81, Notre Dame, IN 46556): vol. 8, no. 1, pages 137-144.

* * *

**A prayer:**

*Jesus, our brother,*
*we praise you and give you glory.*
*You reached out to help all in need,*
*and freely stretched out your hands on the cross for us.*

*Lord,*
*teach us to use our hands and our skills for others.*
*Help us to get our hands dirty with honest work.*
*Open our hearts to the graces and gifts of your Spirit,*
*and make us true followers of your Way.*

*Brother Jesus,*
*teach us to work with you now,*
*so that we may build up God's kingdom on earth*
*and share in your glory for ever. Amen!*
Feet and seats

Our Feet and Legs

**Humanly speaking:** We use our legs to stand, walk, run, and kneel. When healthy, we are able to move about freely; when we are crippled, we are limited in our movements. We pace up and down with tension or impatience. We stand out of respect for a person, or as a funeral procession passes by, or during our national anthem. The importance of our feet and legs can be seen from the many idioms we use: we stand up for what is right, and won't stand for nonsense; we can get a foot in a door or put our foot in our mouth; a person without good reasons doesn't have a leg to stand on. We foot the bill, write footnotes, use other people as a footstool, kick against the goad, wait on others' hand and foot, and sometimes expect things to be laid at our feet. In defeat we are brought to our knees. Any good dictionary lists many more such expressions in our language.

**In the scriptures:** We find many references to our feet and legs:

- **Life is a pilgrimage:** Our life on earth — both as individuals and as members of the believing community — is described as a pilgrimage, a journey (see Gen. 47: 9; Exod. 6: 4; Ps. 39: 13; Ps. 119: 54; Heb. 11: 13-14; 1 Pet. 2: 11). The Hebrew people were led out of the land of slavery, freed through the waters of the Red Sea, guided through the trials and temptations of the desert journey, brought across the Jordan, and thus at last they came into the promised land of Israel. The Christian life is described as a Way (Acts 9: 2). The road to destruction is broad and easy, while the path to eternal life is narrow and hard (Mt. 7: 13-14). But Jesus tells us that he himself is our way (Jn. 14: 6).

Those who walk in God's ways are blessed (Ps. 1: 1; Ps. 119: 1). Our God protects our feet from stumbling so that we may walk in light (Ps. 55: 13; see Jn. 8: 12). We are invited to walk by faith (2 Cor. 5: 7), in love (Eph. 5: 2), in the Spirit (Gal. 5: 25), as children of light (Eph. 5: 8).

- **Walking with Jesus:** Our Lord invites the apostles (see Lk. 5: 11, 27) and all the world to become his followers, his disciples (Mt. 28: 19-20). He spent much of his time teaching us how to walk in his spirit, as the four evangelists show us; the sermon on the mount (chapters 5-6-7 in Matthew) gives us a particularly deep insight into the mind and will of Christ, and offers us guidance for living in his footsteps. People who were cured by him sometimes followed him on the way (Mk. 10: 52), or wanted to do this (Lk. 8:
38-39). Peter fell to his knees to protest his unworthiness (Lk. 5: 8). One of the saddest lines in the gospel records that many of Jesus' followers pulled back because of his teaching, and no longer walked with him (Jn. 6: 66).

- **Parables and miracles:** Jesus speaks about those who are standing about idle all day (Mt. 20: 6), and contrasts the Pharisee who stood boasting in the temple with the tax collector who bowed his head and struck his breast in sorrow (Lk. 18: 9-14). Jesus walked on the water, while Peter sank because of his weak faith (Mt. 14: 22-23). Debtors fell to their knees to ask for further time to pay (Mt. 18: 26, 29). In the name of Jesus, Peter and John cured the lame beggar, who then walked and jumped in praise of God (Acts 3: 1-10, 16; 4: 10).

- **Suffering, dying, and rising:** Jesus knelt or prostrated himself to pray in the garden of Gethsemane (Lk. 22: 41; Mt. 26: 39). The Roman soldiers genuflected or knelt to him in mocking homage (Mt. 27: 29) — a far cry from the reverence owed to Christ the Lord by all the universe (Phil. 2: 10). On Easter Sunday the women held on to the feet of the risen Jesus (Mt. 28: 9).

- **Other notes:** Jesus stood as he read the scriptures in the synagogue (Lk. 4: 16). He tells us to stand and look up when the end is coming (Lk. 21: 28). St. Paul reminds us to stand firm in our faith (1 Cor. 16: 13). When we think we are standing on our own, however, we are closest to a fall (1 Cor. 10: 12); we need to turn to God for strength and help (1 Cor. 10: 13). In a hymn of praise to God, we are reminded that God has placed all creation under our feet, in our power (Ps. 8: 6-8; see Gen. I: 26, 28). At the last supper, Jesus washed his disciples' feet as a concrete example of how we should love one another (Jn. 13: 1-16; 1 Tim. 5: 10).

In the liturgy: The catechumenate is described as a journey in faith (see Rite for Christian Initiation of Adults, no. 5 [2332], and Bulletin 91, pages 213-214). Eucharistic prayer III describes the Church as God's pilgrim people, chosen from all eras and from all parts of the world to sing a hymn of praise and thanks to God's glory. The Exodus event is still commemorated on Holy Thursday and Good Friday, and is at the root of our Easter vigil celebration. At the end of each Mass, we are sent forth in peace, to give thanks and praise and glory to God by every phase of our lives (see 1 Cor. 10: 31; Col. 3: 17; 1 Thess. 5: 17-18). Each day we are to carry our daily cross (Lk. 9: 23), as we are strengthened by our daily bread (Lk. 11: 3), the food for our journey, until our sufferings are rewarded with victory (1 Cor. 15: 57; 1 Jn. 5: 4). At the gospel, we stand alert, listening to the words and actions of Jesus, and ready to obey our Lord.

Standing is the preferred position for community prayer. From the earliest centuries Christians have been standing as a sign of the resurrection (from the Greek anastasis, rising, standing), and even felt that kneeling on the Lord's day or in the Easter season was out of order (see Bulletin 58, pages 82, 85). Clement of Alexandria suggested that standing on our tiptoes was a sign
of the great praise and glory we are offering to God in our worship (see diagram 5 on page 139, above). Even in our present rubrics standing is given pride of place in the postures of the community (Gl, no. 21 [1411]), and we give thanks that we are allowed to stand and serve in the presence of our God (eucharistic prayer II).

We also stand to mark the beginning of our celebration as the ministers and presider come in procession through the assembled and singing community.

- **Washing of the feet**: The 1955 reform of the Holy Week rites restored this practice to parish celebrations on Holy Thursday. Where it is celebrated as a symbol of humble service to the people by their clergy, its significance is strongly felt by all present. Those communities which have not yet begun to observe this rite — or which have tried to substitute something else — should give serious consideration to beginning the footwashing next Holy Thursday.

- **Prostration** is still retained at the beginning of the Good Friday service, and during the litany of the saints in ordinations.

**In our community life**: “Standing in the need of prayer” is a familiar spiritual that teaches us an important lesson: we are always in need of prayer. We need to pray for others and for ourselves, and we need others to pray for us. As God’s people of prayer we are set aside, chosen, deputed to pray with Christ for the whole universe and in its name. We are to express in our prayer the needs of the whole world and of the whole Church on earth. We must pray for peace, for an end to war and violence; for good weather and for an end to the suffering caused by natural disasters; for the persecuted, the starving, the needy, the abandoned. We pray for our civil leaders, and ask God to guide them in working for peace and justice.

We pray for the Church around the world, for the pope, for the bishops, for all in positions of leadership and other ministries. Closer to home, we pray for the people of God in our own land, for our bishops, presbyters, and deacons; for all our ministers; for parents, teachers, old people, and children. We pray for the people in our own parish: our pastor, our parish council, our religious; we pray for vocations to all ministries; we pray for the gift of generosity in the hearts of all, so that we may respond to the Spirit of Jesus and use the many gifts we have received for the benefit and building up of the body of Christ, the Church.

- **Standing in faith**: Our prayer must be a prayer of faith. Jesus has told us that if we pray with strong faith our prayer will be answered (Mt. 21: 21-22). Whatever we ask in the name of Christ will be given to us (Jn. 14: 14; 15: 7; 16: 24, 26-27), for we are Jesus’ friends (Jn. 14: 14-15), members of his body (1 Cor. 12: 27), branches on his vine (Jn. 15: 5). We need to learn to ask, seek, and knock in faith, for our Father knows our needs and is ready to give us all good things (Lk. 11: 9-13).
• **Respect:** In these days of relaxed manners, it would be good if schools and organizations began once more to teach and encourage signs of respect for others, including standing when a visitor, teacher, or leader comes into a room, and offering a seat to an elderly or tired person (see Lev. 19: 32).

**In our family life:** Both respect for others and prayer for others need to be taught by word and example in our homes:

• **Respect for others:** One of the faults of a democratic society, very evident in our day, is the lack of respect shown to elderly people and to ministers and servants of the community. Dropping all titles for first names is another sign of a misconstrued egalitarianism. Parents would do well to teach their children to respect the wisdom and the frailties of older people (see Bulletin 93, pages 103-104), and to respect those who serve the community as leaders or in other forms of ministry. Respect is not servility, but rather a recognition of the gift of service offered by others.

• **School of prayer:** The home is the first school of prayer (Bulletin 93, page 109). Parents need to encourage their children to think of others in their prayer, and to respond to accidents and disasters by praying for those involved, and by helping in other ways where possible. Bulletin 80, *Helping Families to Pray*, offers positive guidance in praying in the spirit of the renewed liturgy. See also Bulletins 63 and 68 on families and prayer.

**Seats and Seating**

**Humanly speaking:** Sitting is a normal position for listening, learning, teaching, presiding, meeting, discussing; we usually sit when we travel or ride in cars, buses, planes, and trains. At a meeting, someone usually is named chairperson or “the chair,” to chair or lead the gathering. (Other notes on leadership are given above, on pages 142-143.) We speak of our M.P. as a sitting member, and say that Parliament is sitting or in session. We talk of the seats of power, and we endow chairs of learning in universities. Our place in our family or community is often marked by our chair: even in the story of Goldilocks, each of the bears saw that someone had been sitting “in my chair.”

**In the scriptures:** Whether we are sitting down or standing up, God knows where we are and what we are doing (Ps. 139: 1-6; the whole psalm is a simple prayer of thanks for God’s loving care for each of us). Jesus often sat to preach to the people: in the synagogue (Lk. 4: 20-21), in a boat (Lk. 5: 3), on a hillside (Mt. 5: 1). People sat on the grass for the meals of the loaves and fishes (Mt. 14: 19). He spoke of the Pharisees as official teachers, sitting in the seat of Moses (Mt. 23: 2), but condemned them for contradicting Moses’ teachings (Jn. 5: 45-47). He promised to let his apostles sit on thrones as judges of Israel (Mt. 19: 28), but would not give the first seats to James and John (Mk. 10: 40). At the end of time, he will be seen seated at the right hand of God, coming in glory (Mk. 14: 62) to judge all people (Mt. 25: 31-32).
In the liturgy: The present rubrics suggest sitting as the community's posture during the first two readings, the responsorial psalm, the homily, the preparation of the gifts; after communion, the people may be seated during the time of silent reflection (GI, no. 21 [1411]).

- **Places for the assembly**: Some points on the seating arrangements for members of the congregation are noted above on page 145. What do our fixed pews say? Are they suggesting that we are passive spectators, an audience in a theater? (The Liturgy constitution says that no longer are we to be passive watchers, but active sharers in the liturgy: nos. 48, 14 [48, 14].) In general, it may be said that fixed pews can sometimes be an obstacle to movement by the community, suggest that they should remain in their places instead of taking part in processions, and make it easier for individuals to isolate themselves or remain at a distance from the lectern and the altar.¹

In the old Roman basilicas, there are no fixed pews for the people: they stand throughout the celebration. Sometimes benches are provided along the walls for the old and the feeble. Throughout the Latin rite, current practice is to provide special seats only for liturgical ministers and civil officials (Liturgy constitution, no. 32 [32]).

- **Bishop's chair**: The Greek word *kathedra* (in Latin, this became *cathedra*) was used to designate the chair or throne of the bishop. Our word "cathedral" means the church where the bishop presides over the diocesan family. Latin also used *sedes* (seat) to refer to the city or town where the bishop resided: we still see this term in such references as see city, and the Holy See. In the early churches, the bishop presided from a chair at the center of the apse, with the presbyters seated on benches on either side. Now the bishop's chair is also placed at one side, usually to the left from the congregation's view (the old "gospel" side of the church).

The chair (a better term than "throne" — see Mk. 10: 42-45) represents the bishop's place in the liturgy and life of the diocesan Church: it is when the people, presbyters, and other ministers gather around the bishop to praise God, especially in the Sunday eucharist, that the Church is most clearly seen to be present (Liturgy constitution, no. 41 [41]; GI, no. 74 [1464]).²

The anniversary of the cathedral's dedication is celebrated in every parish and community in the diocese. More details of this celebration are given in *Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy: 1983-1984 Liturgical Calendar* (1983, CCCB, Ottawa), pastoral note 25b, pages 45-46.

- **Presidential chair**: In the parish or other community, the priest is a representative of the bishop, and acts in his name (Liturgy constitution, no.

---

¹ See *Standing and kneeling*, by Brian Magee, CM, in Bulletin 65, pages 247-249; and *Place of the community*, in no. 74, pages 112-120, especially pages 113-114.

42 [42]; GI, no. 75 [1465]). His chair — which is not to be a throne (GI, no. 271 [1661] — is the place of the presiding priest in a community of celebrants. At the beginning of the renewal this chair was often placed behind the altar; more recently, some communities have placed it at the side of the altar, where priest and community may see each other more clearly.

Chairs for servers should not be placed as though they were for concelebrating presbyters. On the chair for the deacon, see Bulletin 74, pages 118-119.

When a lay person leads the liturgy, it is suggested that he or she may sit with the community members for the readings from God’s word, or may sit near the lectern. The leader does not use the chair of the presiding priest. (See Bulletin 79, *Sunday Liturgies: When Lay People Preside*, page 120.)

**Community and family life:** The question of leadership is discussed above, on pages 142-143.

In a family or community home, comfortable chairs are a sign of hospitality to visitors as well as concern for the comfort of those who live there.

- *A place for prayer:* Is there a place — such as a corner of a room — set aside in each home for prayer? It could be a spot where an individual or several persons can go to reflect, to be silent, to pray. Simple furnishings can make it more suitable: a cross or crucifix; a holy picture, icon, or statue; a book of God’s word — bible, New Testament, psalm book, perhaps in several different translations; other books of prayer, including the *Family Book of Prayer, Preparing by Prayer, and Sunday Mass Book* (all available from CCCB Publications Service). Comfortable seats, stools, or cushions can be available, according to the preferences and needs of members and visitors. Further thoughts on prayer rooms are included in Bulletin 63, page 86; see *A Book of Blessings*, pages 100-101.

\* \* \*

**Helpful reading:**


\* \* \*

**A prayer:**

*Loving God, our protector,  
you know when we stand or sit,  
walk or run, kneel or stumble or fall.  
Remember the love you have poured into our hearts,  
and help us to do all our actions for your glory.*

*Bless us and all our work,  
and help us to follow the light of your Spirit  
and the teaching of Jesus your Son,  
who is our brother and our Lord for ever and ever.  Amen!*

157
Our senses

Seeing

**Humanly speaking:** The power of sight makes it possible for us to see the beauty of the earth and the universe we live in. We can see the sun, the moon, and the stars. We can see the smiles of a child and its mother, the glory of a garden of flowers, a majestic mountain, a running river, a mighty sea. We can see lights, color, movement. We can read a book or a letter from our lover, or look at a photograph, a painting, a mosaic, or a sculpture. We can follow the flight of birds or the running of children at play. We can watch ballet dancers or a stage play or a movie. When we understand something, we say “I see.”

With our eyes we can glance, look, gaze, stare; we can lower our eyes in shame or humility, or avert them. They open wide with amazement or fear, glow with excitement. We can be glassy-eyed with exhaustion or boredom.

- **Tears:** We can weep for sorrow, for anger, or for joy. English also has the lovely expression “crocodile tears” for sympathy that is feigned or counterfeit.

**In the scriptures:** Adam and Eve are described as having their eyes opened after they sinned (Gen. 3: 7). Jesus speaks to us about removing the beam from our own eye before we try to remove a speck from the eye of our brother or sister (Mt. 7: 3-5). He commands us to forgive others (Mt. 5: 23-24; 6: 12, 14-15; 18: 21-35) rather than seek revenge: no longer is it to be an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth (Mt. 5: 38-39).

Faith is sometimes expressed in terms of sight. Those who have eyes to see are blessed when they believe in Jesus (Lk. 10: 23). When he restored sight to a blind beggar, the man followed him on his way (Mk. 10: 52). In chapter 9 of John — used as the gospel on the fourth Sunday in Lent, year A, and whenever catechumens are moving toward baptism at Easter — Jesus speaks of himself as the light of the world (Jn. 9: 5), and accuses the Pharisees of spiritual blindness for their refusal to believe as did the man who had been physically blind (Jn. 9: 35-41).

- **Tears:** The psalter speaks of God as collecting our tears in a water flask (Ps. 56: 8). In the gospel, we see Jesus weeping over the people of Jerusalem (Lk. 19: 41-44), and with others at the death of Lazarus (Jn. 11: 31-36). Peter wept bitterly over his denial of Christ (Mt. 26: 75). While on the way to Calvary, Jesus comforted the women who were weeping for him, and
suggested that they cry instead for Jerusalem (Lk. 23: 27-31). Paul invites us to share in the feelings of those who are happy and those who are weeping (Rom. 12: 15). At the end of time, God will wipe away all our tears and make us completely happy (Rev. 21: 4).

In the liturgy: Our liturgy uses visual symbols in all its celebrations: flickering candles, colored vestments and white albs, rising smoke from incense (see Rev. 8: 4). Priests make various gestures to be seen by the people (Gl, no. 273 [1663]): signs of the cross, bows, anointings, laying on of hands. Processions, processional crosses, and banners are intended to be seen. Decorations, statues, mosaics, and paintings are there to raise our hearts to thoughts of God's love and mercy for us. In the middle ages, stained glass windows were placed in churches to be a beautiful bible for those who could not read.

We pray that our eyes may be opened so that we may see God's work in creation (17th Sunday in ordinary time, alternative opening prayer), and that we may recognize the wonders of this life (23rd Sunday, alternative opening prayer). In the funeral liturgy, we ask God to wipe away all our tears (Rev. 21: 4), as we look to God for comfort in our sorrow. Our tears are never in vain, for God sees our suffering (5th Sunday in ordinary time, alternative opening prayer; see Mt. 11: 28-30).

• Art: The Catholic Church promotes good art and encourages its use in church buildings and furnishings, and in all the things used for our worship (vessels, vestments, music, books, furniture). The beauty of good art gives glory to God and turns our minds and hearts to our creator. All good art, including contemporary styles, is acceptable as long as it contributes to reverence and beauty. (Further principles and details are discussed in the Constitution on the liturgy, nos. 122-124, 126 [122-124, 126]; and in Gl, nos. 253-254, 256, 287-289, 295, 306, 312 [1643-1644, 1646, 1677-1679, 1685, 1696, 1702].)

In our family life: Children may be encouraged to thank God for their gift of sight, and for all the beautiful and wonderful things they see in creation (see Bulletin 89, page 111). Parents and teachers have to teach them to appreciate the beauty of form, and to recognize and love good art. Care should be taken to avoid cheap and tawdry "religious art" (junky statues, pictures, some picture books) and "religious" trinkets that insult both our faith and our taste.

Photographs of the Canadian bishops' art collection (26 pieces) are contained in Sunday Mass Book (1976, CCC, Ottawa), and in Art Collection/Collection d'Art (1976, CCC, Ottawa — with fuller notes by the artists on their own work). Children can be encouraged to read worthwhile books

and to develop a taste for reading instead of always watching television passively. Two tasteful books have been edited recently by the National Liturgical Office for families: *Family Book of Prayer* and *Preparing by Prayer* (both 1983, CCCB, Ottawa).

* * *

**Helpful reading:**


* * *

**A prayer:**

*Lord Jesus,*

*help me to see!*

*Teach me to see your hand in the beauty of the earth,*

*in the eyes of my brothers and sisters,*

*in the crosses I have to carry.*

*Help me to use my power of sight*

*for the glory of our heavenly Father.*

*Help me to love you*

*and to serve you in all I see and meet.*

*Lord Jesus,*

*I want to love you now and for ever. Amen!*

### Hearing and Listening

**Humanly speaking:** With our ears and our power of hearing we are able to hear the many sounds of nature: birds singing, cattle lowing, the wind blowing, rain falling, leaves rustling, waves lapping or crashing, brooks babbling, water trickling. We can hear people talking, in friendly conversations and in formal speeches; we hear laughter, joking, and the sounds of weeping and sorrow. We can hear the happy shouts of playing children, the roar of excitement by spectators at sports, the babble of sounds at a large fair or exhibition. At night, or in a forest or desert, we can listen to the sound of silence. Even in groups, a momentary lull sometimes interrupts our conversations.

*Parents and children:* Parents are always listening to their children: they hear their baby's cries and murmurs, their children's first words, and watch their gradual development in the art of speaking and conversing. Children grow up listening to their parents: conversations, family stories, fairy tales, nursery rhymes, scoldings, encouragement. Sometimes words are simply replaced by a warm gesture: a smile, a kiss, a hug.

Parents can influence their children to love poetry, singing, and good music by surrounding them with these forms of beauty even before their birth. A home that loves music and beautiful words will touch the lives of children and extend this influence into their adult lives.
Children and parents and friends need to learn to listen, and to let others pour out their hearts at times. When we have troubles on our mind, it helps us a lot to be able to get them out by speaking to a sympathetic friend.

- **Everyone:** Every adult and child needs to learn to listen to his or her own heart, to the voice of conscience, and with respect to the cares and secrets of others.

In a world where we are surrounded by loud advertising on radio and television, we need to become able to discern between truth and falsehood, and to recognize that many people are out to get our money by increasing our desires for things we truly do not need.

In the scriptures: The scriptures are accepted in faith as God's living word to us. God has spoken to us in many ways in the past, and finally through Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our brother (Heb. 1: 1-3). We are invited to listen to God's voice and obey (Ps. 95: 7), to be still and recognize that God is our God (Ps. 46: 10). God's word is alive and active (Heb. 4: 12), accomplishing God's will (Is. 55: 10-11), and judging us (Heb. 4: 12).

God sends preachers or messengers to proclaim the word to all, and to teach those who listen to call on the name of Jesus as Lord and be saved (Rom. 10: 9-15). If we have ears, we are to listen (Mt. 11: 15), in order that we may have life (Is. 55: 3); God invites us to listen to Jesus in a special way as God's Word (Lk. 9: 35). Jesus told the apostles that they were blessed because they saw and heard him, something that prophets and many others longed for (Mt. 13: 16-17); yet those who believe without meeting Jesus in the flesh are also blessed (Jn. 20: 29).

Speaking of heaven, Paul combines Is. 64: 4 and 65: 17, and reminds us that we have not heard, seen, or even imagined the wonderful rewards God is preparing for those who are faithful in following Jesus (1 Cor. 2: 9).

In the liturgy: In the eucharist and in all the sacraments and other celebrations, we listen to God's word and to prayers, songs, and preaching, and respond by silent reflection, by prayer, and by action in our daily living. Most celebrations of the liturgy would be improved by more careful proclamation of the word, and by a longer period of silence after each reading.

In the sacrament of individual reconciliation, both priest and penitent listen to God's word. Then the priest listens as the penitent confesses, and the penitent listens to the priest's advice and suggestions for a holier life. Where possible, special provisions may be made for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

One danger in the liturgy of the word in our Sunday celebrations of the eucharist is wordiness. The rite itself provides many words. Presiders and ministers must make sure that they do not bury the liturgy in an additional avalanche of excess words. Introductions should be brief and concise, and
therefore are to be carefully prepared; in many cases, they should be written out and honed until they are lean rather than wordy.

Except in very small churches and chapels, an adequate public address system should be provided so that the readers and the presiding priest may be heard clearly and easily by all members of the assembly (GI, no. 273 [1663]).

- **Silence**: See pages 172-173, below.

**In our family life**: Parents can help their children to grow up in an atmosphere of attentiveness to God's word. Bible songs and stories for little ones, simple readings to children as they grow, the use of psalms and refrains (sung at least some of the time) in prayer, and a time for God's word each day; these are ways of giving the word a greater place in their family's life. A variety of versions and editions of the bible, with personal copies for all members and some available for visitors, will make God's word easily accessible. Bibles and books about the word make fine presents for birthdays, Christmas, and other occasions.

Each week, sometime before Sunday, members of the family can prepare the Sunday readings, especially the gospel, and see what God is saying to them and to their parish community. It is also helpful to discuss the readings and homily after Mass, and share further reflections with one another.

- **Handing on the memory** (see Bulletin 85, page 147): Tradition means that we remember what we have received, and hand on our memory. It is not a lifeless repetition; we have to make the memory part of our own life before we hand it on to our children, so that it can become a part of their life that they in turn will pass on to the next generation.

We hand it on by telling a story. It is not a mere repetition of what we heard as children: now we are part of it, and we hand it on so that our children can be part of it in their turn.

The Israelites were commanded to tell the story of God's great deeds among them: see Exod. 12: 26-27; Exod. 13: 8-10; Deut. 6: 20-25. So strongly did they do this that they felt drawn into the story: "We were there!" Jewish families still carry on the practice during the Passover: the youngest child asks the meaning of these rites, and the father tells the *haggadah*, the ancient and ever new story of their salvation from slavery in the land of Egypt.

The scriptures mention other occasions on which parents and other adult members of the family pass on their memories of God's grace-filled actions: see Deut. 32: 7; Ps. 44: 1; Ps. 48: 12-14; Ps. 78: 1-8; Ps. 145: 4-7, 10-13, 21; Is. 38: 19.

In your family, what are some of the opportunities for passing on the Good News of Jesus to your children and their friends?
Helpful reading: Further notes on hearing and listening are given in Bulletin 89, pages 107-110.

Some helpful suggestions on bibles and other books for the family's use are given in A book for God's people, in Bulletin 63, pages 79-85; see also A family bookshelf, in Bulletin 80, pages 188-189; see also Bulletin 68, pages 89-90. For ideas on the psalms, see Bulletin 75, Praying the Psalms; helpful books are listed there on pages 187-189.

* * *

A prayer:

Loving God,
we thank you for listening to our prayers.
Even though you know our needs before we do,
you turn your ear to our words
and grant our requests.

Father,
hear our prayer,
for we ask in the name of Jesus our Lord. Amen!

Tasting

Humanly speaking: The sense of taste allows us to enjoy the pleasure of good food, tasty meals, and good company. Commercial competition has led however to the use of various drugs and chemicals to alter or enhance or imitate flavors, making natural tastes seem bland and less desirable. The excessive use of salt in foods had led to published concerns about dangers to health. Tastes in food and ways of cooking (or eating food raw) vary in different regions, countries, cultures, and seasons.

In a metaphorical way, we may speak of a taste for good art, reading, or music, and of developing or losing our taste for certain pleasures or activities.

In the scriptures: Jesus reminds us that we, his followers, are to be the salt of the earth, to give it a unique flavor. If we lose this flavor, this holiness, we are worthless (Mt. 5: 13).

While John the Baptist was austere, Jesus came among us eating and drinking (Mt. 11: 16-19). The gospel describes a variety of meals that Jesus enjoyed: banquets (Jn. 2: 1-11; Lk. 7: 36-50); meals with sinners (Mk. 2: 15-17); the picnic meal of the loaves and fishes (Mk. 6: 30-44); the last supper in its Passover spirit (Lk. 22: 1, 7-22); and the meals with his disciples after his resurrection (Jn. 21: 1-15), and especially at Emmaus (Lk. 24: 30-32, 35). Heaven is described in terms of a wedding feast (Mt. 22: 1-13) or banquet (Lk. 14: 15-24; see Lk. 22: 30 and Ps. 23: 5).

Giving food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty is one practical way of showing our love for Jesus (Mt. 25: 31-46; James 2: 14-17). Those who give cold water to Christ's followers will be rewarded (Mt. 10: 42: an example is given in Jn. 4: 4-42, where Jesus rewards the woman at the well and the other villagers with the gift of faith). Jesus promised to give the Spirit, "streams of living water," to all who believe (Jn. 7: 37-39).

St. Paul reminds us that we can give glory to God in everything we do, including eating and drinking (1 Cor. 10: 31; see Col. 3: 17; I Thess. 5: 18). All foods are clean, because they are part of God's good creation (Mt. 15: 11; Acts 10: 15; Rom. 14: 20).

We are invited in Ps. 34: 8 to taste and see how good the Lord is. God's law is sweeter than honey (Ps. 19: 10). Our shepherd leads us to green pastures and still waters, and prepares a banquet table for us (Ps. 23: 2, 5). In heaven, we shall see that Jesus has truly saved the best wine for the last (see Jn. 2: 10).

In the liturgy: Like the disciples at Emmaus, we ought to recognize Christ when we gather for the breaking of the bread (Lk. 24: 31, 35). The many presences of the Lord in the liturgy are described in the Liturgy constitution, no. 7 [7].

Concern for the sign value of bread in the liturgy has some people trying to work for bread that is more truly breadlike in flavor and texture (Gl, no. 283 [1673]; see National Council resolution, and Eucharistic bread: Actual food, in Bulletin 69, pages 128-143; no. 76, page 233). Liturgists are also encouraging communion from the cup as a fuller sign ("take and drink" — Liturgy constitution, no. 55 [55]), and discouraging intinction as being of minimalistic sign value. Communion should be eating real food and drinking real drink.

The Latin word sapere means both tasting and knowing. It is used in the Latin collects to express the taste that Christians have for wisdom and the things of the Spirit.

In the Didache ("Teaching of the Twelve Apostles"), a little booklet reflecting Christian ways in Syria around the year 100, we find this prayer: "Almighty ruler, . . . you gave men and women food and drink for enjoyment that they may give thanks to you" (chapter 10). This is paraphrased in the hymn, "Father, we thank thee who hast planted" (CBW II, no. 676), but line 5 offers a slightly puritanical view: "Thou, Lord, didst make all for thy pleasure." Fr. Godfrey Diekmann, OSB, points out that the Greek says "for our pleasure."3 The loving God who gives us the sense of taste wants us to enjoy creation.

3 Summer School of Theology, St. John's University, Collegeville, MN 56321, July 1982.
A number of versions of “Taste and see” (Ps. 34) are included in CBW II (see nos. 148, 284, 287, 290, 413-415, 668), and may be used appropriately at communion and at other times.

In the family: Simple, healthy, balanced meals, cooked and prepared with love, and served in an atmosphere of concern and feeling for one another; meals which partake of the sacred spirit of the community eucharist and our promised banquet in heaven; meals which begin and end with prayer; meals where friends and guests are always welcome: these are the meals in which a family can recognize Christ in their midst. Some meals will be special celebrations, and will be marked with additional symbolic acts and gestures.

As noted above on pages 159-160, families which encourage and share the taste for art and music of quality are giving their children an invaluable heritage, and the world the gift of further beauty.

* * *

Helpful reading:

  * Examples of meal prayers are also given in A Book of Blessings (1981, CCCB, Ottawa), pages 177-186; and in Family Book of Prayer (1983, CCCB, Ottawa), page 15.

* * *

A prayer:

Lord Jesus,
be with us when we eat together,
and bless our love for one another.
Fill us with your spirit of joy and hope,
and help us to keep doing our best for you.

Guide our work and play today,
keep us faithful in your love,
and bless all the people we touch today.

Jesus our brother,
we praise you for ever and ever. Amen!
Our Sense of Smell

Humanly speaking: We enjoy pleasant smells, and breathe them in deeply: fragrant flowers, new-mown hay, the aroma of good cooking, perfume, incense. Bad smells — rotting food, burning garbage, exhaust fumes, a skunk’s defensive spray — make us wrinkle our noses in disgust. We use air purifiers to mask unpleasant odors in our homes. Our society puts great stress on avoiding personal odors of any kind: in order to make ourselves smell like anything but people, we are urged to buy and use soaps, deodorants, perfumes, fragrances, and other assorted lotions, bars, sprays, sticks, and creams. Thus, it is alleged, we will avoid offending others and become pleasing and attractive to them. Various other dreams of success, popularity, and romance are peddled with our perfumes.

In the scriptures: Fragrances and incense are part of the life of worship in the scriptures:

- Noah’s sacrifice is described as being pleasing to the Lord’s nostrils (Gen. 8: 21). This early anthropomorphism (speaking of God as having a human body) reflects the theological truth which is expressed in Ps. 94: 8-11: God, the maker of our sight and hearing and other senses, is certainly able to know what we are doing.

- Incense: A daily sacrifice of incense was offered on the altar of incense (Exod. 30: 1, 7-9; Lk. 1: 9-11). Special ingredients were combined for this incense, which was to be used only for worshipping God (Exod. 30: 34-38). Our prayers going to God are described in terms of the rising smoke and the fragrance of incense (Ps. 141: 2; Rev. 5: 8; 8: 3-4). Incense was among the gifts presented by the wise men (Mt. 2: 11; see Is. 60: 6).

- Other fragrances: Perfumed oil was compounded and reserved for anointing the tent and the vessels, and for making priests (Exod. 30: 22-33). In the royal wedding song (Ps. 45: 8), the king’s robes are made fragrant with spices (compare this with Gen. 27: 27).

- Fragrant lives: Paul speaks of the knowledge of Christ and of our lives as aromas or fragrances that draw people to live for God (2 Cor. 2: 14-17).

In the liturgy: Fragrances are still part of our liturgy:

- Incense: It took some time for incense to be used in Christian liturgy, since pagans used it to offer adoration to their gods, including the emperor; a Christian who did this was renouncing the faith as an apostate. It was also used at pagan funerals, and carried before public officials in processions. After the Roman empire became Christian, the use of incense was gradually accepted for Catholic worship. Today incense is used in a variety of our celebrations.
In any celebration of the eucharist, burning incense may be carried before the cross in the opening procession through the assembly; the altar is incensed at the beginning of the celebration. Incensing is a special mark of reverence for the gospel book. During the preparation of the gifts, the altar, the gifts, the ministers, and the people are incensed. The eucharistic elements are incensed at the institution narrative. At the end of the Mass, incense may lead the procession of ministers through the community. Directives for the use of incense are given in GI, nos. 235-236 [1625-1626].

Liturgical of the hours: Incense may be used during the gospel canticle of morning and evening prayer. The altar is incensed, and then the presiding presbyter and the people (GILH, no. 261 [3691]). In popular celebrations of evening prayer, incense is sometimes put into a brazier during the singing of Ps. 141.

Funerals: It is appropriate to use incense during the Mass, as described above, and during the final commendation and farewell. The Canadian funeral ritual suggests a brief introduction to the incensation for the sake of members of other Churches who may not be accustomed to the use of incense.5

Eucharistic devotions: Incense is used during exposition and reposi­tion, and when the blessing (benediction) is given at the end of a period of exposition. Texts and rubrics are given in A Book of Blessings (1981, CCCB, Ottawa): pages 245-254; see also Bulletin 69, pages 104-126; and Sunday Mass Book (1976, CCC, Ottawa): pages 1097-1106.

Blessings: Incense is one of the ritual elements that may be included when designing a blessing. “Used as a symbol of purification and prayer, incense may add solemnity to a procession, gospel reading, or blessing.” Such ritual gestures “help to express and deepen the faith of all who take part in the celebration” (see A Book of Blessings, page 31).

Method: The Roman rite has accustomed to the use of a thurible (censer, incense pot) on a chain about a meter in length. The Byzantine rite uses a short chain, sometimes with little bells (like sleigh bells). More recently, the custom of spreading incense in a brazier of burning coals — either remaining in one place or carried in procession — has become a little more common in some communities.

Generous use: In the 1940s and 1950s, altar boys used one little quarter square of cheap charcoal, over which three spoonfuls of expensive incense were poured. The result: a wisp of smoke and a waste of incense. Now

---


that we have begun to accept the symbolic value both of clouds of smoke and of fragrance permeating the assembly place, we are using lots of burning charcoal and plenty of incense. We need to remind ourselves occasionally of Rev. 5: 8 and 8: 3-4. A wisp of smoke is a skeletal symbol and has little to say to the people of God.

* Chrism: The Hebrew word “Messiah” (the anointed one) was translated as *Christos* in Greek. Originally used of the king and the high priest, the word later came to refer to the promised king (Gen. 49: 10; Num. 24: 17; Psalms 2, 72, and 110). In the time of Christ, there was a popular expectation of a political liberator coming to free them from the Romans who occupied their land (see Lk. 24: 21). The first generation of Christians saw Jesus as Lord, Messiah, prophet, and suffering servant. Jesus accepted the title of Messiah in Mk. 14: 60-62; see also Mk. 8: 29, and parallels. The name Jesus Christ means the anointed savior.

- Chrism is a fragrant oil (compare Exod. 30: 22-33), used to anoint those who are being confirmed, and those who have just been baptized or ordained as presbyters or bishop.

- Chrism is a mixture of olive oil or other plant oil with perfume. The standard “formula” in Canada seems to be to add a wee bit of drugstore balsam to the oil before or during the chrism Mass. The rite also permits the use of perfume: see the Canadian sacramentary (1983, CCCB, Ottawa), page 1082, no. 13.

- Adequate symbol? Theoretically, chrism should spread a pleasant fragrance throughout the assembly of God’s people (compare Jn. 12: 3). Is this true of the chrism used in most celebrations today? Chrism should be a reminder of God’s goodness, of the generous outpouring of the Spirit into our hearts (see Rom. 5: 5). In practice, are we unconsciously shortchanging God’s people by another piece of minimalism? How can we do better?

[Before 1973, in the anointing of the sick, the priest also anointed the nose, praying that the Lord would forgive this person any sins committed by the use of the sense of smell.]

In the family: It is good to learn to thank God for the beautiful fragrances of nature, cooking, and good perfume. It is the Jewish custom to praise God when smelling a flower’s scent or a fine perfume, in this manner:6

> Blessed are you, Lord our God: you have made this pleasant fragrance for us.

This type of spontaneous response to God’s gifts helps us to live in accord with St. Paul’s advice in 1 Cor. 10: 31; Col. 3: 17; and 1 Thess. 5: 16-18.

6 This form of blessing, known as a berakah, may be used often in our prayer. See Bulletin 80, page 176; no. 49, pages 152-153, 164-168; and no. 68, pages 73-74. Many examples are given in Bulletin 49 and in A Book of Blessings.
A prayer:

All praise and glory to you,
creator of the universe
and Father of all your people:
you have made the world in beauty,
and give us many fragrances and aromas to delight us.

Help us to recognize your hand in all creation,
and to offer you the praise of all creatures
through our Lord and brother Jesus Christ,
in the love of your Spirit,
for you are one God, for ever and ever. Amen!

Feeling and Touching

This part of our sensual life — in the best sense of the adjective — is discussed in *Arms and hands*, on pages 147-151, above.

* * *

A prayer:

Holy Spirit of God,
touch our hearts with your love,
fill our bodies and minds with your strength,
and enliven our senses with your grace.

Teach us to seek your gift of wisdom,
and to know your truth.
Fill us with your generous gifts,
and make our lives bear everlasting fruit for our Father
as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus,
who is our brother and our Lord for ever and ever. Amen!
Assembled for worship

There are many other symbolic elements in our liturgy. Some of these are mentioned briefly in this article, but deserve fuller development in later issues of the Bulletin.

Respect for the Assembly

It is the whole assembly — priest, ministers, and people — that is the important symbol. The whole assembly celebrates the liturgy, with each member carrying out his or her particular ministry within the community action.

Assembled by God: It is God who has called us together to be the people of God. The Hebrew scriptures speak of the qahal, the Greek texts of the ekklesia: we call it the Church, the people called together by our God. The clearest image of the Church is the group who assemble around the bishop, especially for eucharist on the Lord’s day; the next clearest image is the local assembly around the pastor (see Liturgy constitution, nos. 41-42[41-42]; G1, nos. 74-75 [1464-1465]). Christ is present among us in many ways (Liturgy constitution, no. 7 [7]), and is recognized in the breaking of the bread (see Lk. 24: 31, 35).

A sign to the world: As God’s Church, we are to be a sign to the nations of God’s love for the human race, and of the unity God wants in the human family (Constitution on the Church, no. 1). Our love for one another is the sign that we are Christ’s followers (Jn. 13: 35), and our reaching out to those in need is a tangible expression of God’s love for them. Even our church buildings are to be signs of the people of God as a servant Church (see Bulletin 74, House of the Church).


See also Bulletin 87, pages 6-7, on “Assembly.”
A prayer:

Lord Jesus,
help us to recognize you in our midst:
in your word,
in the breaking of bread,
and in our brothers and sisters. Amen!

God's Word Is Proclaimed

God's word is proclaimed in many ways in our liturgy: in the words of the readers, by their dress and actions, by the respect given to the book and to the place of the word, and by the attention paid by the community.

Readers: When a reader proclaims the word in the liturgical assembly, it is God who is speaking to the gathered people (Gl, no. 9 [1399]). By their preparation, dress, projection, intelligible and faith-filled proclamation, readers help the people to recognize this as God's word and to listen to it with faith.

Book of God's word: The lectionary is to be a respectable book, carried in procession at the beginning and end of the celebration. Readers proclaim the readings from it, and not from a leaflet or loose piece of paper. Canada's Lectionary for Mass for Sundays and solemnities is designed for good proclamation. At the gospel, the deacon or priest gives signs of reverence to the book: a gospel procession, incense, lighted candles, sign of the cross, kissing the book.

Place of the word: The lectern used for the three readings is reserved for God's word. It is not to be used as a place for announcing hymn numbers and bingo games. The lectern may be decorated by a drape or a simple banner.

Listening with respect: As God's word is proclaimed, all members of the community, including the presiding priest and the ministers, listen with attention and respect. Ushers ask latecomers to wait until the reading is finished before they move toward a seat. All listen in faith as the reading is proclaimed in faith.

Preparation and follow-up: Readers are appointed well in advance, and prepare their texts well. The readings for next Sunday are listed in the parish bulletin so that people may read them over ahead of time. Musicians take the readings into consideration as they prepare their selection of pieces to be sung. Ideas are included in the bulletin and homily for living out what God is saying to us in the word.

Some questions: What are we saying in a community when readers fail to come, or come only at the last minute, or send an unprepared substitute? What of readers who prepare only in the five minutes before Mass, or who come in wondering what they are to read today? What of parishes where they
habitually grab a reader at the door and appoint him or her on the spot? What do these actions say about our respect for God's word and for God's people?

* * *

Helpful reading: See Place of the word, in Bulletin 74, pages 128-131. Other issues of interest include: Bulletin 50, on the lectionary; no. 56, on training readers; no. 71, on celebrating the liturgy of the word.


* * *

A prayer:

Jesus,  
let your Spirit guide us  
as we listen to the Father's word.  
Help us to live as people of the word,  
and to follow you in love.  

Lord Jesus,  
we praise you,  
for you are Lord for ever and ever. Amen!

Silence

Participation: Silence is one of the ways in which we participate in the liturgy (Liturgy constitution, no. 30 [30]). Moments of silent reflection and prayer are deliberately built in so that all members of the community will have time for personal prayer. In the Mass, these times include silence during the penitential rite, after Let us pray, after each of the readings and the homily, and after communion (GI, no. 23 [1413]). Similar periods of silence are part of other liturgical celebrations.

Importance: Moments of silence in the liturgy are important for the prayer life of the community members. Words without end can be oppressive. People need brief moments to digest what they are hearing, to listen to the Spirit, to breathe a personal prayer. A liturgy which is punctuated with adequate moments of silence will be more prayerful and enjoyable.

* * *
Helpful reading:

*Keeping silent and listening,* in Bulletin 89, pages 107-110.

*Silence is necessary!* in Bulletin 71, pages 204-205; other references are given there. See also Bulletin 77, page 32; and no. 83, page 60, no. 12.

A prayer for silence is given in *A Book of Blessings* (1981, CCCB, Ottawa): see page 280.


* * *

A prayer:

Lord Jesus,
help me to be still in your presence.
Speak to me in moments of silence,
and lead me in your ways.

Jesus,
I love you.
Help me to praise you for ever and ever. Amen!

### Language: Some Concerns

There are some areas of concern in our use of language in liturgy today:

**Exclusive language:** Language referring to both men and women or to all the people of God should no longer be expressed in masculine terms only. As new liturgical texts are translated or older ones revised by ICEL (International Commission on English in the Liturgy), this problem is being taken care of: a recent example is *Pastoral Care of the Sick* (1983, CCCB, Ottawa). Those who preach or make announcements still have to be careful of their choice of words.

Those translating the scriptures into modern English have yet to come up with versions that are completely suitable for oral proclamation in the liturgy. ICEL is working on a translation of the common psalms (see *Lec­tionary for Mass*, nos. 174-175).

Further notes are given in Bulletin 87, pages 36 and 41-42.

**Excessive words:** Announcements are permitted during the Mass at the end of the communion rite, just before the dismissal. Only those which are truly necessary for the life of the community should be made. It is preferable to include them in the parish bulletin or on the bulletin board instead of making them at Mass.

Brief introductions and instructions are permitted at certain points in the celebration. These should be short, carefully prepared, and honed to avoid excess words.
Some invitations may be made in the minister’s own words. Care needs to be taken to keep them to the same length and style as the original in the liturgical books. The invitation to the Lord’s prayer should be about two lines, not six.

* * *

Helpful reading:


Language, Liturgy and Meaning, by A.C. Thiselton (1975, Grove Books, Bramcote, Notts.).

Postures and Gestures

Our bodily positions (standing, kneeling, bowing, sitting) and our gestures should reflect our faith. The priest and the other ministers need to let their faith shine through their gestures and postures. Sloppy, hasty, or careless movements distract people and hinder the development of faith and reverence.

Priests, ministers, and people have to learn how to make gestures well, and to understand what they mean. This is part of the continuing need for education and growth in every community. Many positive suggestions are offered in the articles in this issue.

* * *

Helpful reading:


Worship Without Words: Liturgical leaflet (1979, CCCB, Ottawa).
Respect for Symbols

We show respect for symbols when we use them generously, and let their richness enfold the community. Their poetic ambiguity requires that they not be explained in the greatest detail; rather, we let them evoke the mystery of God's saving love, and tease out its echoes in our hearts and in our daily living.

Familiar symbols: Every country has certain symbols that speak to its citizens, and call forth feelings of love and pride, of loyalty and dedication: the flag, the national anthem, heroes, special days, sites, monuments, rallying cries.

Scriptures: The scriptures give us many symbols for God's loving care for the chosen people. The New Testament speaks of Jesus as the sign of God's love; of birth and death, light and darkness, burial and resurrection; of water, oil, bread and wine, banquets; of washing of feet; of special days and holy places. The cross is the sign that Christ gave of his mercy and obedience and salvation.

Our liturgy uses many symbols to bring out the vast richness of God's merciful love for us. Water symbolizes both death and destruction (as in a flood) and the life-giving power (watering new plants). Darkness is dispelled by light. Oil soothes and heals and strengthens. Perfumes and incense remind us of the beauty of God and of living our life for God. Bread and wine are symbols of God's generous gift of life to the community.

Today we are invited to return to a more generous use of our symbols: baptism by immersion, anointing with generous amounts of oil, bread that can be recognized as food, return to drinking from the cup. Gestures such as the kiss of peace and the laying on of hands have taken on deeper meaning once more as they are used more frequently in celebration.

Helpful reading:


_An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols_, by J.C. Cooper (1978, Thames and Hudson, 30 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QP).

Clothing and Vesture

Clothing and uniforms: Beyond covering our bodies and protecting us from the elements, clothing helps us to express ourselves; in some societies it expresses rank or social status. We dress up for special occasions, and wear informal clothes when we relax. When people belong to the same group, they may decide to wear the same type of clothing or uniform. In democratic countries, certain uniforms symbolize protection and help: the uniforms of police, firefighters, and the armed forces come to mind.

Putting on Christ: The Pauline epistles use the metaphor of putting on clothing in several ways. We put on Christ when we are baptized (Gal. 3: 27; Rom. 13: 14). We have put on a new nature, and are made new in him (Col. 3: 10; Eph. 4: 24). Another image used is that of putting on armor (Rom. 13: 12; Eph. 6: 11). As followers of Jesus, we are to put on the virtues, especially love (Col. 3: 12, 14). In the end, we will be able to put on immortality (1 Cor. 15: 53-54).

Vesture in the liturgy: Vestments in the Christian liturgy seem to have their origin at the time when Christians moved from small house churches to larger buildings and basilicas. Vestments served as uniforms, and designated the ministers and leaders of the liturgical action.

- Lay ministers: In Canada at present, lay readers and ministers of communion tend to wear ordinary street clothes. Servers dress in cassock and surplice or in some form of robe. Choir members wear gowns in some churches. (The alb is considered to be the common vesture for ministers: see GI, no. 298 [1688].)

- Ordained ministers: The presiding priest wears a chasuble over alb and stole; at times, a cope replaces the chasuble. The deacon wears a dalmatic over the alb and stole. (See GI, nos. 299-300, 303 [1689-1690, 1693].)

Renewal: Vestments should express beauty instead of extravagance (Liturgy constitution, no. 124 [124]). Bishops’ conferences may approve the types of fabrics to be used, and may suggest adapted designs to Rome. A vestment’s beauty should come from its fabric and cut rather than from “lavish ornamentation” (GI, nos. 304-306 [1694-1696]). It is not necessary to add further symbols to the vestment, which is already symbolic in itself.

Some communities are reacting to mass-produced vestments from garment factories, and are designing and crafting their own, or else are ordering them from a designer who will prepare a set of vestments that are in harmony with the particular Church community.

Helpful reading:

Environment for Our Worship

The type of surroundings affects our action as individuals and as a community. This is true in worship as in other areas of our life. When we are surrounded by quiet and dignified beauty, our community's worship can be deeply influenced and made more reverent. The church building has to be designed for the primary symbol, the assembly of God's people, and so make possible good use of symbols in liturgical actions. Moreover, the church building itself is to be a symbol of the Church community which uses it.

* * *

Helpful reading: Many positive principles and suggestions are offered in these references:


House of the Church (Bulletin 74): includes many further references for reading, study, and discussion.

* * *

Reflections (from Bulletin 74, page 134):
A church building should reflect:
— what we believe;
— what we believe we are;
— what we believe we are doing.

What does our church reflect?

* * *

Prayers:

Lord Jesus, we praise you.
Give us hearts of warm flesh, and not of cold stone.
Make us living stones in your eternal temple of praise.

Help us to be your Church,
and let our church reflect your love for us,
and our love for you.

Lord Jesus, we praise you. Amen!

Lord Jesus,
open our hearts to your Spirit,
and help us to understand
what our church buildings are saying to the world today,
and what you want them to say.
Liturgical skills

Dr. J. Frank Henderson, chairperson of the National Council for Liturgy, suggests a number of points that need to be considered about liturgical skills in those who preside when the Christian assembly is celebrating liturgy.

In general, liturgical skills involve the relationship of the individual minister to a group, rather than to single individuals.

Ministry in the Course of Worship

1. General notes on group leadership:
   Appreciation of group dynamics: in general, and in liturgy
   Poise: must be able to feel at ease, or at least give that impression
   Posture is important
   Reverence: toward words, people, things, gestures.
   Sensitivity to mood and festivity; ability to alter mood and foster festivity
   Sensitivity to style: ability to influence the style of a liturgy, and to know the difference between one style and another
   Ability to deal gracefully with disturbances, interruptions, distractions
   Ability to calm down and to enthuse.

   Ability to begin and end a celebration well
   Sensitivity to the people present
   Ability to promote unity of purpose and attitude
   Ability to seek participation of all.

   Ability to promote consciousness of community
   Ability to foster mutual attentiveness and respect
   Ability to encourage explicit interaction among the people present
   Ability both to enter into the prayer oneself and to lead the assembly into prayer (and not just say prayers oneself).
2. Relations with other ministers:
Ability to integrate ministries of others
Ability to handle mistakes of other ministers gracefully
Ability to affirm, support, work with, train, correct other ministers.

3. Verbal communication: general:
To speak effectively to small, medium, and large groups
To speak and relate to individuals or small groups within and together with large groups
To project one's voice appropriately
To proclaim scripture effectively.
To preach effectively in different styles
To pray effectively from texts and books
To pray memorized prayers effectively.
To lead others into prayer
To pray spontaneously in different ways
To invite and lead silence.
To know and use effectively traditional ritual dialogue:
  greetings and introductions
  liturgy of the hours
  blessings
  introduction and conclusion to general intercessions
  general intercessions
  invitations to prayer
  conclusions and dismissals.

4. Verbal communication and relationships: Special needs:
To speak and relate effectively with:
  children, teenagers, young married, middle-aged, elderly
  boys, girls, men, women: separately
  clergy
  native people; ethnic groups
  sick, dying, bereaved
  non-Catholics; non-Christians.

5. Nonverbal communication:
Skills in posture, gesture, movement
Skills in traditional ritual gestures: see nos. 22-25, below.
Sensitivity to the nonverbal in general
Sensitivity to beauty, authenticity
Skills in ritual-making.
6. **Hospitality:**

Ability to welcome others, to greet, to introduce (as leader, as greeter)
Ability to make others feel at home
Ability to welcome latecomers gracefully
Ability to feel at home, with sensitivity to others, in 'parachute' situations

Ability to send forth effectively.

7. **Diaconal skills:**

Ability to make announcements gracefully
Ability to give directions effectively
Ability to respond to questions and make referrals
Sensitivity to and ability to deal with individuals and groups during worship.

8. **Musical skills:**

Ability to lead and to participate in a musical liturgy
Ability to teach new songs
Ability to announce songs
Skill in choosing music.

9. **Communion:** Ability to give and receive the bread and cup: words, eyes, hands.

10. **Confession-reconciliation:** Ability to hear a confession and to show reconciliation.

11. **Sick and dying:**

Ability to pray with them as individuals; with relatives, community
Ability to give communion
Ability to anoint.

12. **General skills** for ministers other than leaders:

Reverence
Unobtrusiveness.

**Preparation for Worship**

13. **Group participation:**

To work with and as a team
The committee process
The liturgy planning process
Dealing with disagreement, conflict, lack of knowledge
Delegation of tasks and responsibilities
Integration of one's own tasks with those of others.
14. Preparation of special liturgies:

Weddings
Funerals:
  with the dying person
  with the bereaved
Sacramental preparation:
  Marriage
  Christian initiation of adults
  parents for infant baptism.

15. Preparation:

Together with individual ministers
Musicians and other artists
Others.

16. Preparing prayers and prayer services.

17. Teaching about liturgy: Adult education skills.

18. Helping others to pray at home or in groups.

Reflection Skills

19. Use of gifts: How one’s own gifts can be used for the service of the liturgical assembly.

20. Evaluation:

  Ability to evaluate one’s own liturgical ministry
  How to go about improving it
  Seeking help in evaluation
  Dealing with criticism.

21. Reflection: Ability to reflect on pastoral experience and the life of the community, relating these to theological principles and the daily and Sunday scripture readings, in order to prepare the liturgical homily.

Liturgical Gestures

22. Gathering          Watching          Touching: things, people
  Leaving             Processing           Kissing: cross, book, altar, people
  Standing           Keeping silence         Bowing: head, upper body, deep
  Sitting            Singing           Genuflecting
  Kneeling           Carrying          Striking the breast.
  Prostration       Anointing
23. Hands:
Outstretched hands
Folded hands
Greeting of peace: handshake (one or two hands); embrace.
Sign of the cross: forehead; threefold; full; on another's forehead; in blessing
Laying on of hands.
Pouring water
Sprinkling with water
Washing feet
Washing hands.

24. Communion:
Breaking bread
Giving communion: bread, cup
Receiving communion: bread, cup.

25. Other gestures:
Acknowledging one another
Invocation
Blessing
Thanksgiving
Sharing.
Adolescents in hospital

At the request of the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy, the National Council for Liturgy has prepared these discussion starters about sick and hospitalized adolescents. Pastoral workers in parishes, schools, and hospitals, as well as youth groups and high school classes, may wish to use these notes for further discussion.

Discussion Starters

1. Young people are disturbed at being sick and are annoyed at being taken from the routine of daily living. As a result, they wish to be hospitalized for a very brief time and to return to full health as soon as possible.

2. With little experience regarding sickness, they are often worried that their illness is serious or that it will have serious consequences for their lives.

3. Keeping up with school work is a concern. They are concerned about tests and the work they will miss in class. For those new in the work force, there is a worry that the job will not be kept open when they return.

4. They enjoy the attention given them by nurses and hospital staff, and appreciate the status of being a patient and of being visited by their peers.

5. Teenagers are frequently glib about their sickness. They keep saying that they are OK and that there is nothing wrong.

6. Young people tend to be very kind to others, especially to someone who is more ill than they are. They show a great concern for older people who are sick in the hospital, and reach out to them.

7. They search for a new meaning in their religion, in the sacraments, and in the Mass. It appears that the atmosphere of the hospital helps them to begin thinking more seriously about some of these matters.

8. Like all who are sick, young people begin to consider what it means to be sick, dependent, hospitalized, no longer in control of their own life.

9. When young people are in hospital, they tend to be open and frank with the pastoral worker.

10. They may show a sense of shame or embarrassment at certain illnesses and the reason for their hospitalization (e.g., social diseases, personal problems of a sexual nature).
Young people tend to identify with their Church, their school or university. They are anxious to tell the pastoral worker what school they go to, the name of their parish, the priests they know.

They come to grips very soon with the fact that they are indeed weak, that they can be sick, and that one day they will die.

They are concerned with the lack of privacy in the hospital.

They have a great need for noise: radio, TV, record player. They spend a great deal of time watching TV, probably as an escape.

They express joy when others pray with them.

Young people seem to visit their peers more frequently than older people visit their own age group.

Seldom are the parish priests told that a young person is in the hospital. This contrasts with the practice of older people telling their clergy that they are going to the hospital.

Some Additional Thoughts

Regarding young people who go to church: It is important to identify yourself as the priest, chaplain, or pastoral worker to the young person who is sick. Such persons represent the parish community to the young. Young people come from different communities and will return to them. The priest or pastoral worker is a source of reassurance and continuity. The young person sees the priest or pastoral worker first as a minister of the Church and then as a friend. The youth immediately identifies the priest or pastoral worker as the representative of the community from which he or she comes, and to which he or she will return. This is a reassurance of identity, and is shown when young people tell you the name of their parish. They may ask: “Do you know Father so-and-so?” They may indicate which Mass they take part in.

During hospitalization one’s faith is accepted and respected. Everyone experiences fear and this is accepted as normal. The experience of being in a hospital lets young people see that the strength of prayer and religion is not downgraded. This atmosphere seems to help the church-going adolescent in being open to anointing, even though there may be an initial struggle before celebrating this sacrament.

Regarding unchurched adolescents: Frequently those who have lost contact with the Church will say: “I used to serve Mass,” or “I used to know a certain priest or go to a certain parish.” They pray in their own way, however, and may show little interest in the sacraments. If the pastoral worker has an open attitude, he or she may find that the unchurched are involved in a shunned relationship, or an attempt to break with drugs, alcohol, or illicit
sex. Further, there may be an openness to Christ and the Church. The pastoral worker, acting as a guide, will invite the young person to a deeper appreciation of Christ. The hospital setting may be an ideal place to welcome the young person to return to the active practice of the faith. This type of welcome may also take place in the home.

20. Attributes of pastoral workers:
* A welcoming attitude, openness
* Care and concern
* A listening attitude to discover the underlying meaning of words
* Nonjudgmental and “nonpreachy” attitude
* A response to the needs of the young person.

One specific concern of some hospital workers surfaces when pastoral workers give advice contrary to that of the doctor and the hospital. This may happen when the young person is compared to someone else in a similar situation and judgments are made which are in opposition to those of the doctor or hospital. Care should be taken to avoid giving such advice.

Questions

For discussion purposes, the Council has prepared these questions:

a) Discussion starters:
* I am in agreement with the general orientation of these points:
  Yes ________ No ________ .
  * Comments
  * I agree with the points made in numbers ________ .
  * Comments
  * I disagree with the points made in numbers ________ .
  * Comments
  * These additional points should be included:

b) Regarding young people who go to church:
* My reaction to this section is: Positive ________ 
  Negative ________ Other ________ .
  * Comments

c) Regarding unchurched adolescents:
* My reaction to this section is: Positive ________ 
  Negative ________ Other ________ .
  * Comments
d) Attributes of pastoral workers:

* I am in agreement with these:
  Yes ________  No ________  
* Comments
* Other attributes needed by pastoral workers are:
* Comments

c) Rites of anointing and viaticum:

* My reflections on the celebration of these rites with young people are:
  
* My recommendations for the celebration of these rites with young people are:

BULLETINS FOR THIS YEAR

After consultation with the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy and the National Council for Liturgy, these topics have been chosen for the National Bulletin on Liturgy for 1984:

* No. 92 January  Guidelines on Sacraments
* No. 93 March  John Paul II:  Worship and Prayer
* No. 94 May  Gestures and Symbols
* No. 95 September  Culture and Liturgy
* No. 96 November  Social Justice and Liturgy

Each issue contains 64 pages. Subscriptions for 1984, from January to December (nos. 92-96), are still available at $8.00 in Canada; $10.00 (U.S. funds) outside Canada; by airmail, outside Canada, $17.00 (U.S. funds). Individual copies may be ordered at the prices on the inside front cover. Send your cheque or money order to Publications Service, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1 Canada.
Brief book reviews


This reverent service is intended for use by gatherings of Jews and Christians. Scripture, other readings, prayers, songs, gestures, and silence combine to provide a positive and powerful reflection on the Holocaust, the systematic murder of six million Jews by the Nazis in World War II. Recommended for large or small groups.


This is the seventh book in the series of Studies in Judaism and Christianity being published by Paulist; earlier books in the series are reviewed on pages 190-191, below. In this book, eight authors provide informative essays on Jewish spirituality, Christian spirituality, and on the ways they are related. By continuing the dialogue between Jews and Christians in a positive way, this book shares helpful insights. Recommended for all interested in working for mutual growth and understanding.


The author presents well written and imaginative pictures of people mentioned in the gospels, and offers them as aids to people who base their prayer on the bible.


For many Catholics, the final book of the New Testament seems a jumble of confusing and ever-changing images. The author of this popular study helps us to understand the apocalyptic style of literature, and offers Catholic teaching on the contents of Revelation. He points out its dominant theme, that the risen Jesus is the Lord and has won the victory over evil for us all. Recommended as helpful for parish study and prayer groups, catechists, readers, clergy, religious, and all who wish to deepen their understanding of the book of Revelation.


This is vol. 6 of Pueblo's fine series, Studies in the Reformed Rites of the Catholic Church. Other volumes have been reviewed in earlier issues of the Bulletin. In 1977, the author of this book edited Bulletin 57 on the rites for the sick and the dying.

A competent and pastoral study of the 1983 edition of Pastoral Care of the Sick, this book is written for deacons, priests, seminarians, students of liturgy, and ministers of the sick. After a clear presentation of the Church's tradition, the book looks at the renewed rites for the sick and the dying, and their pastoral celebration. As well, Fr. Gusmer helps us to understand the theology behind sickness, healing, and death. We recommend this well written book as an excellent contribution in the pastoral field.

1 Prices for U.S. publications are given in U.S. dollars, unless otherwise noted.
Songs and hymns by Willard J. Jabusch: paper, 8 1/2 by 11 inches, illustrations (1984, Musica Pacis Productions, 4848 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60640):

* God of Surprises: Eleven songs and hymns for unison, two or three voices. 16 pages.

* Spotless Is the Lamb: Accompaniments for fifteen songs. 32 pages.

* Come in Singing to the Feast: Twelve songs and hymns for unison, two or three voices. 16 pages.

* The Carpenter’s Son: Accompaniments for eleven songs and hymns. 11 by 8 1/2 inches. 24 pages.

* Two Songs for Christmas: For unison, two or three voices. 4 pages.

Fr. Jabusch provides a wide variety of songs in these five collections. Reflecting scriptural themes and passages, they are simple though deep in the lyrics and fairly easy to sing. Some of the hymns are based on folk melodies from around the world. Recommended for schools, youth groups, and catechetical classes as well as general parish use at different times and seasons of the liturgical year.


In the liturgy for the sick, the dying, and the dead, Christian Churches are seeking to help all believers to grow in faith, hope, and love, and to reach their full maturity in Christ (Eph. 4: 13), a fullness promised in our baptism. Our pastoral rites recognize that our bodies are temples of God’s Spirit, and help to make us holier and more like Christ in our times of weakness and suffering.

Seventeen authors bring us the Orthodox, Catholic, and Reformed traditions and current practices. While theologies and rites differ somewhat, the common grounding in scripture and in human need is evident, and the pastoral concern shows through in the prayers and ritual actions. (The only weakness in this book is the arrangement of authors in alphabetical order, as in the French original; a more logical progress would be more useful to the reader.) Recommended as a helpful book for pastors and students of liturgy.

A Path to Peace: Prayer, Fasting and Works of Charity, by Joseph M. Champlin (1983, Franciscan Communications, 1229 S. Santee, Los Angeles, CA 90015): paper, 32 pages. Bulk prices between 42¢ and 32¢, plus shipping. [For a sample copy, send $1.00 in U.S. funds to Parish Life and Worship Office, Box 511, 240 East Onondaga Street, Syracuse, NY 13202.]

Both in Lent and at any time in the year, Christians will find this booklet helpful as they continue the work of personal conversion. Peace must begin within each of us. The traditional practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are explored in a simple but practical way, and we are helped to see the power they can have in our lives. Recommended for every believer who wants to grow closer to Christ.


These two booklets, written in simple language for children, contain guide notes for parents and teachers. Scripture references are suggested in marginal notes for use by adults. References to the liturgy are frequent and helpful.

The first book has five lessons. The author is a father, and helps us to recognize Jesus as bread (“Do this in memory of me”) and as breadless (“I was hungry... and you gave me food”). The second book, with three lessons, helps children to prepare for both individual and communal celebrations, and includes two examinations of conscience and simple prayers of sorrow. Recommended for families.

The title summarizes the contents of this book well. Fr. Irwin brings a fresh look at the meaning of liturgy in our worship and in our daily life, and unfolds the richness of the various elements which make up our liturgy. He shows us how liturgy is prayer, and how it shapes our spirituality and our life as committed Christians. While the examples are from the Roman Catholic liturgical texts, the message applies to all Christian liturgies today. Recommended for all who plan and celebrate liturgy as presiders, ministers, and members of the worshipping community.


Prepared to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Constitution on the liturgy, these papers celebrate the great moves forward and the richness that have come to us from Vatican II's renewal in our liturgy. At the same time, they point out areas needing further concern and work by all, especially cultural adaptation and the involvement of our daily life in our worship. Recommended for all who are concerned with promoting better liturgy.


The meaning of the paschal journey and Christian initiation is placed in its context of Church and Lent and conversion. In 15 helpful articles, the authors from various Christian Churches bring pastoral and scholarly insights to deepen our understanding of the journey, including the process of initiation of children. This issue continues the consistent excellence of Liturgy, and raises important questions for local discussion and action. Recommended.


This positive booklet provides a modern approach to the sacrament of reconciliation. After looking at the meaning of sin, it reviews the varying approaches to this sacrament in the Church's history, and suggests ways in which we can prepare and celebrate reconciliation more profitably. Recommended for high school students and adults, including catechists and confessors.


The title of this booklet for reflection during Lent is based on Mt. 13: 52. It offers brief home celebrations and prayers based on the seasonal scriptures, with separate sections for years A, B, and C. Simple practices for family use help to bring home the meaning of Lent. A page on Holy Saturday and the Easter vigil would be desirable in a future revision. Recommended for family use.


The renewal in liturgy goes beyond restoring authentic rites and helping us to grasp our basic symbols. "The Christian communities must meet the challenge of relating contemporary experience to a symbolic heritage, transforming that experience in the power of the Spirit, and projecting the kind of future for humanity that is promised in the symbol of God's kingdom and in the meaning of Jesus Christ" (pages 30-31). The author helps us to face the crisis of the symbolic in our liturgy and in our culture, and leads us to a balanced outlook. Not easy to read, but well worth the time and effort it requires. Recommended for students of liturgy and those who preside at liturgical actions.
Studies in Judaism and Christianity: Stimulus Series: The first six books issued in this series, which seeks to explore issues in the contemporary dialogue between Christians and Jews, are reviewed on this page. The latest book is reviewed on page 187, above.


The texts or excerpts of 36 documents are included in this book: Roman Catholic and Protestant documents, and one joint statement. They come from the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, Europe, Latin America, and the United States. Reading through them shows their concern for scripture, liturgy, and customs, and awareness of many factors contributing to prejudice in history and at present. Many positive suggestions are offered for eliminating prejudice and for promoting co-operation between Christians and Jews. Recommended.


The Jewish understanding of covenant and how to live it today in mission and witness are presented by eight scholars. This book continues the dialogue on the questions raised by the Christian documents in the previous volume (above), and helps Christian readers to enter more fully into Jewish thinking and feelings, especially after the Holocaust. Recommended.


The foreword by a Jewish scholar welcomes this study for its balanced and positive presentation as it seeks to develop a Christian theology of Judaism for today's Church. The author, a Swiss professor, offers historical facts and background material to help us understand Judaism and its relationship with developing Christianity, and challenges us to move forward in our dialogue. Recommended.


Jewish and Christian scholars present ten articles on current studies of the scriptures fifteen years after Vatican II's Declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions. The development of modern biblical studies and methods of criticism have become an area where Christian and Jewish scholars — and eventually, pastors and people — can recognize and share in common approaches to God's word. Recommended.


Jesus Christ is at the center of the Christian message and experience. The author explores current approaches to Christology, and then seeks to express the relationship of Jesus with Judaism in a way that expresses both Christian belief and the specialness of Judaism today. This thoughtful book opens new vistas for self-understanding and continuing dialogue. Recommended.

Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic writers give us nine articles in which the many shades and nuances of mission are explored, along with the consequences for working together with other faiths to give witness to the world. These articles help to broaden our own sense of mission and hope, and invite all to become more involved in their proper mission while respecting others' ways and commitment. Recommended.

All the books issued so far in this series promote deeper study and reflection on the issues of concern to Christians and Jews. We recommend the set as serious reading for all involved in mission, dialogue, or pastoral care.

_Social justice:_ Three books for Christians who want to work for social justice. Originally published by Fides/Claretian, they are now available from Twenty-Third Publications. While these books are written in an American context, the principles they contain can be applied in our country as well.


Racism is often subtle and encouraged by our institutions. Even though the sin may be anonymous, each of us can do something about it. Examples are offered of individuals and groups who are working to overcome problems by discussion, dialogue, and action. Recommended.


A call to return to the gospel commands to feed the hungry and help the poor, the sick, and the afflicted is sounded clearly in this book. All humans have the right to share in the richness of our planet: this is justice, not charity. This book looks at American affluence, spending patterns, and the arms race, and also at the needs of millions who are starving and deprived. Practical and positive ways in which each family can help are suggested. Recommended as a thoughtful book for parishes and families.


Our prayer life cannot be separated from our daily concern for justice and peace. The author, father of six children between 15 and 22, offers practical suggestions for bringing these issues into family discussion and action. Families are encouraged to make education for justice part of their daily living. Every family can do something positive. Chapter 7 speaks of liturgies in church and at home. Recommended for every Christian family.


In twelve brief chapters, Fr. Mick offers a well written and stimulating approach to the truths and principles which underlie our Christian liturgy. Penetrating questions for reflection give the reader time to think about the meaning and practical application of each chapter. A concern for relating our daily living and praying is evident. Recommended for parishioners, ministers, catechists, clergy, and religious.


Following the Order of Mass, the author leads us through the various parts, with brief notes on their history and on their present meaning. A simple and reverent presentation of the Sunday celebration. Recommended for families and catechists.

Prepared for the United Methodist Church in the United States, this resource will be of interest to choirs and catechists of other Churches. Informative essays introduce us to the musical interpretation and performance of these songs (pages xiii-xvii), and to the history of hymns in the Black worship experience (no. 1), Negro spirituals and Afro-American liberation songs (73), and Black gospel songs (172). Songs for special occasions and service music are also included. Many of these songs are familiar throughout North America, and others deserve to be. An accompaniment edition is also available. Recommended as a helpful resource.

Living the Eucharist: A Preparation for First Communion, by Francoise Darcy-Berube and Jean-Paul Berube (1984, Novalis, Box 9700, Terminal, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 484): paper, 8½ by 11 inches, illustrations, 64 pages. $3.95.

— Parent Guide: paper, 8 by 10 inches, illustrations, 23 pages. $5.95.

Brief and simple lessons, following the Order of Mass, help the child preparing for communion to get into the spirit of the Sunday celebration. The examples and illustrations help to present the message well, and activities invite the child to enter more fully into the process. Families may benefit from use of this book in co-operation with their parish.


The paschal mystery — the dying and the rising of Jesus — is the model and cause of Christian mysticism, which lets go of all things and surrenders to God's total love. The author studies four classical mystics (Ignatius Loyola, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, and the author of Cloud of Unknowing) and two modern ones (Thomas Merton and Teilhard de Chardin), and seeks to lead us to benefit from the richness of our heritage of mysticism in our Christian life of prayer. Recommended.


The twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous are adapted by this booklet, and become ways of freeing every Christian from selfishness. May be used by individuals or in groups. Helpful for adult Christians.

Preparing for John Paul’s visit to Canada: Three books intended to be used during the months of preparation for the papal visit (1984, Novalis, Box 9700, Terminal, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 4B4):

• The Magnetic Pope: Anecdotes, Messages and Photographs of John Paul II, by Guy Marchessault: softbound, 157 pages. $2.50.

Intended for general use, this pocket-sized book contains brief notes, activities, and photos. Useful for families.

• Preparing a Welcome for the Holy Father: Celebrations for Adults and Children: paper, illustrations, 64 pages. $4.00.

Six celebrations for adults, and one with children, are provided, with suggested readings, songs, and symbolic actions. Reverent and helpful.

• A Celebration of Faith: Classroom Projects in Preparation for the Papal Visit to Canada, by Joseph Rapai: paper, illustrations, 8½ by 11 inches, 32 pages. $4.95.

Nine themes are outlined, six for the time of preparation and the final three for use during the visit. Each includes a question page for duplication, suggested activities, and references. May be helpful for teachers and catechists.