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The Communion Rite
Attention All NBL Subscribers

Due to the reorganization and new handling procedures in the production of the NATIONAL BULLETIN ON LITURGY, the next issues will be delayed. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause our readers and ask for your continued patience and understanding.
The Communion Rite

This issue considers the third part of the liturgy of the eucharist, the communion rite. How do we understand its actions and texts and their meaning? How do we celebrate this rite well? How can participation be improved? What is the role of music? How is the presence of Christ experienced? What significance does communion for the cup have?
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The Communion Rite in Context

The communion rite begins following the singing of the Great Amen of the eucharistic prayer. It contrasts with the eucharistic prayer in several respects: there is more action and more verbal and sung participation by the people; the visual focus too is more on the assembly as a whole.

What we see in the communion rite is a succession of acts that signify and effect unity among persons within the worshiping community and between them and Christ. The centre of this part of the eucharistic liturgy is the sharing of the holy food by the holy people.

The act of holy communion is the basis for the use of descriptions such as "the Lord's Supper," "the paschal meal," "the eucharistic banquet" and "the banquet that gives us [Christ's] body and blood." The General Instruction says: "Since the eucharistic celebration is the paschal meal, it is right that the faithful who are properly disposed receive the Lord's body and blood as spiritual food as he commanded. This is the purpose of the breaking of bread and the other preparatory rites that lead directly to the communion of the people." (n. 56)

The meal itself is preceded by several elements of preparation, and it is followed by silent, sung and spoken prayer. All stand for most of the communion rite, though they may sit for silent prayer when the assembly has finished receiving communion.

The texts of the communion rite are more explicitly christological and hence less explicitly trinitarian than other parts of the eucharistic liturgy.

To promote deeper understanding and better celebration of the communion rite of the mass, we will consider each of its constituent actions and texts in some detail. First, however, let us consider its architectural and theological context.

The Eucharistic Liturgy

The altar-table, upon which the bread and wine rest and which is surrounded by the entire assembly, is the visual focus. The altar is described as "the table

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1 General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), 2, 7, 281
2 GIRM, 48, 56
3 GIRM, 240
4 GIRM, 268
of the Lord and the people of God are called together to share in it.” Speaking of the liturgy of the word and liturgy of the eucharist together, the General Instruction adds, “the table of God’s word and of Christ’s body is laid for the people of God to receive from it instruction and food.” (n. 8)

Environment and Art in Catholic Worship says this about the altar.

The altar, the holy table, should be the most noble, the most beautifully designed and constructed table the community can provide. It is the common table of the assembly, a symbol of the Lord, at which the presiding minister stands and upon which are placed the bread and wine and their vessels and the book. (n. 71)

The altar is designed and constructed for the action of a community and the functioning of a single priest — not for concelebrants. The holy table, therefore, should not be elongated, but square or slightly rectangular, an attractive, impressive, dignified, noble table, constructed with solid and beautiful materials, in pure and simple proportions. (n. 72)

The location of the altar will be central in any eucharistic celebration, but this does not mean it must be spatially in the center or on a central axis. . . . Placement and elevation must take into account the necessity of visibility and audibility for all. (n. 73)

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Holy Communion in Context

The union with Jesus Christ into which we enter by eating and drinking his sacramental Body and Blood cannot be experienced fully if holy communion is viewed in isolation from other parts of the eucharistic liturgy, from baptism, and indeed from daily life. In all of these we enter into and experience communion with Christ; they provide the context in which we celebrate the communion rite.

Eucharistic prayer: Holy communion continues the process of union with Jesus Christ that we experience in the eucharistic prayer. In fact the communion rite cannot adequately be understood if its intimate relationship to the eucharistic prayer is ignored. Though necessity sometimes requires us to separate the act of holy communion from the eucharistic prayer (in communion for the sick, for example), this is clearly an exception to a general rule (though an exception that is valued by the church).

Thanksgiving: The eucharistic prayer is among other things, the grace before the holy meal. How can we possibly rush to the sacramental table before giving thanks to God for the sacred food we are about to consume? The holiness of this meal requires that we approach it with lengthy and heartfelt thanksgiving.

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5 GIRM, 259
Christ is host: In the eucharistic prayer we enter into union with Jesus Christ by joining in his own prayer of thanksgiving and praise to God; Christ is the host at this meal. He not only leads us in prayer but also leads us into his own prayer. In telling the story of Christ’s life and ministry, especially in the story of the Last Supper, and in proclaiming his death, resurrection and ascension, we enter into these salvific events. They are not ancient history, but present realities for us. Through God’s grace we are united with Christ in the renewal of his paschal mystery. Through Christ’s love we are united to him in his self-offering to God.

The Holy Spirit: In the eucharistic prayer we also enter into union with the Spirit of the Risen Christ. In its epiclesis the transforming presence and action of the Spirit are invoked upon the bread and wine that they become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The sanctifying presence and action of the Spirit are invoked upon the worshiping people that we truly be the Body of Christ – the church.

Consecration: It is in the eucharistic prayer that God makes present the sacramental Body and Blood of Jesus Christ of which all will partake in holy communion. The entire assembly – people and priest – prays this great prayer of thanksgiving and consecration. The eucharistic prayer and holy communion constitute a united act which should be separated only with great caution and deep regret.

Gathering rites: Holy Communion continues the process of union with Jesus Christ that begins with the gathering rite and liturgy of the word of the mass. Today we appreciate that Christ is really present in the people – the local church – that gathers for worship. Christ is also present in the ordained minister who is both a member of this assembly and its presider. When we gather at the beginning of the eucharistic liturgy, and when we join with the ordained presider in this liturgy, we are already entering into communion with Jesus Christ.

Word of God: Christ is also present in the liturgy of the word, for indeed Christ is the word of God. The words of scripture on the pages of the lectionary and the words proclaimed by the readers point to the real word - the Risen Christ in the Holy Spirit. By listening and responding to the readings and preaching we truly enter into communion with Christ.

Baptism: Holy Communion also continues the process of union with Jesus Christ that we experienced in baptism. In baptism Christ called us to himself, to be his sisters and brothers in God’s household. We professed our faith in God, in Christ and in the Holy Spirit, and then were buried with Christ in the water and raised up with him – reborn – from the baptismal waters. We were given the Spirit of Christ, anointed priest, prophet and king, and began to live the paschal mystery – Christ’s death and resurrection – in our own lives.

Daily life: Holy Communion also continues the process of union with Jesus Christ that we experience in our daily lives as well as in our liturgical celebrations. We live in union with Christ and experience communion with Christ when our everyday attitudes, actions and words conform to his. This happens when – without losing our individuality – we become of one mind with Christ, when we see things the way he does, when we live as he did, when we promote his ideals and values, when we carry on his mission and ministry. In the concluding rites we are commissioned to carry on his work.
For the week to follow: We bring these daily experiences of communion with Christ to the Sunday eucharist, celebrate them and thank God for them. We are then strengthened and nourished to live more fully in communion with Christ during the following week.

Not in isolation: Important as it is, the communion rite does not exist in a vacuum. At a time when the scarcity of priests prevents many communities from celebrating mass every Sunday, we need more than ever before to appreciate the context of the communion rite and its intimate relationship to the eucharistic prayer, liturgy of the word, gathering rites and the whole of the Christian life.

Resources

*It Is Your Own Mystery* (Washington: Liturgical Conference 1977). This excellent resource, unfortunately, is now out of print.

Gabe Huck, *The Communion Rite At Sunday Mass* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications 1989). This is now the best reference on this subject, from a pastoral point of view, and should be in every liturgist's library.

*Communion* (Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops 1983). This 24-page booklet is a fine resource for congregations and parish liturgy committees.

Our Next Issue

Solemnities of the Lord: In addition to Christmas, Epiphany, the Baptism of our Lord, Easter, and Pentecost, other important solemnities and feasts of our Lord are celebrated each year. Our next issue will consider the following solemnities: the Presentation of the Lord, Holy Trinity, Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, Sacred Heart, Transfiguration, Triumph of the Cross, and Christ the King.
The Lord's Prayer itself is preceded by an invitation and is followed by the embolism and by the doxology.

Invitation

The priest invites the community to join in the Lord's Prayer. In form this invitation is relatively informal and conversational; it does not consist of ritual phrases. Though four model texts are printed (in English; only one in Latin), the invitation may also be composed by the priest or community.

In Latin: It is of interest that the model invitation given in the Latin missal is the traditional one:

Praeceptis salutaribus moniti
et divina institutione formati,
audemus dicere:

Taught by your saving precepts
and guided by your divine institution,
we make bold [or, we dare] to say:

This portrays a traditional hesitation about referring to God as "our Father," even though our forebears were quite comfortable using "Father" in the sense of creator, first person of the Trinity, or as the Father of Jesus. This position is still represented to some extent in the "and so we have the courage to say" of the second text, but in a milder form. As a whole the model invitations discard the older hesitation and affirm "our Father" as an important divine name for people today.

Active participation: The invitation to the Lord's Prayer, as is typical of this genre of liturgical speech, invites the active participation of all. However, it really is addressed to the community and not simply to isolated individuals.

Taught by Christ: Though the Lord's Prayer is addressed to God, most of the invitations remind us that these words were taught to the disciples by Christ; hence there is a strongly christological context. Today Christ is still present with us, and in the Spirit still teaches us how to pray.

The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer is said in unison, by presider and people together.

The text of the Lord's Prayer echoes and summarizes several points already referred to in the eucharistic prayer. In addition it constitutes a model for liturgi-
cal prayers of petition such as the collects inasmuch as it consistently uses the imperative voice in its petitions: "give us, forgive us, lead us not, deliver us." Finally, it is the first of several elements of the communion rite that were explicitly given by Christ to the disciples.

**Daily bread:** The General Instruction says: "This is a petition both for daily food, which for Christians means also the eucharistic bread, and for the forgiveness of sin, so that what is holy may be given to those who are holy." (n. 56a) Both the Lord's Prayer and the sign of peace are viewed, at least in part, as acts of reconciliation among members of the assembly in preparation for the sharing of communion.

**Holy Father:** The address of this prayer uses the divine name "Father," as do the prefaces and most eucharistic prayers. "Hallowed be thy name" echoes the "Holy, holy" and the first phrase of the eucharistic prayers.

"**Thy kingdom come**" echoes the penultimate thought in the eucharistic prayers, e.g., "Then, in your kingdom, freed from the corruption of sin and death, we shall sing your glory with every creature through Christ our Lord."

"**Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven**" is a description of God's realm.

"**Give us this day our daily bread**" echoes the prayer of blessing and acknowledgment which accompanies the placing of the bread and wine on the table at the preparation of the altar and the gifts. Seen as a eucharistic reference, it also echoes the first epiclesis and the institution narrative of the eucharistic prayer.

"**Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us**" and "**lead us not into temptation**" make us think of the second epiclesis of the eucharistic prayer, in which the Holy Spirit is invoked upon the community to bring about unity and constant fidelity.

**A communal prayer:** The Lord's Prayer brings all the members of the community together inasmuch as it is said in unison. Because of the image of God as loving parent, it is often referred to as the "family prayer" of the church. In addition, in its origins it is a prayer for those who are disciples of Christ, and hence for those called to continue his ministry in the world today. It may be seen as a gift given us by Christ to enable the ministry which we carry out in his name.

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**Music**

**The Lord's Prayer** (and invitation, embolism and doxology) may be sung as well as spoken, and it may be appropriate to sing it from time to time. This will add solemnity and length to this part of the communion rite and in so doing may create an imbalance within this rite. The Lord's Prayer should not appear to rival in importance the eucharistic prayer, sign of peace or breaking of bread. When sung, it is to be sung by the entire community.

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1 Eucharistic Prayer 4
Gesture

The priest: The General Instruction indicates that the priest is to hold his hands outstretched while leading the Lord’s Prayer and while saying the embolism.²

What about the people? A query referred to the Vatican for official interpretation is of interest in this regard. "In some places there is a current practice whereby those taking part in the Mass replace the giving of the sign of peace at the deacon’s invitation by holding hands during the singing of the Lord’s Prayer. Is this acceptable?" The Reply quite rightly says that it is not acceptable for holding hands during the Lord’s Prayer to replace the sign of peace. However, it does not condemn the former gesture in itself: “The prolonged holding of hands is of itself a sign of communion rather than of peace. Further, it is a liturgical gesture introduced spontaneously but on personal initiative; it is not in the rubrics.”³

Embolism

The General Instruction states, “The embolism, developing the last petition of the Lord’s Prayer, begs on behalf of the entire community of the faithful deliverance from the power of evil.” (n. 56a)

A presider’s prayer: Following the unison prayer of the entire community, the presider alone elaborates on the last verse of the Lord’s Prayer:

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, 
and grant us peace in our day, 
In your mercy keep us free from sin 
and protect us from all anxiety 
as we wait in joyful hope 
for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

A prayer of petition: In form this is an additional prayer of petition, but its last two lines are a fitting introduction and invitation to the doxology that follows.

In content the embolism contains three negative elements: “every evil, sin, all anxiety,” and asks God to “deliver us, keep us free, protect us.” The positive element is “grant us peace in our day.” Finally, we are described as waiting “in joyful hope.” Our temporal perspective is both present and eschatological: “for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ,” both in holy communion and in the parousia.

The “evil” that is referred to can be understood at least in part in terms of the communal and societal evils which beset our world today. It is well to name and reflect on these, and to ask God’s help in exorcising them. In addition, we

² GIRM, 110, 111  
³ GIRM, 112 (footnote R2)
need to realize that we may be God’s instruments in overcoming them. “Evil”
is the antithesis to God’s dominion, the obstacle to be overcome before this
dominion can be realized. It is our individual and collective mission to seek to
remove these obstacles so that God’s reign will indeed be realized, and in this
we depend completely on God’s help and guidance.

The term “anxiety” (Latin: *perturbatione*) presents difficulties to some per­
sons, as they interpret it from a psychological perspective. It might better be
understood in relation to the biblical verse, “Let not your hearts be troubled,
neither let them be afraid” (John 14: 27; cf. 14: 1).

The positive side of the embolism, “grant us peace in our day,” is the first
reference in the communion rite to the theme of peace. Like the first part of the
embolism as a whole, its temporal reference is the present.

Some persons feel that the embolism is a liturgical antique that would best be
retired from use. They see it as an unnecessary and unhelpful intrusion into
the united prayer of the entire community.

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**Doxology**

By the people: The congregation (but not the presider) responds to the
embolism* and concludes the Lord’s Prayer as a whole with the doxology:

> For the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
> are yours, now and for ever.

Prayer of praise: This is named as a doxology, that is, a short prayer of
praise. It is also described as a conclusion and as an acclamation. Clearly it
builds on the last phrase of the embolism. This is very ancient, though it is not
in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts of the New Testament. Its use
reflects the normal Jewish practice of concluding prayers of petition with a
doxology of praise.

There is no Amen, for this acclamation is used to respond to prayers enunci­
cated by the priest. In contrast, the Lord’s Prayer has been said by everyone;
the doxology itself is the concluding acclamation.

The doxology echoes the conclusion of the eucharistic prayer sung just a few
moment previously: “... all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, for ever
and ever.” It also refers to the beginning of the Lord’s Prayer itself: “thy king­
dom come, thy will be done.” When the Lord’s Prayer is prayed outside Mass,
the doxology may appropriately be added.

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* GIRM, 56a
Sign of Peace

To Christ: The presider now addresses a prayer to Christ. This is somewhat unusual, as liturgical prayers usually are addressed to God, the first person of the Trinity. This address, however, is consistent with the tenor of the communion rite as a whole, which emphasizes the personal presence of Christ.

Words of Christ: As is often the case, the address is followed by a phrase which provides a basis for the petition that follows. In this case it includes a quotation of the words of Jesus (John 14:27):

Lord Jesus Christ,
you said to your apostles,
I leave you peace, my peace I give you.

The main petition is:

grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom.

The negative side: This is preceded by a preliminary petition which is couched in negative terms:

Look not on our sins,
but on the faith of your Church.

The prayer concludes with a standard formula:

where you live for ever and ever,

and all respond: “Amen.”

Greeting: Following this prayer, the presider greets the people, and the people greet him in return:

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

Invitation: The deacon or priest now invites the assembly to perform an action:

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

The action: The rubrics add: “All make an appropriate sign of peace, according to local custom.” A separate rubric directs, “The priest gives the sign of peace to the deacon or minister.”

Reflection: Having gone through the liturgical actions and texts, let us now reflect on their meaning.
Peace

The General Instruction describes the sign of peace in this way: “Before they share in the same bread, the faithful implore peace and unity for the church and for the whole human family and offer some sign of their love for one another.” (n. 56b) In another place it says: “All exchange some sign of peace and love.” (n. 112) The term “peace” has already been introduced in the embolism.

Gift and promise: Like the Lord’s Prayer and the eucharist itself, peace is one of Christ’s gifts to his disciples and his church. It is also his promise.

At the Last Supper: The context of the words of Christ that are quoted here is the high priestly prayer from John’s version of the Last Supper. It is of interest as well that Jesus uses the greeting, “Peace be with you” three times in this gospel in the context of his post-resurrection appearances (John 20: 19, 21, 26).

Shalom: In considering the rite of peace as a whole, we need to recall the biblical meaning of the word “peace.” The Hebrew word shalom refers to total wholeness – physical, spiritual, mental, economic, social.

For all humanity: When we pray for peace, it is not only personal peace within ourselves or even social peace within the church community that we seek. We pray for peace – shalom – for all humanity. We seek peace wherever there is discord, whether in individual hearts, in families, in work and social situations, in all dimensions of society; we seek peace with justice between nations around the world.

Healed human relationships: We not only pray for peace – we not only recall that this peace is identified both with Christ and with the kingdom – but each one present now engages in an action that will be a sign of this peace. Our action in sharing the sign of peace illustrates that a basic dimension of the peace we seek is healed human relationships. To reach out to another person and pray Christ’s peace for them – and as well, to accept this prayer from another person – is to pray that all relationships be whole. It is also to commit oneself to doing whatever one can to ensure that all one’s own relationships – and all human relationships in general – are as wholesome as possible.

Practice and commitment: In sharing the sign of peace with other members of the worshiping community, one is practicing how to be peace-givers in all aspects of one’s life. It is to commit oneself to the work of peacemaking wherever it is needed.

More than good morning: It should be clear from this reflection that the sign of peace is far more than “Good morning. How are you today?” The place for this kind of exchange – which is quite legitimate in itself – is in the informal gathering of the community at the beginning of the celebration, before the opening song. The sign of peace is intensely theological, as well as being a ritual action. The peace of Christ is far more profound than “Good morning.”

Of high quality: It should also be clear that the human interaction that is involved in the sign of peace needs to be of the highest quality. It is not some-
thing to be carried out in haste or without paying close attention to the person with whom the sign is exchanged. For this reason no one will try to greet everyone in the assembly. A few persons, greeted well, is sufficient.

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**Further Reflection**

**The prayer** with which this part of the communion rite begins refers to “unity” and “kingdom,” as well as “peace.” “Unity” is the gift of the Holy Spirit that is invoked in the second epiclesis of the eucharistic prayer. “Kingdom” is mentioned toward the end of the eucharistic prayer and in the Lord’s Prayer.

**The negative petition**, as in the embolism, refers to sin, but in a different way:

- Keep us free from sin (embolism)
- Look not on our sins (sign of peace)

**Sin and faith**: The present text assumes human frailty, but contrasts “sins” with “faith.” To some extent it is a contrast between the individual and the community. From another point of view, however, the “your church” that is referred to is not separate and distinct from the “us” of “our sins.” Because of baptism we are members of the church, and hence up to a point this can be rendered “Look not on our sins, but also on our faith.” In addition, “church” is also understood in broader terms, e.g., as the Body of Christ and hence more than simply its individual human members.

**The realm of Christ**: The link between “kingdom” and “where you live” identifies Christ with the kingdom; this is where he “lives” or is present. Alternatively, as shown throughout the gospels, where Christ is, there the kingdom is present.

**Christ’s presence**: The greeting is an expansion of the more common exchange, “The Lord be with you. / And also with you,” which always recalls to us the presence of God. In this context “Lord” refers to Christ – the Risen One – and Christ’s presence is specified in terms of his promised gift of peace. His presence, which is also the presence of the kingdom, brings peace – is peace. The greeting adds, “always;” the peace of Christ is our constant gift, not simply our immediate liturgical experience.

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**The Action**

**The invitation** to exchange a sign of peace is preferably given by a deacon. This is fitting inasmuch as peacemaking is an active ministry of the church in which the church serves the world: it is a diaconal ministry, whether actually carried out by lay people, deacons or priests. When a deacon is present and ministers through this invitation, all are reminded of their own call to engage in the ministry of peace during the week as well as on Sunday.

**Invitation or command?** What is an invitation in English (“Let us offer each other . . .”) is a directive statement or command in the Latin original: *Offerte*
vobis pacem. Peacemaking is not an option for Christians; it is a mission given us by Christ.

Local custom: How the action that is called the sign of peace is actually carried out depends on local custom. But it is always an action. The commonly used dialogue, "The peace of Christ be with you. / And also with you" is nowhere specified or even suggested. If the exchange of these words is the local custom, however, it is to be viewed as an action, not simply a verbal exchange.

A gentle touch: In our society the sign of peace often involves touching other persons, whether by handshake, hug or kiss. We touch those whom we ordinarily would not; we may touch others – of the same or opposite sex – more intimately than we would on other occasions. And we say that such touching is a sign of the peace of Christ. In a time and society where there is so much physical violence against persons – child and spouse abuse, muggings, pornography, rape, murder, terrorism, war – we proclaim that we can touch others gently, with respect and affection. Furthermore, we say that this is a model of how humans should always touch each other, and we practice and commit ourselves to this model of human relationships.

Ecumenical Perspectives

As is the case for the Roman Catholic liturgy, the newest liturgical books of other churches have also reintroduced the sign of peace. In contrast to Catholic practice, however, the Anglican, Lutheran, United and Presbyterian churches all place the sign of peace at the end of the liturgy of the word, usually after the prayers of the people (general intercessions). This was its position in the early church; it was only later made part of the communion rite.
Breaking of the Bread

The first elements of the communion rite — the Lord’s Prayer and sign of peace — help to prepare the assembly for holy communion. Having completed these actions, we turn to an element which has a dual purpose. One is to prepare the bread and wine for the sharing of holy communion. The second is symbolic.

Bread is broken: The rubric merely says, “[The priest] takes the host and breaks it over the paten.” The bread is broken into pieces that are appropriate for serving to communicants.

The breaking of bread goes beyond a pragmatic preparation for communion, though it is that as well. Of course it presupposes that there is some kind of loaf of bread to break; otherwise it makes no sense. The use of wafers implicitly views this rite in a purely pragmatic way, though the priest’s host is always broken in memory of Christ’s action at the Last Supper.

Commingling: Other preparatory acts follow immediately upon the breaking of the bread. A small piece of the bread is placed in the chalice. As this is done the priest says the following prayer:

May this mingling of the body and blood
of our Lord Jesus Christ
bring eternal life to us who receive it.

The wine: Additional chalices are brought to the altar-table, and wine is poured into them from the decanter. Additional purificators (napkins) are also brought, if necessary.

Ministers: Other ministers besides the priest-presider may participate in these actions. Acolytes, deacons and/or communion ministers may help break the bread, and they alone usually bring the chalices and pour from the decanter.

Bread and Wine

Old habits are hard to change. Our former practice of using wafer-like hosts for altar breads still persists in many places. This custom is contrary to the principles of contemporary liturgical theology and practice, however, and we need to move on to the use of better bread.¹

¹ See Gabe Huck, The Communion Rite at Sunday Mass (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications 1989) 30-49;
The kind of altar bread that should be used is described in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal:

- Altar bread should look like food: "The nature of the sign demands that the material for the eucharistic celebration appear as actual food." (n. 283)

- Altar bread should be made from wheat flour: "According to the tradition of the Church, the bread must be made from wheat." (n. 282)

- Altar bread should be unleavened: "According to the tradition of the Latin Church, it must be unleavened." (n. 282)

- Altar bread should be made in loaves and broken into individual pieces during the eucharistic celebration: "The eucharistic bread . . . should . . . be made in such a way that the priest can break it and distribute the parts to at least some of the faithful." (n. 283)

- Small hosts are permitted, but only when required: "When the number of communicants is large or other pastoral needs require it, small hosts may be used." (n. 283)

- Altar breads must be palatable and breakable: "Care must be taken that the elements be kept in good condition, so that . . . the bread [does not] spoil or become too hard to be easily broken." (n. 285)

- Altar breads should be consecrated at the same mass that they are distributed for communion: "It is most desirable that the faithful should receive the body of the Lord in hosts consecrated at the same Mass. Thus even through the signs communion will stand out more clearly as a sharing in the sacrifice actually being celebrated." (n. 56h)

The use of the traditional type of host simply does not meet these requirements. Nor does the all too frequent use of consecrated hosts taken from the tabernacle. Parish communities need to start making their own altar breads, in loaves, fresh each Sunday.

**The plate:** Bread customarily is served on a plate, not put in a cup with a lid. Ciboria, while handy for storing consecrated wafer-hosts, are not suitable vessels to put on the altar or from which to serve the Body of the Lord. They are totally unsuitable if loaves of bread are used.

**The wine:** According to the General Instruction, "the wine for the eucharist must be from the fruit of the vine, natural, and pure, that is not mixed with any foreign substance." (n. 284) Furthermore, the wine must not have turned to vinegar. (n. 285) It is not necessary to use a special "mass wine," which often is not very good wine at all. Any superior wine made from grapes, and not mixed with other ingredients, is satisfactory. In order for it to be a good sign of Christ's blood, it should be a red wine, or at least rosé.

**The cup:** While metal or ceramic cups are satisfactory, transparent glass goblets may be preferred because we can see the sacramental Blood of Christ within them; in the other cases we merely see its container.
Reflection on Breaking Bread

The General Instruction says: “In apostolic times this gesture of Christ at the last supper gave the entire eucharistic action its name. This rite is not simply functional, but is a sign that in sharing in the one bread of life which is Christ we who are many are made one body.” (n. 56c)

Jewish meal blessing: The breaking of bread is part of the Jewish practice of saying grace before meals. The bread is held by the family head, the prayer is said (“Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth”), and then the bread is broken and some is eaten.

The eucharist is liturgy and not drama, and so the acts of giving thanks, breaking, and eating have been separated and developed into separate liturgical rites. Some presiders break the bread during the recital of the institution narrative within the eucharistic prayer; this misses the point and is a bad practice. Logically, one should immediately commune as well.

In Acts: The phrase, breaking of the bread, recalls the description of the early Christian community given in the Acts of the Apostles:

And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (2:42)

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts (2:46).

In Luke: We also recall Jesus’ actions at table in Emmaus:

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. (24: 30-31)

Paul’s vision: We especially remember the interpretation that Paul gives in his first letter to the Church in Corinth:

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the same loaf. (10:16-17)

The loaf which is broken is, in this view, a tremendously important symbol of the communal nature of the Church, of eucharistic worship, and of humankind in general. To use wafers is simply to contradict Paul and to give a counter-sign; it is to promote and foster individualism at worship and in society.
Food is for sharing: Finally, the purpose of the breaking of the bread (and pouring out of the wine into several cups) is to share these holy foods, a communal and relational act that will be considered further below.

Lamb of God

While all of these actions are taking place at the altar, the assembly sings or says the Lamb of God:

Lamb of God,  
you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God,  
you take away the sins of the world:  
grant us peace.

The first verse is sung as many times as necessary to accompany the action of breaking the bread. Thus this song may have as few as two or three verses, or many.

The General Instruction says: “During the breaking of the bread and the commingling, the Agnus Dei is as a rule sung by the choir or cantor with the congregation responding; otherwise it is recited aloud.” (n. 56e) In another place it says that “the Agnus Dei is sung or recited by the choir and congregation.” (n. 113) It is thus a litany, with the congregation saying or singing “have mercy on us” and “grant us peace.” However, it may also be sung or said in unison.

Music in Catholic Worship adds: “The Agnus Dei is a litany-song to accompany the breaking of the bread, in preparation for communion. The invocation and response may be repeated as often as the action demands. The final response is always “grant us peace.” Unlike the “Holy, holy,” and the Lord’s Prayer, the Lamb of God is not necessarily a song of the people. Hence it may be sung by the choir, though the people should generally make the response.” (n. 68)

For variety: Instead of simply repeating “Lamb of God” at the beginning of each verse, alternative versions have been prepared that use a variety of invocations. For example, the International Consultation on English Texts and English Language Liturgical Consultation have proposed that the churches consider the following text:

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.  
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.  
Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us peace.  

Contemporary composers such as Michael Joncas, Marty Haugen, David Clark Isele and others have set a number of alternative litanies or “tropes” to

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3 Praying Together (Nashville: Abingdon Press 1988), 37
4 Michael Joncas, Lamb of God (Chicago: GIA 1988)
5 Marty Haugen, Mass of Creation (Chicago: GIA 1984)
6 David Clark Isele, Holy Cross Mass (Chicago: GIA 1979)
music. These are very attractive, especially when the breaking of bread is pro-
longed.

Christ as Lamb: As a song that is sung while an action is being performed, it
necessarily interprets that action. The text is addressed to Christ under the
title, Lamb of God. This image brings to mind the passover lamb and passover
meal, as well as the slain but victorious lamb of the book of Revelation. The
words are quoted, however, from the gospel according to John, where they are
the cry of John the Baptist (John 1:29, 36). In the liturgy the biblical quotation
is shortened by the omission of the word “behold.”

The next day [John] saw Jesus coming toward him,
and said:
Behold, the Lamb of God,
who takes away the sin of the world.
This is he of whom I said,
after me comes a man who ranks before me,
for he was before me. (1: 29-30)

The next day again John was standing with two
of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus
as he walked, and said:
Behold, the Lamb of God.
The two disciples heard him say this,
and they followed Jesus. (1: 35-36)

An acclamation: The text is an acclamation of those who recognize Christ, a
shout of recognition, a profession of faith, a warm greeting. It is associated
with the baptism of Jesus and with his anointing for ministry with the Holy Spir-
it. It is a call to discipleship, a call to follow Jesus, and this call is a communal
one. It is a cry of those called to be his disciples.

We address Christ: The words “you take away the sins of the world” are not
simply a basis for the subsequent petition, as would be the case in a collect.
Rather, they are part of the direct address to Christ. The Lamb of God also
recalls the christological acclamations that surround the proclamation of the
gospel: “Glory to you, Lord”; “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.”

Ecumenical Perspectives

Other churches employ a variety of practices during the breaking of the
bread. For example, Lutheran Book of Worship indicates that the entire break-
ing is to be done in silence. No texts are prescribed or suggested for the
presider. There is no equivalent to the Lamb of God. This is also one option in
the Presbyterian Church in Canada and in the United Church of Canada.

In the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, used by the Eastern Churches,
the priest says the following as the bread is broken:

Broken and divided is the Lamb of God,
which is broken, yet not disunited;
which is ever eaten, yet never consumed,
but sanctifieth those who partake thereof.
The Anglican Church of Canada's *Book of Alternative Services* gives a series of alternative dialogues at the moment the priest breaks the bread. For example:

Priest: "I am the bread of life," says the Lord.  
"Whoever comes to me will never be hungry;  
whoever believes in me will never thirst."

All: Taste and see that the Lord is good;  
happy are they who trust in him!

Or:

Priest: "I am the bread which has come down from heaven," says the Lord.

All: Give us this bread for ever.

The other five alternative texts include several for the seasons of the liturgical year.

The United Church of Canada's *A Sunday Liturgy* provides, as an option, several texts that the presider might say at the breaking of the bread. For example:

The body of Christ broken for you.

Or:

The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ.

As the wine is poured, the following might be said:

The blood of Christ poured out for you.

Or:

The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ.

As an option, the Presbyterian Church in Canada's *Word and Sacrament* suggests that the minister might say the following:

Because there is one loaf,  
we, many as we are, are one body:  
for it is one loaf of which we all partake.

The bread is then broken.  
The minister continues:

When we break the bread,  
is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?

At the pouring of the wine:

When we give thanks over the cup,  
is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ?
Communion

When the assembly and the consecrated bread and wine have been prepared, all proceed to share the holy meal. This, at least, is the logic of the liturgy. In practice, there is one further set of preparatory prayers.

Private Prayers of Preparation

After all is ready, the priest says a private prayer of preparation, using one of two specified texts. The General Instruction says: "The priest prepares himself by the prayer, said softly, that he may receive Christ's body and blood to good effect. The faithful do the same by silent prayer." (n. 56f) In another place it says that the priest says this prayer "inaudibly." (n. 114)

It is to be emphasized that the priest prays silently; his prayer should not be audible to the people. This period of silence provides the rest of the assembly with a quiet moment in which they too may pray. No texts are provided for this; all pray as inspired by the movement of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. The people may need to be taught to use this moment profitably.

Invitation to Communion

The priest takes a piece of bread and "hold(s) it slightly over the paten." The General Instruction says: "The priest then shows the eucharistic bread for communion to the faithful." (n. 56g) Both here, in reference to the congregation as a whole, and later in relationship to individual communicants, the priest or other minister "shows" the bread to the people. This means that the bread is visible to the people, and that they are looking at this bread as the words that follow are said.

As he shows the bread, the presider says:

This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.
Happy are those who are called to his supper.

This functions as an invitation to communion. This text has taken a different form in our present English translation than in the original Latin text. The latter is:

1 GIRM, 115
2 GIRM, 117
Ecce Agnus Dei.
Ecce qui tollit peccata mundi.
Beati qui ad cenam Agni vocati sunt.

Behold the Lamb of God.
Behold the one who takes away
the sins of the world.
Blessed [or: Happy] are they who are called
to the supper of the Lamb.

In form the Latin text is both an acclamation and a profession of faith.
“Behold” is much stronger than “this is,” and is a more affective than intellectual way of speaking; it comes from the whole person. It also more obviously refers to the presence of Christ; it is a greeting addressed to a person who is present with us.

In content the first sentence is a direct quote from John’s gospel (1: 29, 36). The second sentence, however, refers to the Lamb of the book of Revelation, especially 19:9: “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

What is about to take place is “his supper,” or more fully, the marriage supper of the Lamb. We are described as “those who are called” to this supper. Our disposition at this moment is described as “happy” or “blessed.”

The people join the priest in continuing:

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word and I shall be healed.

In form this superficially appears to be dialogue. The rubrics indicate, however, that the “This is the Lamb . . .” and the “Lord, I am not worthy . . .” constitute a single text, which the priest begins but in which he is then joined by everyone else.3 This is an unusual form of liturgical speech.

The General Instruction calls the “Lord, I am not worthy . . .” “the prayer of humility in words from the Gospels.” (n. 56g)

Some persons have expressed a desire to introduce alternative texts at this point in order to provide for the opportunity to express sentiments other than humility. Though this is not yet officially authorized, the following biblical texts suggest directions which such alternatives might one day take.

• Lord, I will follow you wherever you go. (Mt 8: 19)
• You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. (Mt 16: 17)
• Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David. (Mt 20: 30)
• You are the Holy One of God. (Lk 4: 34)
• Increase our faith. (Lk 17: 5)
• Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. (Lk 17: 13)

3 See also GIRM, 56g, 115

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• Teacher, you are the Son of God. (Jn 1: 49)
• You are a teacher who has come from God. (Jn 3: 2)
• Give us this bread always. (Jn 6: 34)
• Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. (Jn 6: 68)
• We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God. (Jn 6: 69)
• Lord, I believe (in you). (Jn 9: 38)
• Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, 
the Son of God, the one coming into the world. (Jn 11: 27)
• Lord, you know that I love you. (Jn 21: 15)

Communion of 
Priest and Ministers

The first person to commune is the priest, and in doing so he serves himself. He holds the bread and says quietly:

May the body of Christ bring me to everlasting life.

He then "reverently consumes the body of Christ." "Then he takes the chalice and says quietly:"

May the blood of Christ bring me to everlasting life.

"Then he reverently drinks the blood of Christ."⁴

Other ministers at the altar and lay ministers who will be serving communion also receive at this point. Alternatively, deacons and lay ministers might be served communion last.

If there are a number of ministers at the altar (possibly including concelebrants), it may take a substantial period of time for them to receive communion, even if care is taken to be as expeditious as possible. This can constitute a disturbance and distraction for the rest of the assembly. However, it can also provide an opportunity for additional personal prayer for the members of the congregation; they can close their eyes and pray instead of watching the ministers commune. Again, these ministers might communicate last.

The communion song begins as soon as the priest takes communion. It is considered further below.

As the priest and other ministers complete their own communion, they move immediately to appropriate places where they can serve the rest of the assembly.

⁴ GIRM, 116
Communion of the People

The people proceed to the place where they will receive communion, and may do so singing. They are offered the consecrated bread, and should be offered the consecrated wine as well. They then return to their places.

Procession

People proceed to the front to receive communion. This is the only formal liturgical procession that involves all of the people, and more than the other liturgical processions it is manifestly and intensely communal. It actually involves the lay members of the community, and not merely their representatives; the priest and most lay liturgical ministers do not physically participate in it. It recalls and recapitulates the informal procession which brought everyone from their homes to the church prior to the liturgy.

While everyone has figuratively been gathered around the table since the preparation of the altar and the gifts, only the priest and acolytes have been really close to the table. Now everyone comes up from their pews or chairs to approach the table. All go to communion together.

Everyone in the assembly is said to receive holy communion at the table of the Lord. While this is literally true of the clergy, lay communion ministers and probably the musicians as well, the other members of the assembly usually do not go to the altar but instead to some communion "station" or the communion rail. There can be good reasons for such communion stations apart from the altar; nevertheless, they should be as close to the altar as possible.

A challenge that remains to be approached with greater creativity is how to make the communion procession a true experience of community. How might it be experienced differently than the highly individualistic lines for food in which one stands at a fast food outlet? Certainly, families can approach as a group; the Marriage Encounter program encourages wife and husband to go to communion arm in arm. Should people, regardless of family relationship, go up in pairs rather than singly? What alternatives are there to single lines in which one person sees only the back of another's head? All will stand during the entire sharing of communion as a sign of unity. People will sit only when all have communicated.

Music

As is usually the case with liturgical processions, the communion procession is accompanied by music, in this case congregational singing. The General Instruction describes the communion song as follows: "Its function is to express outwardly the communicants' union in spirit by means of the unity of their voices, to give evidence of joy of heart, and to make the procession to receive Christ's body more fully an act of communion." (n. 561)

"The song begins when the priest takes communion and continues for as long as seems appropriate while the faithful receive Christ's body."
Music in Catholic Worship adds: “The communion should foster a sense of unity. It should be simple and not demand great effort. It gives expression to the joy of unity in the body of Christ and the fulfillment of the mystery being celebrated. Most benediction hymns, by reason of their concentration on adoration rather than on communion, are not acceptable. In general, during the most important seasons of the Church year, Easter, Lent, Christmas, and Advent, it is preferable that most songs used at the communion be seasonal in nature. During the remainder of the Church year, however, topical songs may be used during the communion procession, provided these texts do not conflict with the paschal character of every Sunday.” (n. 62)

Music that requires that the people carry their hymnals in the communion procession are to be avoided. Many people will not take their books, and hence will not be able to sing as they approach the table. If they do carry their hymnals, they will not be able to see the other communicants and communion ministers and hence will have a diminished visual participation.

Appropriate music for the communion procession either has a refrain or chorus that has been memorized by the members of the assembly, or is composed with verses sung by choir or cantor and easily learned responses sung by the congregation.

Contemporary composers are providing a wealth of communion music which is suitable for the communion procession. The following is only a sampling of what is now available:

From Catholic Book of Worship II:
   Gift of Finest Wheat, 570

From Gather (Chicago: GIA 1988):
   Be Light For Our Eyes, 244
   Eat This Bread, 341
   I Am the Bread of Life, 337
   Now In This Banquet, 336
   Taste and See, 338
   In the Breaking of the Bread, 340
   Now We Remain, 299
   One Bread, One Body, 346
   The Harvest of Justice, 300
   We Remember, 249

From Music from Taize (Chicago: GIA)
   Ubi Caritas, vol. 1
   Eat This Bread, vol. 2
   There is One Lord, vol. 2

   Unless a Grain of Wheat, 518
   Lord we Share in This One True Bread, 512
   I Am the Living Bread, 470
   Unless A Grain of Wheat, 445
   That There May Be Bread, 402
   Bread that Was Sown, 371
   Taste and See, 367
Ministering Communion

We often speak of "distributing" communion and of "receiving" communion, but our language here calls for reflection. It is of interest that the General Instruction nowhere uses the term "distribution," though it frequently speaks of "receiving." Distribution has an impersonal note to it, and we usually use it in reference to things, not persons. We receive gifts, and we receive guests when we extend them hospitality.

Another word that seems appropriate in the context of holy communion is "share." The holy meal is a meal that is shared by the entire assembly. In our daily lives too we share our meals at home and at banquets; and we share food, other material assistance, time and energy with other persons who are in need, both locally and around the world.

Communion is a receiving of food and a sharing of food. We do not simply eat the consecrated bread and drink the consecrated wine, or help ourselves, but receive food from another. We feed each other, knowing that it is really Christ who is both host and food. We recall and experience the truth of Christ's words: "This is my body which will be given up for you; This is the cup of my blood . . . . It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven."

The rubrics specify that the communion minister take the eucharistic bread, raise it a little, and show it to the communicant while saying, "The body of Christ." The communicant responds "Amen" and receives communion.

The cup is given in a similar way, being shown to the communicant while the minister says, "The blood of Christ;" the communicant again responds "Amen" and drinks from the chalice. The minister wipes the edge of the cup with the purificator and turns the cup a little.

In form the exchange, "The body/blood of Christ / Amen" is an exchange of acclamations. In content this dialogue is described as a profession of faith and a way in which communicants may participate actively in the eucharistic liturgy.

The minister of communion will take care and exercise reverence in giving the consecrated bread and wine to the communicants. The bread and cup will be held at eye level (or close to it), so that both minister and communicant are looking both at the holy food and at the holy people at the same time.

Touching: When the consecrated bread is put into the hand of the communicant, the minister should not be afraid of touching the hand with his or her fingers, thus adding a tactile contact to the verbal and visual contact through which minister and communicant communicate.
The Cup Is for Everyone

The Church after Vatican II accepted the principle that in communion the cup of Christ’s Blood be offered to everyone, not just the clergy. After centuries of not doing so, this principle was implemented slowly and with care and pastoral education, and some parish communities are still on their way towards this goal.

The General Instruction says, “Holy communion has a more complete form as a sign when it is received under both kinds. For in this manner of reception a fuller light shines on the sign of the eucharistic banquet. Moreover there is a clearer expression of that will by which the new and everlasting covenant is ratified in the blood of the Lord and of the relationship of the eucharistic banquet to the eschatological banquet in the Father’s kingdom.” (n. 240)

Today, after ample time for education and for working out the practical details of sharing communion from the cup, there rarely is any good reason for not offering the cup to everyone. Large parishes are doing so without great difficulty; children, older persons and persons with disabilities are receiving from the cup in many places.

When the cup is not offered to the laity, many lay persons feel treated unjustly: the clergy take it all, none is shared with them. It is a poor sign of unity among members of the Church when some drink and others are refused; it is a denial of one of the rights and responsibilities of the baptized.

Communion from the Cup and Hygiene

Some persons are afraid that they may catch some disease by drinking from a common cup, even when it is wiped with a purificator between communicants. Will they get herpes or aids or some other disease? Medical authorities have been consulted since the early part of this century, and especially in the last ten to fifteen years. They tell the Church that it is extremely unlikely that anyone will catch herpes or aids from the communion cup. (They will not say that this will never happen; scientists do not talk that way. They speak in probabilities, and tell us that the chances are very, very small.)

A fear: While some people may use the (very remote) possibility of catching a disease to avoid offering the cup (on the part of the clergy) or of receiving from the cup (on the part of the laity) as an excuse, others have a genuine fear that is not dealt with effectively by simply telling them what medical authorities say. Objective facts do not meet the needs of persons who are afraid.  

5 For more on this subject, see the following:
Frank C. Senn, Health and the Distribution of Holy Communion: Pastoral Reflections on Factors to Consider (Chicago: Division for Parish Services, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 1986)
Ecumenical Perspectives

The *Lutheran Book of Worship* provides no invitation to communion. In the Anglican, United and Presbyterian churches in Canada the following is used, at least as an option, to invite the community to communion:

> The gifts of God for the people of God.

In the Anglican liturgy the people respond, “Thanks be to God.” An alternative invitation used in the United Church is:

> Come, for all things are now ready.

In the Eastern Churches, after the communion of the clergy, the Holy Doors are opened and the deacon, holding the chalice, says:

> In the fear of God and with faith draw near.

The choir sings:

> Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord;  
> God is the Lord and hath revealed himself to us.

Churches use a variety of texts as the bread and wine are given to the communicants. For example:

*Lutheran Book of Worship*:

> The body of Christ, given for you.  
> The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Anglican *Book of Alternative Services* and
The United Church of Canada’s *A Sunday Liturgy*:

> The body of Christ (broken for you).  
> The blood of Christ (shed for you).

or:

> The body of Christ, the bread of heaven.  
> The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada uses no words at this moment.

In the Eastern Churches the priest says the following:

> The servant of God, N., partaketh of the precious and holy Body and Blood of our Lord, and God, and Saviour, Jesus Christ, unto the remission of his/her sins, and unto life everlasting.
After Communion

The communion procession has two directions. It not only leads everyone to the altar-table, but also back to their pews or chairs. As the procession of the gifts arose out of the gathered people, this is where the communion procession is concluded.

**After communion the ministers place the vessels** on the credence table, and then sit. It is less distracting when the contents of the chalice are consumed and the vessels are cleaned after the celebration rather than at this time.

**Silence and song:** When all are seated, there may be period of silent prayer, or a song or praise, or both. The *General Instruction* states: "After communion, the priest and people may spend some time in silent prayer. If desired a hymn, psalm, or other song of praise may be sung by the entire congregation." (n. 56j)

**Balance is needed:** Certainly a period of silence is desirable. Whether there is singing here will depend on what has been sung as a processional song (or if there was such a song), and whether a closing song has been planned. Three songs so close in time might be burdensome; a careful and sensitive balance among these musical possibilities is called for.

*Music in Catholic Worship* adds: "The singing of a psalm or hymn of praise after the distribution of communion is optional. If the organ is played or the choir sings during the distribution of communion, a congregational song may well provide a fitting expression of oneness in the Eucharistic Lord. Since no particular text is specified, there is ample room for creativity." (n. 72)

Prayer after Communion

**A collect:** As with other parts of the liturgy that include a procession (entrance, preparation of altar and gifts), the communion rite concludes with a collect, called the prayer after communion. Like the prayer over the gifts, this is a short collect with a brief concluding formula rather than a longer collect like the opening prayer.

**Invitation:** The priest issues the usual invitation to prayer: "Let us pray." If there has already been a period of silent prayer, he may proceed immediately to the text of the collect. If not, he as usual pauses for a moment of silent prayer.

**The General Instruction says:** "In the prayer after communion, the priest petitions for the effects of the mystery just celebrated and by their acclamation, Amen, the people make the prayer their own." (n. 56k) Thus this prayer is not a prayer of thanksgiving; we have already given thanks at some length in the eucharistic prayer.

**That our lives be different:** The prayer after communion is related to the second epiclesis of the eucharistic prayer, in which we ask that the Holy Spirit
transform us so that we truly be “the one body of Christ, a living sacrifice of praise.” Now we pray that, having celebrated the eucharist, our lives may be different in the future. It asks that the sharing of the bread and wine of communion bear fruit in the lives we live after the liturgy. We ask that our lives be different, that this communion may lead to a more Christ-like life in the future.

The future: Individual prayers after communion may specify the future in terms of daily life, of God’s dominion, or of eternity (heaven).

In revision: The prayers after communion, like the other prayers of the Sacramentary, are currently being revised. The following two examples show the direction that this process is taking.¹ The present text and a draft revision are presented together.

Sacramentary:

Father,
may our communion
teach us to love heaven.
May its promise and hope
guide our way on earth.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Draft Revision

Lord our God,
grant that we who journey through this passing world
may learn from the sacrament we have celebrated
to cherish the things of heaven
and to cling to the treasures that never pass away.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sacramentary:

Father,
you increase our faith and hope,
you deepen our love in this communion.
Help us to live by your words
and to seek Christ, our bread of life,
who is Lord for ever and ever.

Draft Revision:

Lord,
you have renewed us with the holy bread
that enlivens our faith, inspires our hope,
and strengthens our charity.
Teach us to long for Christ,
the true and living bread,
and to live by every word that proceeds from your mouth.
Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

¹ Eucharistic Prayer 4
Original texts: In addition to revised translations from the Latin, some new prayers after communion are being composed directly in English. Three examples, from the same source, are shown below.

O God, Eternal Beauty, Wisdom everlasting, 
today we have tasted the joys of heaven's unending feast. 
We beg you now, extend the grace of this celebration, 
that heaven's joys may be known and shared in what we do on earth.
We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

Almighty God, 
you have given us the bread of heaven as food for our journey. 
Sustain us on our way toward the promised land, that, purified from evil, 
we may glorify your name in good works and reach the eternal Easter. 
Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O God, 
with wonder and gratitude we have celebrated the mystery of Christ's triumph over death. 
May we who share that victory never fear the sting of death, never yield to sin's dark ways. 
May our charity and hope bear witness to that triumph, till the whole creation sings to you the undying hymn of thankful praise through Jesus Christ our Lord.

With the Amen of the prayer after communion the communion rite and the liturgy of the eucharist as a whole, conclude.

The announcements follow the prayer after communion, and never precede this prayer.

Ecumenical Perspective

Many other churches have a single prayer after communion for use at all eucharistic liturgies. The Anglican Church of Canada, in contrast, has an entire set of such prayers for use during the liturgical year, as do Roman Catholics. These prayers, in the Book of Alternative Services, are noteworthy in that some refer to service in the world, a theme that is rare in Roman Catholic prayers after communion. Three examples of such prayers are given here.

Gracious God, 
our hands have taken holy things;
our lives have been nourished by the body of your Son.  
May we who have eaten at this holy table  
be strengthened for service in your world.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.³

Eternal God,  
in you we find peace beyond all telling.  
May we who share in this heavenly banquet  
be instruments of your peace on earth,  
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.⁴

O God,  
may we who have shared in holy things  
ever fail to serve you in your world,  
and so come to the fullness of joy,  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.⁵

³ Book of Alternative Services, p. 351
⁴ Ibid., p. 354
⁵ Ibid., p. 367
Reflection

At the conclusion of this consideration of the communion rite, it might be well to reflect further on three points: the presence of Christ, the Blood of Christ, and ministry.

Presence of Christ

Assembly and minister: We naturally – and correctly – focus on the presence of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine. However, Christ's presence is to be experienced throughout the communion rite. First, we recall that Christ is really present in the assembly as a whole – the local church – and in the ordained minister.

Lord's Prayer: The invitation to the Lord's Prayer and this entire prayer also evokes the presence of Christ as teacher of prayer to his disciples.

Sign of peace: Christ's gift of peace, the equation of peace with Christ's kingdom, and his presence in the greeting and in the sign of peace are also very important. These evoke images of Christ proclaiming the kingdom and reconciling humanity. The prayer at the beginning of the sign of peace is addressed to a Christ who is present with us:

Lord Jesus, you said to your apostles . . .

Lamb of God: The predominant image of Christ in the central part of the communion rite is as Lamb of God. First there is the Lamb recognized by John the Baptist, anointed by the Holy Spirit at baptism, and followed by the disciples. Next there is the Lamb who is slain and victorious and who celebrates his marriage supper and calls us to share in it.

Holy communion: The sharing in holy communion evokes images of Christ feeding the people who followed him: he gives himself to them. The principal symbols of Christ's presence in the communion rite of course are the consecrated bread and wine, sanctified by the Holy Spirit and given for us.

Acclamations: The communion rite also contains several acclamations that are addressed to the Christ who is present with us:

Lamb of God, you take away . . .
This is the Lamb of God . . .
Lord, I am not worthy . . .
The body of Christ. Amen. / The blood of Christ. Amen

Always present: We might with profit increase our sensitivity to and awareness of Christ's presence in the entire communion rite, from beginning to end, without diminishing the special character of his presence in his body and blood.
The Blood of Christ

Festive meal: The following are a few reflections on the significance of sharing in the cup of the blood of Christ. First, drinking from the cup is part of the symbolism of the eucharist as meal. Meals involve both eating and drinking. The cup is the festive aspect of the eucharistic meal.

A great sign: The cup is a sign of unity, a sign of covenant with God and with each other, a sign of the passover feast which celebrates deliverance from slavery and which is a festive experience, a sign of salvation, a sign of God's reign and the guarantee and expectation of the heavenly banquet. It is a gift of Christ, a call to conversion and an experience of salvation and forgiveness. To drink from the cup is to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Discipleship: Drinking from the same cup as Jesus is a sign of being his disciple, another way of saying we will follow Jesus and walk with him. It is also -- perhaps especially -- a sign that we know and accept that our discipleship is bound to be costly, painful and cross-filled. The cup sometimes is bitter and hard to accept.

Renunciation of power: The cup is also a symbol of walking with the poor, for the cup of Jesus can only be drunk by those who renounce privilege, power and position, and who accept and live the radical poverty of Jesus and those with whom he especially identifies -- the outcasts, the sick, the prostitutes and tax collectors.

Poverty and fidelity: The cup likewise is a sign of the poverty and the fidelity of Jesus himself. His poverty, in that the cup of the garden represented not only physical suffering and death, but also the apparent failure of his entire ministry and the dissolution of the tiny community which had grown around him. His poverty also in that Jesus wrestled to discern and accept the will of his Abba, no matter how painful, puzzling and unclear. His fidelity, in that his love for and close relationship with Abba led him to the acceptance of God's will.

Resurrection and Spirit: The cup is the cup of eucharist and hence a symbol not only of death, but also of resurrection and of the life and presence of Jesus and his Spirit among us today. Accepting the cup now is accepting the entire paschal mystery, the only way in which we can live in and with Jesus here and now.

Full humanity: In shedding his blood, Jesus identified himself fully with the suffering and pain of all who are wounded, and showed us yet again his full humanity, which embraced vulnerability, powerlessness and poverty. And yet this is not only the supreme example of the great mystery of suffering and evil and also the supreme example of generosity, love and self-giving; not only his blood, but also his love was poured out.

For us: The blood of Christ is also the great symbol of our identification and union with him today. His blood is the blood of covenant, or redeemed relationship between God and humanity, and in it we are washed; in it sin is forgiven, the world is made new, and the wounded are healed. It is only by drinking his blood from the cup of blessing that we can abide in him and he in us, only thus can we have life -- his life -- in us and be raised up.
Covenant love: In the cup we meet Jesus in his woundedness, vulnerability and self-giving; we accept poverty, powerlessness, our own woundedness and struggle. In drinking from the cup we signify commitment and trust; we live abiding covenant love. This is not just a matter for intellectual consideration or for prayerful meditation. It is especially a matter of personal and communal experience: the experience of our eucharistic liturgies expressing and deepening the experience of our daily lives.

Jesus himself commanded that we all drink from the eucharistic cup of his blood as his living memorial, and it seems especially important that the entire Church be faithful to this command. In our liturgical celebrations we can have the actual experience of holding the cup of blessing in our hands, the experience of tasting and drinking the consecrated wine. And in this regularly repeated liturgical experience we can say, this is my cup also; this is my blood poured out as well; we can express new life and renewed commitment.

Ministry

A model of ministry: The communion rite constitutes a model of ministry for the parish during the week. It is a fine example of the sharing of ministry. Ministry is exercised in the communion rite by the assembly as a whole, by certain lay liturgical ministers, and by the presider (and the deacon, where there is one). The rite as a whole involves the ministry of the church as expressed in the local ecclesial community. In addition, this ministry serves the basic purpose of the communion rite, the sharing of the holy meal by the holy people.

Assembly

The work of everyone: The communion rite is celebrated by the liturgical assembly as a whole; this is abundantly clear. It is not solely the ministry of the priest, or of the priest plus a small number of lay ministers; it is the work of everyone.

All together: This is evidenced first by the fact that all stand throughout all or most of this rite. Standing is a posture of active engagement and participation. In addition, the ministry of the assembly is shown by the unison praying of the Lord's Prayer and the invitation to communion, by corporate silent prayer on several occasions, by the congregational singing of the communion song and Lamb of God and perhaps also the Lord's Prayer and its doxology. In addition, the congregation is a partner with the priest in several dialogues. Everyone participates in the sign of peace. Finally, the congregation moves together to the table and shares in the holy meal, and all stand together while others are communicating.

Lay Liturgical Ministries

Musicians exercise an important ministry during the communion rite, leading the congregation in singing the Lamb of God, the communion song, and perhaps the Lord's Prayer. There may also be a song of praise after communion.
Acolytes (servers) may bring additional chalices and purificators to the table, and they or (other) communion ministers may pour wine and help break the bread. Finally, they may share the consecrated bread and wine with the people.

Bread bakers: The liturgy of communion rite also depends on the bread bakers of the community and on the sacristans and others who make the final preparations for its celebration.

Priest Presider

The priest stands at the table for the first part of the communion rite, and then moves to an appropriate place to share the consecrated bread. Afterwards, he returns to the chair, where he sits for a period of silent prayer and then rises for the prayer after communion. His visual prominence indicates that he has a leadership role. However, he is still very much a member of the community.

Leadership: Additional nonverbal expressions of his leadership are the gestures he makes (hands extended) at the Lord’s Prayer and its embolism, the prayer of the sign of peace, and at the prayer after communion. He makes a gesture of greeting during the sign of peace as well, and he genuflects before communion. During the invitation to communion he shows the consecrated bread to the people. He breaks the bread, participates in the sharing of holy communion, and in a small assembly may be the sole minister of the bread.

Invitations: The presider’s verbal parts are of several kinds. First, he invites the assembly to prayer before the Lord’s Prayer and the prayer after communion, and initiates the invitation to communion, though here he is joined by the congregation.

Dialogue: In addition, he initiates the greeting of the sign of peace, though the congregation returns the greeting as an equal partner.

With the congregation: Several times the presider joins with everyone either in a unison prayer (the Lord’s Prayer) or in communal silent reflection (after communion).

Presidential prayer: He speaks prayers alone but in the name of the entire assembly. These include the embolism, the prayer of the sign of peace, and the prayer after communion. These are worded in the plural, indicating that they are the prayer of all.

Member and leader: The priest presider is entirely a member of the liturgical assembly, and never acts or speaks as one apart from the other members of the assembly. At the same time, he clearly has a leadership role; he is the leader of the worshipping assembly. Here he initiates and invites. In leading, the priest also gives example. His leadership also facilitates or enables the other members of the assembly in their own ministry of full, active, conscious and fruitful participation.

In all of these respects the presider serves the basic purpose of the communion rite of the Sunday eucharist. He leads and helps and joins with all the other members of the assembly as they prepare for and then share in the body and blood of Christ. This is a good model for ministry in the parish at all times.
In our liturgical celebrations we are dependent on the work of many persons outside our worshiping communities. We need candles, vestments, bread and wine, altar cloths, crosses, windows, the church building itself. We expect to pay the artists, artisans, architects, builders, manufacturers and retailers that supply these requisites for worship. We need light, heat and water as well, and we pay for these municipal services.

We are also indebted to those who have composed or translated liturgical texts, those who have prepared the liturgical rites and the introductions, notes and rubrics that accompany them, as well as those who have translated the biblical readings and prepared the lectionary.

We also need to acknowledge the creative women and men who compose song texts and musical settings. Also to be named are editors, book designers, printers and publishers who make available to us the work of all these learned and creative people.

Many of those who supply the music, song texts and art on which we depend derive part or all of their income through this work. They need to eat, clothe and house themselves and often their spouses and children as well. Publishers invest a great deal of money in producing books and editions of music, and depend on selling them in order to stay in business so they can publish the next generation of resources.

We have a moral obligation to deal fairly with composers, editors, translators, writers and publishers, just as we have a moral obligation to deal fairly with those who provide candles, vestments and the design and construction of our church buildings. This is a matter of justice.

We also need to deal fairly with composers and writers in order to encourage and support the creation and publication of new works in the future. This is a matter of fostering gifts given by God for the enrichment of church and society, and of showing good stewardship of such creativity for the benefit of our children and the church and society of tomorrow.

Justice, the fostering of gifts, and providing for tomorrow are expressed and supported in concrete ways in the laws of our country. One kind of law has to do with buying and selling church goods, furnishings and related matters.

A second kind of law has to do with what is called “intellectual property;” in general, written or artistic works. This is the concern of copyright law, which is the main concern of this article.

Copyright laws have been on the books for many years. Many parish liturgists—pastors, musicians, liturgy planners, communities of religious sisters...
and brothers, et al. – have become conscious of them only in recent years, however. The desire and need for new liturgical music and texts, coupled with the ready availability of duplication equipment, have tempted many (who has not sinned in this regard) to infringe the laws of copyright. We also are blessed with more and more creators of song texts and musical settings, and they seek the protection that the copyright regulations afford. Publishers whose rights are infringed also are seeking redress in and out of the courts, sometimes with large settlements. Finally, widespread publicity has attended the 1989 amendments to the copyright laws of Canada and discussions that may lead to further amendments in the future.

This article attempts to explain to Canadian pastoral liturgists how the Canadian copyright laws apply to us. What does copyright mean? To what does the copyright law apply? How is work copyrighted? How do we use copyrighted material correctly? How is the copyright law violated? (What is said here may not apply to commercial publishers, to whom stricter procedures apply.)

This can be a complex and highly technical subject. Only basic principles and practices that have particular application to liturgical celebrations or liturgical education will be dealt with here. For fine points, exceptions, other applications, judicial interpretations, etc., consultation with legal experts is required. While the editor of the Bulletin has sought expert advice, he is not a lawyer. Any errors are his, are inadvertent, and are not intended to circumvent the law.

The basic idea of copyright is this: The person who creates an original literary, artistic, musical or dramatic work is the only person who has the legal right to "copy" his or her work. Anyone else who wishes to copy the work requires the permission of the original author or creator, and needs to acknowledge the original source.

The economic dimension of copyright means that the creator of a work may copy and sell his or her own work, may charge a fee for others to copy it, and may assign (that is, transfer) his or her rights to a publisher or other party. In addition, the creator may charge if a musical or dramatic work is performed by others.

The moral dimension of copyright means that others may not change a copyrighted work, without the permission of the creator, if such editing is prejudicial to the honor or reputation of the copyright owner.

What does "copying" mean? Here it includes publishing, producing, reproducing, and performing the original work. It also includes photocopying, making transparencies or slides for projection, records, audiotapes, videotapes, and the like.

What kind of work may be copyrighted? The original literary, artistic, musical or dramatic works covered by the copyright law include books, articles, tables, translations, compilations, handouts, bulletins, computer programs, all kinds of musical works, sculpture, paintings, photographs, motion picture films, television productions, dance choreography, etc. So far as liturgy is concerned, all liturgical books and texts, all biblical readings and all music (texts and settings) are protected by copyright laws.

How does a work become copyrighted? In Canada, an original work of the type described above is protected by the copyright law as soon as it is created; this is done automatically in the very process of creating it. The copyright pro-

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cess becomes more formal and more public if the work includes the designation “© Jane Doe 1990.” One might include additional information as well: “Edmonton, Alberta” or “St. Mary’s Cathedral, Regina.”

Copyright protection becomes still more public and formal if the work is registered with the Copyright Office of the Government of Canada. Registration involves completing a simple form and paying a fee. Registration does not require that copies be submitted. However, two copies of all works published in Canada must be deposited with the National Library of Canada.¹

The process just described is the procedure in Canada. In some other countries only works that are registered with the national copyright office are protected by law.

If an author wishes to allow others to copy his or her work without asking permission, this may be indicated by a statement such as “This may be reproduced” or “Permission to copy granted” or “Permission to copy is granted for one-time liturgical use” or the like.

Copyright protection lasts for the life of the author plus 50 years. A work that is older than this is said to be in the public domain, and may be copied without permission.

Copyright laws vary from country to country. Because of international agreements, works that are copyrighted in one country are (usually) protected by the laws of other countries. In such cases it is the copyright law of the country in which the work is used that applies. Thus works registered for copyright purposes in the United States or the United Kingdom, but used in Canada, are under the protection of Canadian law, not those of the U.S. or U.K. (This point often is not understood either by Canadian users or U.S. copyright owners.)

Copyright laws try to balance the rights of the creator with those of persons who would like to use his or her work. In Canada the law very much favors the creator; in other countries the users receive more consideration. Canada has very strict copyright laws compared to those in many other countries.

The copyright laws can be violated by infringement and by piracy. Infringement is the most common form of violation among liturgists; it is simply copying a work without permission and/or without giving acknowledgment. Piracy is copying and selling copies for profit.

A separate issue, but one that should be mentioned here as well, is that of plagiarism. This is saying or implying that a work is yours when it is not. To avoid plagiarism one gives acknowledgment that a work is that of someone else.

Making Copies

Proper acknowledgment of the source of any material copied must always be made. This usually will include the name of the author, the name of the article,
book or other work from which an excerpt is taken, the name of the copyright owner, and the date of copyright. The copyright owner may specify the content and form of the acknowledgment and even where it is to appear.

Copying Without Asking Permission

It is permissible to make copies under the following conditions without asking permission.

• If the work in question is in the public domain; that is, copyright protection has run out.

The International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) has compiled and created the Resource Collection of Hymns and Service Music for the Liturgy. This book contains 250 hymns in the public domain and 106 settings of music for the rites which may be reproduced without charge. This resource is published by GIA Publications (Chicago). A companion volume, ICEL Lectionary Music, is also published by GIA.

The words and melodies of Christmas carols and other traditional music are in the public domain. (However, particular musical arrangements may be protected by copyright.)

• If the creator states on the work that it may be copied without permission.

Some publishers grant permission to copy musical refrains or responses for congregational use, if sufficient copies of the whole work have been purchased for choir, cantor, organist, etc.

Other publishers grant permission for one time liturgical use.

• If the part that is copied is less than a “substantial” portion of the work.

“Substantial” may mean that only a small part of a work is copied – one or a few pages from a book, for example. However, it is also measured by the importance (“quality”) of the material that is copied. Thus a congregational refrain or response may be considered substantial, even if it is only a small portion of a larger composition from a quantitative point of view. There are no precise rules regarding this matter. In a legal suit, the judge makes the final decision.

• If the copying constitutes “fair dealing.”

The legal principle of “fair dealing” allows you to make one copy of a copyrighted work for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper study. Such copying may not be done simply to avoid purchasing the item. It is not a right, but rather a legal defense with respect to infringement. (In the United States the legal doctrine of “fair use” constitutes a right to make single copies. In law there is an appreciable difference between fair dealing and fair use; in practice they both allow single copies to be made.)

No special exceptions or exemptions are made in Canada for religious or educational purposes or institutions. (Such exceptions are made in some other countries.)
Asking Permission to Copy

In all other cases permission needs to be obtained – before making any copies. Obtaining permission does not necessarily mean that a fee needs to be paid. Publishers of liturgical materials often – but not always – permit copying for one-time use or for a small number of copies or for educational use without requiring a fee. They usually still require that their permission be asked first, however.

In all cases, proper acknowledgment must be made.

In writing to ask permission, address your request to the “Permissions Department.” Say that you are writing to request permission to make reproductions of a work (or part of a work), the rights for which you understand are owned or exercised by that firm.

Add that, if permission is granted, you undertake to ensure that any reproduction of the work will be carried out in accordance with any requirements the owner specifies, and that a notice of copyright will be included with each copy. Also say that if you do reproduce the work, you will remit any fees stipulated by the copyright owner.

Copyright owners prefer to deal with written requests, which means that the request needs to be submitted a month or more before the date of anticipated use. This may not always be possible, for example, in the case of funerals. In addition, some copyright owners do not always reply promptly. In such cases they may be contacted by telephone.

Supply as much of the following information as possible:

- the name and address of organization making the request, and of the contact person
- title of work to be copied
- author and/or editor
- edition and date
- wording of copyright notice on the work
- ISBN number (for books), if available
- selections, chapters or page numbers to be copied
- total number of original pages
- number of copies to be made
- use to be made of reproduced material
- is the material to be revised and/or abridged? If so, a copy of the proposed changes should be attached;
- form of distribution (e.g., classroom, bulletin)
- will the material be sold? At what price?
- type of reprint (photocopy, offset, typeset)
- date of use or when copying will be done.
Biblical Texts

English translations of the Bible are copyrighted by their respective publishers. Though small portions of the Jerusalem Bible and New American Bible may be copied without fee, their publishers require that written permission be requested. Small portions of the Revised Standard Version may be copied without asking permission.\(^2\) Addresses of some commonly used biblical translations follow:

Jerusalem Bible
New Jerusalem Bible

Doubleday & Company, Inc.
245 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10017
(212) 953-4561

Revised Standard Version
New Revised Standard Version

National Council of the Churches of Christ
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10115-0050
(212) 870-2271

New American Bible
Revised New Testament of the New American Bible

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc.
3211 4th Street NE
Washington, DC 20017
(202) 541-3098

The Grail Psalms

Grail
c/o A. P. Watt Ltd
20 John Street
London, England WC1N 2DL
01-405-67-74

Liturgical Texts

Copyright for the following texts is owned by the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET). They may be used without prior permission, but acknowledgment should be given. New versions of some of these texts have recently been published by ICET's successor, The English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC),\(^3\) but they have not yet been approved for liturgical use in Canada.

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\(^2\) Further information may be found in: *Copyright Update*. Reprint permission policies of publishers of liturgical music and sacred scripture, published by the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, PO Box 29039, Washington, DC 20017, (202) 635-6991.

\(^3\) *Praying Together*, by the English Language Liturgical Consultation (Nashville: Abingdon 1988)
The Lord's Prayer, Kyrie Eleison (Lord, have mercy), Gloria in Excelsis (Gloria), Nicene Creed, Apostles' Creed, Sursum Corda (Preface dialogue), Sanctus and Benedictus (Holy, holy), Agnus Dei (Lamb of God), Gloria Patri (Glory to the Father), Te Deum Laudamus, Benedictus (Song of Zechariah), Magnificat (Song of Mary), and Nunc Dimittis (Song of Simeon)

Most other Roman Catholic liturgical texts in English are copyrighted by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) (its address is given below). (a) For one-time use, you do not have to obtain prior permission from ICEL, though, as always, acknowledgment should be given. (b) The publication in Canada of ICEL texts by commercial publishers requires both the prior permission of ICEL and the consent of the National Liturgical Office (90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1). (c) Parishes or religious communities who wish to use ICEL materials in any permanent or semi-permanent document need to ask ICEL's permission. ICEL may or may not ask that they consult the National Liturgical Office as well.

International Commission on English in the Liturgy
1275 K Street NW, Suite 1202
Washington, DC 20005-4097
(202) 347-0800

Canadian additions or adaptations of ICEL materials, or original materials, are copyrighted by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. Permission to use these may be requested from the CCCB Publications Service, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1.

Music

The copyright situation with respect to music can be quite complicated.

• In some cases the copyright for the words, melody line, harmonization and instrumentation may be held by different persons or publishers.

• The publishers of hymnals or other collections often do not own the copyright for individual pieces included. They have been granted permission to use these materials by the copyright owners, but have no legal right to grant such permission to others. Some modern hymnals give addresses of the copyright owners, usually at the back.

• Each publisher has its own policies and procedures.

• Copyright holders of music own both "reproduction rights," (which have already been considered) and "performance rights." If you have bought enough copies for everyone in the choir and for the organist and other instrumentalists, you need not ask for permission to perform that piece in a worship service. But if the same group of musicians, using the same music, puts on a concert and charges admission, then a royalty for performance rights is also payable to the copyright holder, unless they have granted an exemption.
Addresses of some music publishers are given below.

Damean Music
PO Box 250
South Weymouth, MA 02190
(617) 848-9699

F. E. L. Publications
3342 S. Sandhill Road, No. 9-444
Las Vegas, NV 89121-3455
(702) 737-0142

GIA Publications, Inc.
7404 S. Mason Avenue
Chicago, IL 60638
(708) 496-3800

Hope Publishing Company/Agape
Carol Stream, IL 60187
(312) 665-3200

Medical Mission Sisters
77 Sherman Street
Hartford, CT 06105
(203) 232-4451
  (Monday-Friday/Daytime)
(203) 233-0875
  (Saturday-Sunday/Evening)

North American Liturgy Resources
10802 North 23rd Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85029
(602) 864-1980

OCP Publications
5536 NE Hassalo
Portland, OR 97214-0809
(503) 281-1191

Oxford University Press; Inc.
Music Department
200 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10016
(212) 679-7300, ext. 7164, 7165

Pastoral Arts Associates
of North America
642 N. Grandview
Daytona Beach, FL 32018
(904) 255-5161

Resource Publications, Inc.
160 E. Virginia Street, Suite 290
San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 286-8505

Weston Priory Productions
Rural Route 1, Box 50
Weston, VT
(802) 824-5409

Word of God Music/Servant Music
PO Box 8617
840 Airport Blvd
Ann Arbor, MI 48107
(313) 761-8505

World Library Publications/
J.S. Paluch Co. Inc.
3815 N. Willow Road
Schiller Park, IL 60176
(312) 678-0621

Classroom Use

The copyright laws also cover materials that might be copied for use in classroom or by students in libraries. The rules for acknowledgment, for copying without asking permission, and for asking for copyright permission already given, apply to this situation also.

Letters asking permission for this type of use might be composed along the following lines.

I would like your permission to copy the following (portions) of publication(s) for which you own the copyright: (list the publications; include author, title, inclusive pages. If a periodical article or in a collection of essays, include the full citation to the periodical or collection. Provide ISBN number if available).

I am teaching a course (name it) in/at (name the institution and department). This course has an enrollment of (number of students).
I wish to distribute the material identified below to each member of the class. OR I wish to place on reserve in the library (number of copies) of the material mentioned below for student use. OR I plan to compile an in-house materials book for student use.

The material will be used internally only, solely for the private study of the students enrolled in the course and will not be otherwise published and/or made available for sale.

Addresses of a few publishers whose materials are often used are given below.

The Liturgical Press  
St. John's Abbey  
Collegeville, MN 56321  
(612) 363-2217

Liturgy Training Publications  
1800 North Hermitage Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60622-1101  
(312) 486-8970

Pastoral Press  
225 N. Sheridan Street NW  
Washington, DC 20011  
(202) 723-1254

Paulist Press  
997 MacArthur Blvd  
Mahwah, NJ 07430  
(201) 825-7300

### Making Changes in Copyrighted Texts

**What are the copyright implications** of making changes in a text, for example, to make it easier to read or more inclusive, or more suitable for children?

- If making such changes involves copying, for example by typing out the emended text in a bulletin or other participation aid or some other printed form, you will need to ask permission both to make the copy and to make the changes. Some copyright owners will gladly grant permission to make such changes, and others will not.

- If a presider, reader or cantor simply makes the changes as they speak them, and if the changes are not such as to distort the text so that the honor or reputation of the copyright owner is prejudiced, then this is permitted.

Inasmuch as ICEL and some other publishers have now adopted principles of inclusive language, making such changes orally would not seem to be against their wishes and would not prejudice their reputation — provided that the changes are done well. Remember, though, that prior permission is required if such changes are to be put into writing.
Rite of Consecration
to a Life of Virginity

Mary Bastedo is Director of the L'Arche Community in Stratford, Ontario.

One of the less well known liturgies of the church is the Rite of Consecration to a Life of Virginity, included in the Roman Pontifical of 1978. It takes two forms, "Consecration to a Life of Virginity for Women Living in the World," and "Consecration to a Life of Virginity together with Religious Profession for Nuns." Mary Bastedo celebrated the first form of this liturgy in March 1990, with Bishop John Sherlock of London, her L'Arche community and friends. Here Mary describes this liturgy and tells how she came to celebrate this rite of the church.

The Liturgical Celebration

The liturgy begins with the gathering rites and liturgy of the word. The liturgy of the eucharist and concluding rites of the mass follow the rite of consecration itself.

Calling of the Candidate

Deacon: (Calls Mary by name.)
Mary: Lord, you have called me.
Bishop: Is there anyone to speak on Mary's behalf?
Friends: (Give witness to Mary's life)
Bishop: Come, Mary, that through me, his servant, the Lord may consecrate the resolution you have formed in your heart.
Mary: I am resolved to follow Jesus with all my heart.

Homily

Examination

After the homily, Mary stands and the Bishop questions her:

Mary, are you resolved to persevere to the end of your days abiding in the love of Jesus; living poorly and simply the Gospel message, sharing
your life with the poor; faithful to prayer and obedient to the Holy Spirit; and living chastely as the spouse of Jesus Christ, at the service of God and the Church?

Mary: I am.

Mary, are you resolved to follow Christ in the spirit of the Beatitudes, faithful to your covenant in L'Arche, with Jesus and with all your brothers and sisters, especially the poorest and weakest?

Mary: I am.

Are you resolved to accept solemn consecration as a bride of Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

Mary: I am.

Litany of the Saints

After the litany, the Bishop says:

Lord, hear the prayers of your Church. Look with favor on your handmaid whom you have called in your love. Set her on the way of eternal salvation; may she seek only what is pleasing to you and fulfill it with watchful care. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Renewal of Intention

Mary offers herself to God at the hands of the Bishop. She kneels, places her joined hands between his hands and says:

Father, receive my resolution to follow Christ in a life of perfect chastity, after the example of Mary his Mother, loving him with all my heart, living poorly and simply with him, and obedient, with him, to the will of the Father.

Prayer of Consecration

The Bishop extends his hands over Mary and says the prayer of consecration:

Loving Father, chaste bodies are your temple; you delight in sinless hearts. Our nature was corrupted when the devil deceived our first parents, but you have restored it in Christ. He is your Word, through whom all things were made. He has made our nature whole again.
Lord, look with favor on your handmaid.  
She places in your hands her resolve to live in chastity.  
You inspire her to take this vow;  
now she gives you her heart.  
Only you can kindle this flame of love,  
and feed its brightness,  
giving strength and perseverance to her will.

You have poured out your grace upon all peoples.  
You have adopted as heirs of the new covenant  
sons and daughters from every nation under heaven,  
countless as the stars.  
Your children are born, not of human birth,  
nor of human desire,  
but of your Spirit.

Among your many gifts  
you give to some the grace of virginity.  
Yet the honor of marriage is in no way lessened.  
As it was in the beginning,  
your first blessing still remains upon this holy union.  
Yet your loving wisdom chooses those  
who made sacrifice of marriage  
for the sake of the love of which it is the sign.  
They renounce the joys of human marriage,  
but cherish all that it foreshadows.

Those who choose chastity have looked upon the face of Christ,  
its origin and inspiration.  
They give themselves wholly to Christ,  
the son of the ever-virgin Mary,  
and the heavenly Bridegroom of those  
who in his honor dedicate themselves to lasting virginity.

Lord, protect Mary, who seeks your help.  
She desires to be strengthened by your blessing and consecration.  
Defend her from the cunning and deceit of the enemy.  
Keep her vigilant and on her guard;  
may nothing tarnish the glory of perfect virginity,  
or the vocation of purity which is shared by those who are married.

Through the gift of your Spirit, Lord,  
give her modesty with right judgment,  
kindness with true wisdom,  
gentleness with strength of character,  
freedom with the grace of chastity.  
Give her the warmth of love,  
to love you above all others.  
Make her life deserve our praise,  
without seeking to be praised.  
May she give you glory  
by holiness of action and purity of heart.  
May she love you and fear you;  
may she love you and serve you.
Be yourself her glory, her joy, her whole desire.
Be her comfort in sorrow, in loneliness and in anguish,
her wisdom in perplexity,
her protection in the midst of injustice,
her patience in adversity,
her riches in poverty,
her food in fasting,
her remedy in time of sickness.

She has chosen you above all things;
may she find all things in possessing you.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Presentation of the Insignia of Consecration

*Mary’s friends present a ring to the bishop. He says:*  
Receive the ring that marks you as a bride of Christ.  
Keep unstained your fidelity to your Bridegroom  
that you may one day be admitted to the  
wedding feast of everlasting joy.

All: Amen.

*The bishop presents the ring to Mary. She then sings, with the choir:*  
From my heart has sprung a beautiful song,  
it is my whole life I am giving to the King.

Mary’s Story

How I Came to This Step

The call to celibacy has taken root in me very gradually and gently over the years. It has had its ups and downs, but more and more I discover it to be a gift and at the heart of my call to follow Jesus.

When I first came to L’Arche in 1973, at the age of 24 and a non-Catholic, the witness of celibate people attracted me. I had grown up in the United Church and as a teenager went with my family to the Unitarian Church. In my university years I was virtually an atheist, but there was a restless yearning within me.

A few years later, I met several people who had a mental handicap. Their presence brought me much life and freedom. My desire to do more with them brought me to L’Arche Edmonton in its beginning years.
L'Arche, founded by Jean Vanier, is a Christian community where men and women who have a mental handicap and those who come as "assistants" live and work together. L'Arche began in 1964 in France as a Catholic community but quite soon began to develop an ecumenical and interreligious identity as communities were founded in India, where Hindus, Christians and Muslims were welcomed, and in Canada and England where members of the Anglican, Protestant and Catholic traditions were welcomed.

I discovered a very rich affective life in L'Arche. It flowed first of all from the men and women who have a mental handicap, who were often very warm and accepting, spontaneous and free in their expressions of affection. Their freedom and spontaneity called me out of myself. I discovered, too, a deep capacity for love and nurture within myself as I lived with them and became a reference for them.

I also experienced some deep bonds of friendship among the assistants. We discovered one another as brothers and sisters in this adventure of community living. Those bonds were often forged through living difficult times together, when we pulled together for the sake of those who had a handicap. There were also relationships of conflict, tension and misunderstanding, which forced me to grow in self-knowledge and humility.

L'Arche was also the place where I learned to pray, often out of dire necessity, struggling with conflicts and disillusionments, turning to Jesus and growing in trust that he would provide what was needed. In February 1974 I joined the Catholic Church, with a joyful sense of "coming home" spiritually. I was attracted by many things in the Catholic Church – by the eucharist primarily, by the love and presence of Mary, by the communion of saints, by the Church's wisdom in the ways of prayer and by the grace of celibacy.

Through L'Arche I met many loving and authentic celibate people, including Jean Vanier and priests and sisters who were close to our community. They witnessed to the love of God in a way I had never understood it before – a love that is so personal and so real that it can be the primary engagement of one's heart.

In fact, I was living celibacy, finding it something very freeing in my relationships, particularly with men, and more and more my centre was in prayer, with Jesus. I was discovering celibacy as a way of loving.

After several years, however, I found it necessary to leave the community. I was tired and needed time and space to recollect my energies. I questioned the insecurity and fragility of L'Arche and looked for a more stable and traditional community where I could give my life and grow in this relationship with Jesus and this call to celibacy. I entered St. Clare's Monastery in Mission, B.C. and spent one year there. It was a very rich life liturgically and a privileged experience, but for me something was missing and eventually it became clear that the monastic life was not my vocation.

There followed several years of questioning and doubting many things, including my call to celibacy. I returned to university and was open to other options, looking possibly at marriage and/or a professional career. The pressures of culture and psychology made me ask myself many questions. As graduation approached, an invitation came to join L'Arche Daybreak in Toronto. It had been six years since I left L'Arche. When the opportunity came to return to the community I was excited by it.
My questions, however, were not over and I did much soul searching in that first year back at L’Arche. “Where was all this leading me with the question of marriage or celibacy?” It was a time of vulnerability. I was much more painfully aware of the losses celibacy implied than I had been in the years of my first enthusiasm. At this point in my life, I was more acutely conscious of the sacrifice of not having children. It was not a choice I could easily make.

In January 1985, a year and a half after returning to L’Arche, I made a retreat with others in L’Arche which was an important turning point. It was a moment of recognition of God’s faithfulness over the years and of his call to me in and through the people of L’Arche, especially the poorest and weakest. It was also a moment of saying “yes,” with trepidation and yet with peace, to celibacy. The priest who had been my spiritual director for several years witnessed my intention to live celibacy for one year.

I was amazed at the peace, energy and sense of freedom that flowed from that very little “yes.” It so deeply confirmed the rightness of my decision. It was a step in faith, and my greatest leap of faith was that God would make me a fruitful woman, even though I would not have children. Through my work and relationships at Daybreak, God showed me that my life indeed would be made fruitful. A few years later I was asked to come to L’Arche Stratford as the director of the community.

I renewed my intention to live celibacy for another year, and another, growing in confidence in the rightness of the choice for me. Gradually I dared to talk about it with others and to witness to the gift that I was experiencing.

The Rite of Consecration

After four years of renewing this annual commitment, the question began to form within me: “What is the next step?” In February 1989 I went to talk to my bishop, John M. Sherlock, Bishop of London. In answer to my question, he showed me the Rite of Consecration to a Life of Virginity. He proposed that he would come and celebrate the rite in the local parish church in Stratford, with the L’Arche community, my family and friends, and any parishioners who might want to come.

This gave me much food for thought and prayer. It was certainly a further step to make my “yes” to celibacy public and permanent. I took a year to pray about this next step. I read over the prayer of consecration many times. It attracted me; it called me; it was what I wanted. That summer I had the privilege of participating in a L’Arche Renewal in France for 10 weeks. The question of making the consecration was very central for me, especially during the eight day retreat which was part of the Renewal. I realized, by what I lived emotionally, that there was a significant difference between making a one year commitment and making a permanent one. I had to die to any last dreams of marriage and family that I was clinging to. In the end it was clear; it was a choice I wanted to make.

Others in L’Arche were interested in the consecration, and I was somewhat surprised to discover that no one else had taken this step. Jean Vanier wrote me a letter, reflecting on what this step would mean for me and for L’Arche. He felt it was very significant. [Part of this letter is quoted below.]
When I returned to Stratford in the fall, I began planning for the event. A date was set – March 15, 1990 – and I wrote letters to many friends, especially others in L'Arche, telling them what was happening and asking for their prayers.

The Liturgy

In January I sent out invitations and began planning the details of the liturgy. The rite is meant to be part of a eucharistic celebration. It comes after the gospel reading and before the liturgy of the eucharist. It comprises seven parts:

1. Calling of the Candidate
2. Homily
3. Examination
4. Litany of the Saints
5. Renewal of Intention
6. Prayer of Consecration
7. Presentation of the Insignia of Consecration

The wording of the rite allows for some flexibility. In the calling of the candidate, I gave a simple, personal response: “I am ready to follow Jesus with all my heart.”

In the examination, the bishop asks three questions which begin, “Are you resolved . . . ?” The first was expanded to express my desire to follow Jesus not only in chastity but in poverty and obedience. The second question was altered to include my resolution to be faithful to my covenant in L'Arche. The third, which is “Are you resolved to accept solemn consecration as a bride of Jesus Christ, the Son of God?” was left unaltered.

The renewal of intention was also personally composed. The beautiful prayer of consecration was basically unchanged.

An important addition was made at the beginning of the rite, before the calling of the candidate, when two people who have known me over the years were asked to speak on my behalf – one the priest who has accompanied me for ten years and the other a representative from L'Arche. Following their witnesses, the bishop called me forward.

The celebration on March 15 was a wonderful event. There were about 150 people present – many special friends, including seven priests. I was very happy with how my L'Arche community participated – someone to serve mass, someone to hold the bishop's crosier, another to hold his mitre, someone to carry the cross, another to hold the incense, several people to bring up the gifts and to be eucharistic ministers.

The rite calls for two women to accompany the person being consecrated. I invited Sue Mosteller, a Sister of St. Joseph, who has lived at L'Arche Daybreak for 18 years, and Sonia Marlow, who lives in my home in Stratford, to accompany me.
Implications of the Consecration

For us as a L'Arche community, the consecration was a significant event. The reality for most people who have a mental handicap is that they will not marry. For many of them this is a real suffering. I shared about my choice with the community on several occasions before the consecration. Those moments were very precious. I sensed how deeply our people carry questions and pain about marriage. For them to see someone freely and publicly choose celibacy in community life really opened a door for them. A couple of the women expressed to me that they, too, want to give their lives to Jesus in this way.

Celibacy is a reality that we in L'Arche live but rarely talk about. This public event brought it out into the light. So clearly, too, it was something to be celebrated – a joyous event. For me, it was also a deepening of solidarity with the men and women of L'Arche who have a mental handicap.

I was struck in the prayer of consecration by the parallels that are made between marriage and a life of virginity. There are several references made to the equal value and beauty of these two vocations:

Among your many gifts
you give to some the grace of virginity.
Yet the honor of marriage is in no way lessened.
As it was in the beginning,
your first blessing still remains upon this holy union.
Yet your loving wisdom chooses those
who made sacrifice of marriage
for the sake of the love of which it is the sign.
They renounce the joys of human marriage,
but cherish all that it foreshadows.

... may nothing tarnish the glory of perfect virginity,
or the vocation of purity which is shared by those
who are married.

In L'Arche we often talk about the complementary aspects of the vocations of marriage and celibacy. We realize more and more how both vocations are needed in L'Arche and in the church. Families begin to discover how they are nourished by celibate friends, and those who have chosen celibacy are nourished by friendships with families.

Marriages are celebrated publicly and supported by the presence of friends and family, whereas the commitment to celibacy often is not. At the celebration of my consecration I experienced a very gratifying balance in that complementary relationship between marriage and celibacy. My commitment was also celebrated, joyfully announced and supported by my friends and community.

In his homily at the consecration, Bishop Sherlock stressed that what we were celebrating was not only the gift of my life to Jesus but, most importantly, his gift of himself to me in this covenant of love. The consecration is a gift to be received. It is a gift not only for me personally but for L'Arche and for the whole Church.

Celibacy in L'Arche is a gift that is given with and through "the poor," those who are marginalized, many of whom are not able to marry. This gift of celibacy allows me to be close to them, to share my life more fully with them, and they in turn reveal to me the face of Jesus.
The consecration calls me into an ecclesial vocation, into a growing communion and love for the church, the mystical body of Christ, in all its brokenness and glory. I know more deeply that I have a place and a mission in that body. To pray the prayer of the church in communion with the whole church becomes more central for me.

Learning more about the history of this rite of consecration also gives me a sense of continuity with church tradition. The rite goes back to the late fourth century and was quite common between the fourth and ninth centuries. At that time it was a simple and solemn rite, paralleling the Christian marriage ceremony, and was used both for enclosed monastic nuns and for “women in the world.” In the late thirteenth century, the rite became more elaborate, again paralleling changes in the marriage ceremony. Although the rite was used less frequently for “women in the world” after the fifteenth century, it was never officially disallowed until 1927 when the Congregation of Religious practically forbade bishops to confer the consecration on women outside of religious communities.

Vatican II’s Constitution on the Liturgy asked that the Rite of Consecration be rewritten. The present rite, issued on May 31, 1970, restores the original simplicity and solemnity of the rite, especially the beautiful prayer of consecration which is thought to have been written by Pope St. Leo (A.D. 440-461). It also restores the ancient tradition of allowing the consecration for “women in the world.”

I feel, therefore, a deep sense of gratitude to have received this consecration. It is a continuing mystery, gift and call, which strengthens me to live close to simple people who nourish my heart and to live in an ecumenical community while being deeply in communion with the Catholic Church.

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In 1982 the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) began to work on the revision of the Sacramentary, working toward a new edition of this liturgical book, hopefully to be published in 1993-1994. (What we in Canada refer to as the Sacramentary is elsewhere called the Missal or the Roman Missal; the Latin title is Missale Romanum.)

A first report on the work of revision was issued in 1988; it was reviewed in a previous issue of the Bulletin.1 Recently a second report has appeared.2 The first progress report gave the rationale for the revision and the principles being used in carrying out this work. In addition, some sample revised opening prayers were included. The second report provides some additional revised prayers, including prayers over the gifts and prayers after communion. In addition, it gives some original prayers composed by ICEL.

Of particular interest are the table of contents of the revised Sacramentary/Missal, and samples of the new Pastoral Notes which will be included. The following are quotations from the Second Progress Report.

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Contents of the Revised Roman Missal

The first decision, which was taken tentatively by the Advisory Committee and Episcopal Board in the early 1980s, was to prepare the revised edition of the Missal in two volumes. The first volume would be for use on Sundays and would also include those solemnities, feasts, and ritual Masses that may occur or be used on a Sunday. The second volume was to be for use on weekdays. In the first place this decision was reached for the pragmatic reason of the increased size of an already large book. This division of contents makes possible the incorporation (mostly in volume one) of additional pastoral materials, including pastoral notes for the Order of Mass and other sections of the Missal and the new or original prayers being composed for the Missal. Like the two-volume German Messbuch, the two-volume Missal for the English-speaking conferences of bishops will have the virtue of underlining a primary element of the liturgical reform of the Second Vatican Council, that is, the pre-eminence of

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1 See "Revision of the Sacramentary" in National Bulletin on Liturgy, vol. 21, no. 114 (September 1988) 178-181
the eucharistic assembly on Sunday, "the first holyday of all ... the foundation and core of the whole liturgical year" (*Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 106).

**This division into volumes** also allows for an arrangement of the options for use on the weekdays in Ordinary Time that encourages wider use of the full corpus of possible prayers, in accordance with the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (no. 323). As an alternative to the repetition of the previous Sunday's texts throughout the week, volume two will facilitate wider selection by including a four-week cycle of assigned texts and a general collection of texts for selection ad libitum. Inspired in part by the German *Messbuch*, the four-week cycle will help to encourage the use of a richer variety of texts throughout the weekdays of Ordinary Time. The general collection allows for even more thoughtful selection from the many possibilities. The texts for the four-week cycle and the collection of prayers will be drawn from the full corpus of texts for Sundays, votive Masses, and Masses for various needs and occasions.

**The second volume** will also include brief biographical or explanatory notes for each celebration in the sanctoral cycle. These notes will serve to situate the saint or feast in history and will offer a brief reflection on the basic pastoral significance of the saint or feast for the Church today.

There will necessarily be some repetition of content in each volume of the Missal, for example, the Order of Mass and Eucharistic Prayers. A listing of the contents of each volume follows.

**The Roman Missal, Volume I**

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The following pastoral note on the Advent Season is a sample of the kind of introductory or pastoral notes that ICEL is preparing for the revised Sacramentary.

Advent Season

In the course of the year, the Church unfolds the whole mystery of Christ from the incarnation and nativity to the Ascension, Pentecost, and the expectation of the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord. The season of Advent, at the end of the calendar year and the beginning of the Church's year, embraces both ends of this cycle.

Advent has a twofold character. It is the season to prepare for Christmas, when Christ's first coming to us is remembered, and it is the season when that remembrance directs the mind and heart to await Christ's second coming at the end of time. "Advent is thus a period for devout and joyful expectation" (Congregation of Rites, General Norms for the Liturgy Year and Calendar, 21 March 1969, no. 39).

This twofold character is reflected in the two stages of Advent, each with its own special focus expressed in the corresponding preface of the eucharistic prayer. From the first Sunday to 16 December, the liturgy expresses the eschatological expectation of Advent, the watchfulness of God's people looking forward to the time when "the salvation promised us will be ours" and "Christ our Lord will come again in his glory" (Preface of Advent I). From 17 December until Christmas Eve, the texts proper to each day recall the circumstances in which "at last he came," and prepare us more directly "to celebrate his birth . . . our hearts filled with wonder and praise" (Preface of Advent II).

In some parts of the Church where baptism was once celebrated at Epiphany, the forty days prior to it were devoted to ascetical preparation, and Advent took on several of the liturgical features of Lent. Now, however, "it is no longer considered a penitential season, but a time of joyful expectation" (Congregation of Rites, The Roman Calendar: Text and Commentary, 1969, p. 24).

In the Latin Church today, Advent is not strictly a preparation for the historical event of Christmas, nor exclusively an expectation of the parousia, but is rather an anticipation or a beginning of the celebration of the integral mystery of the incarnation, the advent and the epiphany of the Son of God in flesh and in majesty. The Christian community lives in an "interim" time between two historical events: the coming of Christ in the flesh and his coming in glory at the
end of time. The Church is called to be strong in faith “as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ” (Communion rite; see also Titus 2:13).

• The use of violet is less for the expression of penitence than to suggest a state of unfulfilled readiness and to set off the joyful white of Christmas with greater dramatic effect.

• For the same reason, music in Advent is more restrained, especially in the use of the organ and other instruments. The Gloria is omitted in Advent, not because it is a penitential season, but so that the hymn of the angels may resound with great freshness on Christmas night.

• In all three years of the lectionary cycle, the focus on each Sunday is clearly identifiable: on the first Sunday, the return of the Lord; on the second, John the Baptist’s call to conversion; on the third, the relationship of John to Jesus; on the fourth, Mary and the events immediately preceding Christ’s birth.

• The second and third eucharistic prayers are provided with special texts that may be inserted after the Sanctus during the season of Advent.

• Advent, a period of expectation and preparation, does not anticipate the feast of Christmas. This creates a certain tension between the liturgy and those cultures where the weeks before Christmas are exploited for commercial purposes or where social celebrations of the feast are anticipated in schools and places of work.

• Popular devotions should respect the nature and character of Advent and should be consistent with the themes presented in the Lectionary for Mass and the sacramental volume of the Missal. Songs, carols, and devotions which focus on the nativity itself are out of place in Advent, especially before 17 December.

• Where they are the custom, the Advent wreath and the Jesse tree, which help to sustain an expectant orientation toward Christmas, can assist the liturgical celebration and may be associated with the celebration of Mass.

• Vigils and services of light may be very effective in fostering a sense of watchfulness and prayer and in disposing the faithful to a more fruitful participation in the Masses of Advent.

This scholarly work is a valuable source book complete with concordance and indices. Each preface of the Roman Missal is analyzed giving liturgical antecedents, biblical context, patristic witness, conciliar teaching, and principal vocabulary. Also included are the principal translations of the Latin: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and German. Commissioned by the Congregation for Divine Worship, this volume will aid in the important work of studying the sources of liturgy as a means to a deeper understanding of the way in which the Church celebrates the mysteries of salvation.


An in-depth study of the relationship of charisms to the rites of initiation in the first centuries of the Church. This is a scholarly, but non-technical, book which discusses two questions. First, what do the biblical texts understand to constitute integral Christian initiation? Secondly, does the life of the early post-biblical church, in particular its celebration of Christian initiation, throw any light on the baptism in the Holy Spirit? In Part I George Montague investigates the Scriptural evidence; in Part II Kilian McDonnell researches the pertinent writings of Tertullian, Hilary of Poitiers, Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, John of Apamea, Philoxenus, Theodoret, Severus and Joseph Hazzaya.

A companion document Fanning the Flame, edited by the same authors (ISBN 0-8146-5013-9, 30p. soft. US $1.95) discusses the pastoral implications of the above major work.


A catechism for those interested in joining the Catholic Church or knowing about it. As the author notes in the introduction, it is long enough to provide a survey of the important aspects, and yet short enough to allow busy people to read it. The main asset of this book is an attempt to root the Catholic faith in the scriptures and tradition.


This is a revision of an earlier, very popular book. It includes a few of the newly canonized saints. It includes one Canadian, Marie-Rose Durocher, but omits other Canadians such as Marguerite Bourgeoys and Marguerite d’Youville. Nevertheless, it remains a useful resource for all Catholics. As in the earlier edition, each section is an up-to-date, plausible, practical and readable account of each saint’s life. The new edition also includes feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and some solemnities.


Both these short, but to the point, booklets help parents to understand parish sacramental preparation and catechetical programs which involve both parents and children. Each book contains chapters on why such programs are in place, a brief history of the sacrament, a theological reflection and a note on the celebration of the sacrament. The main purpose of the book is to involve parents with sacramental preparation at home. Excellent reading.

This is the fifth in its series on Pastoral Music in Practice. The ten articles of this volume deal with the multi-dimensional ministry of the musician, and are reprints of the best of the best articles selected from the Pastoral Music Magazine. This volume treats the question of collaborative ministry, the musician as minister, and the prayer life, training, competence and pastoral care of musicians. The articles are written by well known and respected authors.


At first glance this book looks like a popular edition of an emerging topic. However, it is a scholarly treatment of how liturgy and theology have related since the patristic period. Students of liturgy who are familiar with the topic of liturgical theology will find this a great summary on the development of the topic; thus the subtitle, A Primer. Other sections survey the major contributions of European and American authors. For many the title liturgical theology may not be familiar, since liturgy often falls under the category of sacramental theology, however, in more recent times, liturgy is recognized as in itself being a theological source.


This volume follows in the tradition of other books for Advent, Christmas, and Lent, published by The Liturgical Press. This volume does not concern itself with the resurrection from a viewpoint of historical criticism, but how the resurrection in an individual gospel fits the theological plan of the evangelist. Thus the author will guide the reader to appreciate the distinct outlook of each of the Gospels.


It has long been said that the celebration of Holy Week, in general, and the Triduum, in particular, is one celebration. This small volume will help liturgy planners and worshippers appreciate the possibilities of this statement. This book is not for the fainthearted who are interested in celebrating the holy mysteries in a limited time and with minimal symbolism. The author shares his experience of celebrating the mysteries of our faith in a full, rich and meaningful manner. Recommended reading for all who are serious about planning the liturgies of Holy Week.


Many have recognized the quality of scholarship in the Pueblo series on studies in the reformed rites of the Catholic Church. Richard Rutherford's expertise in the field of Christian funeral rites recommends this book in itself. The first section deals with the evolution of the Order, part two with the reformed Order of Christian Funerals, and part three with the present and future. A note to Canadian readers that the ritual books of each episcopal conference contain adaptations permitted by the Church. The Canadian edition of the Order of Christian Funerals contains substantial differences from American and other editions. Thus readers may be confused by reference to paragraph numbers that bear no resemblance to the Canadian edition. This, however, does not affect the scholarship and usefulness of this commentary in understanding the Order of Christian Funerals.
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