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How do culture and liturgy interact in the Canadian scene? What are the cultures of this country, how do they influence our liturgical celebrations, and how does the liturgy resist the dark side of contemporary culture? The question of multilingual celebrations will be considered as well.
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Liturgy and the Cultural Mosaic

Who are we? When we worship, we express – and need to express – who we are. And saying who we are includes our culture. But what is our culture? Should we ask, “What is Canadian culture?” or is the question, “What kind of mosaic of cultures does ‘Canadian culture’ represent?”

Many cultures: For a long time discussions regarding Canadian culture focused on the two founding European groups, French and English. We are now beginning to appreciate the rich – and varied – cultures of the Aboriginal Peoples of this land. To this has been added the cultures of many peoples who have come not only from other parts of Europe, but also from all over Asia, the Pacific region, the Caribbean and Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East.

The richness of the Canadian cultural mosaic has many implications for liturgy and liturgists, as well as for the church in general. How are these many cultures to be expressed liturgically? How are they to be expressed in parishes comprised of members of twenty or thirty or forty different cultural groups? How is liturgical inculturation to be fostered among the Native Peoples of Canada? How is all this to be done without harming the basic unity of the church?

Searching: No one has all the answers to such questions. We all need to search together to explore what inculturation means for the liturgy, and how we are to go about it.

Theory: This issue builds on the previous discussions of liturgy and culture that were included in Bulletin 95 (1984) and Bulletin 105 (1986). Dr. James A. Schmeiser presents a broad survey of the subject of inculturation, presenting the teaching of recent councils and popes, explaining basic theological concepts that are involved, and then exploring implications for our Native Peoples, for women and for youth.

And practice: This issue of the Bulletin also includes a consideration of the use of more than one language in a single liturgical celebration. As one example of liturgical inculturation, a liturgy that was to have been celebrated with Native Peoples during the 1984 papal visit is also included.
Inculturation: Conciliar and Papal Teaching

James A. Schmeiser

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Inculturation is one of those words and concepts that continues to surface in numerous studies and addresses. Although the groundwork for this concept has been solidified for some time, it is becoming more and more evident that we have yet to follow through in the development of its implications. The Canadian church, in the words of Bishop Raymond Lahey, president of the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy, has committed itself to the task of inculturation:

The Episcopal Commission for Liturgy on the recommendation of the National Council, concluded that a long-term study of liturgical inculturation, including its implications for our native peoples, was important for our own country.¹

My focus will be on liturgical inculturation; however, before I am able to move into this area I will develop the concept of inculturation more generally. As well, I wish to indicate to the reader the introductory material that is present in Bulletin 95 (1984), Culture and Liturgy I, and the excellent development in Bulletin 105 (1986), Culture and Liturgy 11.² I will further develop the theological and historical substrata of this issue and then move on to some further considerations and add new ones which have come to the fore in the last few years.

Definitions

A good working definition of inculturation is:

... the integration of the Christian experience of the local church into the culture of its people, in such a way that this experience not only expresses itself in elements of this culture, but becomes a force that animates,

² Other brief references can be found in the Bulletin. As well, see reference 1 and Anscar J. Chupungoo, Liturgical Inculturation (Collegeville: Liturgical Press 1992).
orientates and innovates this culture so as to create a new unity and communion, not only in the culture in question but also as an enrichment of the Church universal.³

This definition implies an understanding of the meaning of culture. "Culture refers to the way of life of a people, to the ideas and images that orientate its thoughts and behaviour."⁴ Culture includes a view of life, common values and meaning, religion, symbols, modes of behaviour, religious practices and some degree of tradition. Culture touches and expresses the very soul of a people.

Many authors write of the stages or levels or degrees of inculturation.⁵ One of the clearest and most succinct is the writing of Frank Henderson in Bulletin 105, applying the concept to native cultures:

The first level is often called adaptation and it involves bringing aspects of native culture into a basically non-native liturgical rite . . .

A second dimension consists of expressing basic Christian symbols and liturgical rites in native media...for example, how the fundamental meaning and significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ – the paschal mystery – might be expressed in native stories, songs, symbols, and rituals.

. . . the third dimension of liturgical inculturation is viewing native religious rituals through Christian eyes.⁶

The goal of inculturation is the incarnation of the good news in a particular cultural context:

. . . it is a process by which people of a particular culture become able to live, express, celebrate, formulate, and communicate their Christian faith and their experience of the paschal mystery in terms (linguistic, symbolic, social) that make more sense and better convey life and truth in their social and cultural environment.⁷

The implications of the above understanding are quite extensive and merit serious reflection. However, first let us briefly consider some of the major magisterial statements that are essential aspects of this process.⁸

⁷ Joseph G. Healey, loc. cit., 412
⁸ In addition to the book by Kilmartin, loc. cit. the book by Aylward Shorter loc. cit., is an excellent reference.
Council of Trent

The Council of Trent was held during the time of major missionary movements in the sixteenth century. This Council was held in response to serious abuses and challenges and, in reaction, imposed a rigid liturgical and theological uniformity. Thus, at the time when the church's missionaries were encountering incredibly diverse peoples, customs, and cultures, the church's European focus was on uniformity and conformity. This was not a time of inculturation, especially when one considers that the missionaries accompanied dominant, conquering European invaders (discoverers) who tended to perceive the indigenous peoples as savages and pagans. This is stated in a succinct manner by Karl Rahner:

...that despite the implied contradiction to its essence, the actual concrete activity of the Church in its relation to the world outside of Europe was in fact (if you will pardon the expression) the activity of an export firm which exported a European religion as a commodity it did not really want to change but sent throughout the world together with the rest of the culture and civilization it considered superior.9

Pope Benedict XV

We begin to see significant cracks developing in this attitude of uniformity during the papacy of Benedict XV in his Apostolic Letter Maximum Illud, dated November 30, 1919, in which he addresses his concern about the Catholic missionary effort:

Some of the mission accounts published recently make very painful reading for us, as we find there an anxiety not so much to extend the Kingdom of God as to increase the power of the missionary's own country. We are surprised that it does not occur to the writers to what extent the mind of the heathen is in danger of being thus repelled from religion. Not in this way does the Catholic missionary act who is worthy of the name; but, bearing perpetually in mind that he is the ambassador not of his own country but of Christ, he should so comport himself that everyone can recognize in him a minister of a religion which embraces all men who adore God in spirit and truth, is a stranger to no nation, and where there is neither Gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free. But Christ is all and in all.10

10 Aylward Shorter, loc. cit., 180
Pope John XXIII’s encyclical, *Princeps Pastorum*, 1959, presents a significant theoretical advance in the area of multiculturalism:

Wherever artistic and philosophical values exist which are capable of enriching the culture of the human race, the Church fosters and supports these labors of the spirit. On the other hand, the Church, as you know, does not identify itself with any one culture, not even with European and Western civilization, although the history of the Church is closely interwoven with it; for the mission entrusted to the Church pertains chiefly to other matters, that is, to matters which are concerned with religion and the eternal salvation of men. The church, however, which is so full of youthful vigour and is constantly renewed by the breath of the Holy Spirit, is willing, at all times, to recognize, welcome, and even assimilate anything that redounds to the honor of the human mind and heart, whether or not it originates in parts of the world washed by the Mediterranean Sea, which, from the beginning of time, had been destined by God’s Providence to be the cradle of the Church.11

The nuances of a multicultural church are present. It will not take too long for these nuances to be clearly specified in the sessions of Vatican II. In addition to this significant contribution, Pope John XXIII goes further in his reflection on the relationship of faith and culture in his opening address to the Council, October 11, 1962, indicating that dogmas or faith statements are culturally conditioned expressions of revelation:

Staring from a renewed, serene and calm acceptance of the whole teaching of the Church in all its scope and detail as it is found in Trent and Vatican II, Christians and Catholics of apostolic spirit all the world over expect a leap forwards in doctrinal insight and the education of consciences in ever greater fidelity to authentic teaching. But this authentic doctrine has to be studied and expounded in the light of research methods and the language of modern thought. For the substance of the ancient deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another.12

**Vatican II**

The documents of Vatican II are crucial in our understanding of the relationship of faith and culture. Many authors point out the significance of the timing of the various discussions and the issuance of documents. It is quite apparent that the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy would be different if it were

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informed by the scholarship and discussion that were part of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. However, briefly, I will present the pertinent texts in chronological order.

*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, December 4, 1963:

Provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite is preserved, provision should be made, when revising the liturgical books, for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions and peoples, especially in mission countries. This should be borne in mind when drawing up the rites and determining rubrics.

*Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, November 12, 1964. This is perhaps the most significant document.

Rather she [i.e., the church or People of God] fosters and takes to herself, insofar as they are good, the abilities, the resources and customs of people.

In virtue of this catholicity each part contributes its own gifts to other parts and to the whole Church, so that the whole and each of the parts are strengthened by the common sharing of all things and by the common effort to attain to fullness in unity.

Holding a rightful place in the communion of the Church there are also particular Churches that retain their own traditions, without prejudice to the Chair of Peter which presides over the whole assembly of charity, and protects their legitimate variety while at the same time taking care that these differences do not hinder unity, but rather contribute to it.

*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches, November 12, 1976:

Between those churches there is such a wonderful bond of union that this variety [i.e., the particular Churches or Rites] in the universal Church, so far from diminishing its unity, rather serves to emphasize it. For the Catholic Church wishes the traditions of each particular church or rite to remain whole and entire, and it likewise wishes to adapt its own way of life to the needs of different times and places.

*Ad Gentes Divinitus*, the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, December 7, 1965. Here the imagery of the incarnation is used:

If the Church is to be in a position to offer all men the mystery of salvation and the life brought by God, then it must implant itself among these groups...
in the same way that Christ by his incarnation committed himself to the par­
ticular social and cultural circumstances of the men among when he lived.\textsuperscript{19}

They [i.e., Christians] should be familiar with their national and religious
traditions and uncover with gladness and respect these seeds of the
word which lie hidden among them.\textsuperscript{20}

So too indeed, just as happened in the economy of the incarnation, the
young churches, which are rooted in Christ and built on the foundations of
the apostles, take over all the riches of the nations which have been given
to Christ as an inheritance (cf. Psalm 2:8). They borrow from the customs,
traditions, wisdom, teaching, arts and sciences of their people everything
which could be used to praise the glory of the Creator, manifest the grace
of the Saviour, or contribute to the right ordering of Christian life.

To achieve this, it is necessary that in each of the great socio-cultural
regions, as they are called, theological investigation should be encour­
gaged and the facts and words revealed by God, contained in Sacred
Scripture, and explained by the Fathers and Magisterium of the Church,
submitted to a new examination in the light of the tradition of the univer­
sal Church. In this way it will be more clearly understood by which means
the faith can be explained in terms of the philosophy and wisdom of the
people, and how their customs, concept of life and social structures can
be reconciled with the standard proposed by divine revelation. Thus a
way will be opened for a more profound adaptation in the whole sphere
of Christian life. This manner of acting will avoid every appearance of
syncretism and false exclusiveness; the Christian life will be adapted to
the mentality and character of each culture, and local traditions together
with the special qualities of each national family, illumined by the light of
the Gospel, will be taken up into a Catholic unity. So new particular
Churches, each with its own traditions, have their place in the community
of the Church, the primacy of Peter which presides over this universal
assembly of charity all the while remaining intact.\textsuperscript{21}

\textit{Gaudium et Spes, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern
World}, December 7, 1965. Here it is indicated that the Church embraces all
cultures.

By its nature and mission the Church is universal in that it is not commit­
ted to any one culture . . . \textsuperscript{22}

The Church learned early in its history to express the Christian message
in the concepts and languages of different peoples . . . \textsuperscript{23}

The Church is faithful to its tradition and is at the same time conscious of
its universal mission; it can then enter into communion with different
forms of culture, thereby enriching both itself and the cultures them­selves.\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., no. 10, pp. 824-825.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., no. 11, p. 825.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., no. 22, pp. 839-840.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., no. 42, p. 942.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., no. 44, p. 946.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., no. 58, p. 963.
It [i.e., the Church] takes the spiritual qualities and endowments of every age and nation, and with supernatural riches it causes them to blossom, as it were, from within; it fortifies, completes, and restores them in Christ.\footnote{Ibid., no. 58, p. 93.}

In terms of inculturation, the weakest of all these documents is the pastoral Constitution on the Liturgy. However, the inclusive development of the understanding of the Church includes essential elements of inculturation, even though some of the ideas and language are not clearly developed.

\begin{center}
Pope Paul VI
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Pope Paul VI continues the theoretical development of inculturation. In 1964, in an address in St. Anne's Church, Jerusalem, he speaks of the history of the Eastern Churches:

'It was in Palestine, first of all, that the apostles established faith in Jesus Christ and founded churches. Then they set out across the whole world and announced throughout the world the same doctrine and the same faith.' (Tertullian) Each nation received the good seed of their preaching according to their own mentality and their own culture. Each local church grew with its own personality, its own customs and its own personal way of celebrating the mysteries, without this harming the unity of faith and the communion of them all in charity and respect for the order established by Christ. That is the origin of our diversity in unity and of our catholicity, always an essential property of the Church of Christ, and of which the Holy Spirit has given us a new experience in our time and in the Council.\footnote{Aylward Shorter, loc. cit., p. 140.}

In 1969, in his visit to Uganda, cultural pluralism and the principle of reciprocity is considered:

The expression, that is, the language and mode of manifesting this one faith, may be manifold. Hence, it may be original, suited to the tongue, the style, the character, the genius, and the culture, of the one who professes this one faith. From this point of view, a certain pluralism is not only legitimate, but desirable. An adaptation of the Christian life in the fields of pastoral, ritual, didactic and spiritual activities is not only possible, it is even favoured by the Church. The liturgical renewal is a living example of this. And in this sense you may, and you must, have an African Christianity.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 209-210.}

Indeed, you possess human values and characteristic forms of culture which can rise up to perfection such as to find in Christianity and for Christianity, a true superior fullness, and prove to be capable of a richness of expression all its own, and genuinely African.\footnote{Ibid., p. 210.}
The Synod on Evangelization in 1974 and the publication of the Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, in 1975, are considered to be the clearest expressions of a multicultural church:

We can put all this in other words and say that we must evangelize (not from outside, as though it were a matter of adding an ornament or a coat of paint, but from within, at the core and root of life), or imbue with the Gospel, the cultures and culture of man, in the very broad and rich sense these terms have in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.

The Gospel, and therefore evangelization as well, cannot be identified with any particular culture but it is independent of all cultures. On the other hand, the reign of God which the Gospel proclaims takes concrete form in the lives of men who are profoundly shaped by their particular culture. It is also a fact that elements of man's culture and cultures must be used in building the kingdom of God. Therefore, although the Gospel and evangelization do not properly belong to any culture, neither are they incompatible with any. On the contrary, they can enter into all of them without being subservient to any.

The separation between the Gospel and culture is undoubtedly a sad fact of our age, as it has been of others. We must therefore be zealous and make every effort to evangelize man's culture or, more accurately his cultures. These must achieve rebirth through encounter with the Good News. This encounter will not take place, however, unless the Good News is preached.²⁹

He then goes on to elaborate on the relationship between the universal and the local Churches:

Yet, this universal Church is, in fact, embodied in the local churches. These in turn comprise one or other concrete sector of mankind. They speak each their own language. They possess, and are limited by, a certain cultural heritage, a way of viewing the world, a human substance. The sensibility of contemporary man requires an openness to the riches of the local Churches.

We must be on guard, however, against thinking of the universal Church as a sum total or a kind of more or less irregular federation of local Churches which are essentially different each from the other. Rather, according to the Lord's will the same Church that is universal in vocation and mission acquires a varying outward appearance when she sinks roots in varying cultural, social and human terrains. Consequently, any local church which deliberately cuts itself off from the universal church loses its place in God's plan and much of its ecclesial character. On the other hand, the church spread throughout the world would become an abstraction if she did not derive embodiment and life from the local Churches. Only if we keep these two aspects of the Church always before us will we be able to comprehend the rich relationship that exists between the universal Church and the local Churches.³⁰

³⁰ Ibid., no. 62, p. 35.
The more solid the bonds uniting the local Church to the universal Church – the more capable the local Church becomes of enriching the treasury of the faith with a legitimate variety of expressions, whether in the profession of the one faith or in the forms of prayer and worship or in Christian lifestyles or the manifestations of the spiritual responses proper to the people among whom the local Church exists. The more authentic too, will the local Church be as preacher of the Gospel, for it will be able to draw from the universal patrimony what is of profit to its own people, and it will also be able to turn the life and experience of its own people to the advantage of all in the universal Church.31

The implication of the above quote is that the local church, in relation to the universal church, has intrinsic value and is not to be usurped by any other church, not even the particular church of Rome.

Pope John Paul II

The idea of inculturation has been affirmed and developed in the writings and addresses of Pope John Paul II. Implementation, however, may take some time.

In his Apostolic Exhortation, Catechesi Tradendae, October 1979, John Paul II, pulling together the material from the synod of Bishops, 1977, writes:

We can say that the aim of catechesis, as of evangelization in general, is to bring the power of the gospel to bear on the very heart of culture and cultures. To this end, catechesis must know these cultures and their essential components; it must grasp their more significant expressions; it must respect their values and riches.

By so doing, it will lead the peoples of the various cultures to acknowledge the hidden mystery and help them to derive from their own vital tradition expressions of life, liturgical celebration and thought that will be Christian.32

True catechesis certainly knows that it must seek embodiment in the various cultures of human environments.33

In 1980, speaking to the bishops in Kenya, John Paul II relates inculturation to the incarnation:

There is no question of adulterating the Word of God, or of emptying the cross of its power, but rather of bringing Christ into the very centre of African life and of lifting up all African life to Christ. Thus not only is Christianity relevant to Africa, but Christ, in the members of his Body, is himself African.34

31 Ibid., no. 64, pp. 36-37.
33 Ibid., no. 53, p. 70.
34 L'Osservatore Romano, no. 22 (635, June 2, 1980) 3-4. (All references to L'Osservatore Romano are to the English edition.)
In an address to participants of the First National Congress of the Ecclesial Movement of Cultural Commitment (January 16, 1982), John Paul II states:

The synthesis between culture and faith is not just a demand of culture but also of faith... A faith that does not become culture is a faith not fully accepted, not entirely thought out, not faithfully lived.35

In 1983, addressing the bishops from Zaire making their ad limina visit to the Holy See, he states:

Though legitimately proud of your specifically African character, you still have the duty of exchange with the other Christian communities regarding your expressions and your modes of life. In so doing, you are the guarantors of the unity of the Church, and you contribute to a reciprocal enrichment.36

When he visited Canada in 1984, the pope reaffirmed the value of the native culture, and even acknowledged past errors:

Your encounter with the Gospel has not only enriched you, it has enriched the Church. We are well aware that this has not taken place without its difficulties and, occasionally, its blunders. However, and you are experiencing this today, the Gospel does not destroy what is best in you. On the contrary, it enriches as it were from within the spiritual qualities and gifts that are distinctive of your cultures (see Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, no. 58). In addition, your Amerindian and Inuit traditions permit the development of new ways of expressing the message of salvation and they help us to understand better to what point Jesus is the Saviour and how universal his salvation is.37

He committed the Church to further action, quoting the words of Paul VI:

And through her action, the Church desires to assist all people “to bring forth from their own living traditions original expressions of Christian life, celebrations and thought.”38

In 1985, in his visit to Cameroun, the pope speaks specifically of inculturation:

Therefore an unremitting effort of inculturation must be pursued in order that the faith may not remain superficial.39

In the Extraordinary Synod, 1985, it is stated very clearly that inculturation is much more than adaptation:

Since the Church is a communion, which joins diversity and unity, being present throughout the world, it takes up whatever it finds positive in all cultures. Inculturation, however, is different from a mere external adaptation, as it signifies an internal transformation of authentic cultural values through integration into Christianity in various human cultures.40

38 L’Osservatore Romano, no. 41 (855, October 8, 1984) 7.
39 L’Osservatore Romano, no. 36 (902, September 9, 1985) 3.
40 The Tablet, vol. 239, no. 7588 (December 14, 1985) 1328, no. D(4).
In the body of material from Pope John Paul II it is easy to find warnings and
cautions and even scepticism about the possible contributions of non-Christian
cultures. However, the quotes included in this paper indicate that the issue is
significant and that there is ongoing development. This is similar to much
progress in the Church, where new ideas are in conflict with past attitudes and
practices.

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Inculturation: Theological Reflections

James A. Schmeiser

It is important to develop, at least briefly, some of the theological reflections that are giving the impulse to the movement toward inculturation, and which also offer a critique of the resistance to embody theory in practice.

Theology of Creation

As Vatican II reminds us in The Church in the Modern World, all humans are created in the image of God.\(^{41}\) As such, since "God our Father is the beginning and the end of all things we are all created to be brothers."\(^{42}\) The understanding that all creation is of God and participates in his goodness is a basic tenet of our faith. Even though there is an ambivalence in the manifestation of God's goodness in all of creation, including humans, we must remember that creation is the basis of God's ongoing and universal revelation. All cultures, including their religions, contain treasures of this revelation, treasures that we must seek out, listen to and celebrate if we are able to truly praise the mystery of our Creator God.\(^{43}\)

Theology of the Incarnation and Paschal Mystery

The development of this concept is quite vast. A clear presentation of this is given by Kilmartin:

The prime analysis of inculturation is the incarnation, life, death and glorification of Jesus Christ. The fact that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ was given in and through a specific culture means that it can and must be mediated through the members of Christ's Church in each epoch of history and in each particular culture.\(^{44}\)

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\(^{41}\) Vatican II – The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, no. 12, p. 913.

\(^{42}\) Ibid., no. 92, p. 1000.

\(^{43}\) For an excellent development, see D.S. Amalorpavadass, loc. cit., pp. 46-47; also see Ad Gentes Divinitus, in Vatican II – The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents, no. 11 p. 825.

\(^{44}\) Edward Kilmartin, loc. cit., p. 62.

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More and more focus is given to the Word of God who was made flesh and lived among us, the Word through whom all things were created and who has been present in the history of creation.45 After the resurrection, Jesus was no longer bound to the physical limitations of his earthly life. Through the Spirit, Jesus is present to all of humanity, to every culture and language and nation. This is the very depth of inculturation for Christians. We, the Body of Christ, consist of many parts, all essential to the whole. As well, it is not only Christians who are expressions of the Resurrected Lord. In his incarnation and resurrection, Jesus assumed all of creation in its relationship with the Father. The covenant of creation is healed and enhanced in the covenant of the Paschal Mystery. The God of all creation is the God to whom Jesus pointed. This God is present in all of creation. The reality of the person of Jesus embodied this presence in such an intense form that we are invited to approach, not only all of humanity, but all of creation, with a sense of the sacred. Attitudes of cultural superiority or domination should be examined carefully.

The Universal Nature of the Church

Implicitly, this has already been stated. However, I would now like to spell out some of the nuances of this ecclesiology.

As stated in the previous considerations of the incarnation, the mystery of the Risen Christ is embodied in the actual communion of believers, each of which has its own culture. Not only do individuals have their own special gifts, individual churches have their own special gifts. No one can say that the other is not needed.

The church cannot be truly catholic or universal until it is truly incarnated in a people and inculturated according to various local cultures.46

This is stated very clearly in the address given by D.S. Amalorpavadass at the meeting of Societas Liturgica in York, England in 1990:

The universal Church is not a mere federation of all churches but a communion of local/particular/individual churches. The local church, far from being a mere viable unit of administration contains the whole mystery of the church. In each local church the full and true Church of Christ is concretely present and dynamically operative. It is the embodiment of the Spirit of the Risen Christ in a people, in a particular place and time, within the interaction of a concrete society, cultures and religions, in a specific context. The Church cannot be truly catholic or universal until it is truly incarnated in a people and inculturated according to various local cultures. The responsibility of realising inculturation in all aspects of its life and in all areas of society and evolving a theology of inculturation belongs to the local church whose task is preaching the gospel. If so, one should recognize and be aware of the quality of the churches, their autonomy and freedom, their viability and competence, their resource-

45 See D.S. Amalorpavadass, loc. cit., pp. 48-50; also see Aylward Shorter, loc. cit., pp. 76-79.
fulness and equipment. In that regard responsibility and initiative, originality and creativity on the part of each church are necessary to meet relevantly the needs of society, to fulfill her mission, and thus to promote a full ecclesial life.\footnote{D.S. Amalorpavadass, loc. cit., p. 51, no. 34.}

All of this is consistent with the documentation considered in the section on Vatican II.\footnote{See footnotes 13-25.} It is also consistent with an address of John Paul II to the College of Cardinals in 1984:

The universal church is presented as a communion of churches, and indirectly as a communion of nations, languages, cultures. Each of these bring its own 'gifts' to the whole, just as do single human generations and epochs, particular scientific and social gains, and the stages of civilization which are gradually attained.\footnote{See Joseph Gremillion, loc. cit., p. 215.}

The latter [i.e., liturgical prayer] should look to the culture in which it is rooted for the signs, gestures and words that serve for adoration, worship and celebration. They concern theological reflection, which ought to draw on the categories of thought typical of each culture. Finally, they concern the ecclesial community itself. It has its roots in the eucharist, but depends on its concrete development on historical-temporal conditions that derive from being rooted in the environment of a certain country or a certain part of the world.\footnote{Ibid., p. 215.}

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Inculturation: Specific Cultures and Sub-cultures

James A. Schmeiser

As mentioned in the introduction, two issues of the National Bulletin on Liturgy do an excellent job considering the relationship of culture and liturgy. Bulletin 95, in addition to a good bibliography, gives explicit examples of the initial stages of liturgical inculturation in various parts of the world. Bulletin 105 considers the Canadian church and liturgical inculturation, as well as including an updated bibliography. I will add some reflections to what has already been stated and raise some new issues.

Native Peoples

I would refer the reader to the excellent work of J. Frank Henderson in Bulletin 105. As Dr. Henderson states, most of the examples of liturgical inculturation are at the first level, that is, of adaptation. This involves bringing aspects of indigenous culture into a mainly Roman rite. There seems to be agreement that "...we still have a long way to go before we can overcome the effects of our ancestors' treatment - and our own - of the Indians and Inuit." This same judgment was stated by Archbishop Adam Exner: "The Church hasn't done a good job. It's done a lousy job."

Bishop Blaise Morand, who admits that before he became bishop he never paid much attention to natives and Metis, states:

I want first of all to understand their values - and they have fantastic ones if we take the time to listen and hear them ... we cannot talk to them about the white God ... We cannot approach them with the traditional catechism. I see a strong tradition in their own way of worshipping God. I just find that we've made them come our way too much.

Dr Schmeiser’s three articles are closely related, and footnotes are therefore numbered consecutively throughout.

52 Ibid., p. 220.
53 Archbishop Adam Exner, "Cultural diversity in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, an address given at a gathering of Nathanael," January 19, 1992, p. 6. A transcript of this talk was kindly provided by Fr. Claude Blanchette.
All of Canada is re-examining its historical attitudes and actions toward the aboriginal peoples of this country. The church, as well, has to take responsibility for its part in devaluing and, in part, in destroying native cultures. Inculturation at any significant level has not taken place. The aim was to assimilate the native peoples, dispossessing them of their culture, their language, their power of self-determination, and in significant numbers, of their children. The examples of adaptation given by Dr. Henderson are quite delightful. However, we must remember that they are only indications of the first stage.

The introductory ceremonies prepared for the visit of the pope with the native people at Fort Simpson in the Northwest Territories, September 18, 1984, begin to go beyond the stage of adaptation and express blessing in the context of native symbols.55 These are presented later in this issue. A sensitivity to nature, to the rhythm of nature and life, to creation is apparent in the blessings. It is a beginning. This reverence for creation is one of the significant lessons that the caucasian culture could learn from the native culture. Also, it would be of value for us to consider the native attitude toward the extended family, community, and the respect and love for older generations.56 What will be discovered as the Word of God takes root in native culture and native liturgies remains to be experienced.

A Multicultural Nation

Canada is a country with an extraordinary mixture of cultures. In addition to the many native cultures, the predominant English and French cultures, there exist large numbers of other ethnic groups. Archbishop Exner indicated in 1991 that there are twenty-one major languages used in the churches of Winnipeg.57 With the languages come cultures, all in varying degrees of proximity to each other. Gregory Baum points out that during his visit to Canada the pope said very little of Anglo-American culture even though he admired the various cultural traditions. Some of the gifts of this culture such as division of power, due process, and freedom of expression may not seem as valuable to the church in Rome as it is to the Church in Canada.58

The questions raised in Bulletin 105 as to how the Roman liturgy can be adapted to become a Canadian liturgy are basic and important.59 Possibly, as we become conscious of the significance of inculturation, we will continue to move in the direction of adaptation and on to inculturation.

55 National Bulletin on Liturgy, vol. 19, no. 105 (1986) 249-252. Also see the article by Eileen Saunders, "Native Rites Used in the Liturgy," in Prairie Messenger, vol. 61 (July 31, 1983) 1. At the annual pilgrimage at St. Laurent, Saskatchewan, an Ojibway priest, Fr. John Hascall, celebrated the Eucharist seated on a bearskin rug, using sweetgrass, a water purification ceremony, a round dance and drums, and testimony from the elders. Also, in support of this approach, please see, "Celebrating the Good News of Jesus Christ in Native Dress," by Eileen Saunders, in Prairie Messenger, vol. 61 (October 2, 1983) 10-11.


57 Adam Exner, loc. cit., p. 46.


Women

In the previous Bulletins, as well as in most literature dealing with inculturation, very little mention is made of women. This is surprising when one considers the great deal of literature focusing on the relationship of women and theology. It may be assumed that women and men somehow fit together in some kind of homogeneous mix. Yet, when we examine the liturgical forms used today, as well as their history, we can easily see that not only are they a basic western European model, they also are very masculine.

Some examples may help us to realize the one-sided focus of our liturgical forms. There are numerous historical examples of the impact of the negative understanding of menstruation for the status of women in worship. Leadership is largely reserved to men. The stories chosen for the lectionary are mainly androcentric.

The principles of inculturation would indicate that people are to be agents of their cultural/liturgical expressions, not passive consumers. Attention must be given to one's experience, stories, concerns and significance. Models such as Sarah, Hagar, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, Miriam, Deborah, Ruth, Esther, Susanna, Judith, Mary, Mary Magdalene are important and yet largely absent in the liturgy. The image of God, our Mother, is present in scripture, yet absent in our liturgy. More and more, we are becoming aware that the understanding of sin has shifted. Many of the fathers of the church made statements about women that were horrendous and scandalous. The sins that we are to confess may need to change so that men become more aware of sexism, misogyny and exclusive androcentricity, and so that women become more aware of their part in the history of the church.

Theresa Berger raises the question whether the women's movement can be called as "culture" or a "subculture." However this is answered, we will recognize the emergence of new realities: non-sexist language, a different perspective of history, unique forms of art and literature, and a specific form of intellectual discipline. Any sensitivity to inculturation will have to take these issues to heart.

On the Canadian scene, I would like to point out one author, Ellen Leonard, who addressed the issue of "Experience as a Source of Theology" at a meeting of the Canadian Theological Society. Dr. Leonard gives an excellent argument that experience is a legitimate source for theological reflection. However, in history, there has been a bias in the evaluation of experience. She quotes an Asian theologian who states: "... western theology is culture-bound, church-centered, male-dominated, age-dominated, procapitalist, anticommu­nist, nonrevolutionary, and overly theoretical." The same reflection may be

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61 Ibid., p. 60.
made of our liturgy. Is our liturgy gender-free? Or, is the male experience and expression and celebration of God normative for all of humanity? Most of us would be embarrassed to affirm this and yet that may be the actual praxis of the church.

In the development of her paper, Professor Leonard examines the significance of being a Canadian and a woman in her theologizing. She takes into account that we are a pioneering people, a country that plays a significant role in the world community, and a pluralistic society. This has given us a sense of survival, a closeness to nature and to our physical reality, a sense of interdependence and mutuality, an awareness of the importance of nurturing or caring rather than dominating, an acceptance of the challenge to take responsibility, not only for ourselves but for the world community, the importance of refusing to be a victim. In all of these areas, we must recognize the diversity of women's experience.

She then develops how these considerations have caused her to re-examine certain areas of theology. Her way of imaging God, of thinking and talking about God has shifted, and certainly goes beyond the "white male God." The shift in the understanding of God causes a shift in the understanding of ourselves, who are made in the image of God. As indicated earlier, the understanding of sin shifts:

The experience of sin is different for those who are powerless than it is for those with power. The traditional emphasis on sin as pride and rebellion against God does not fit the experience of those whose self has been devalued by the dominant culture and who consequently lack a sense of self. Sin for such persons is the passive acceptance of their situation while salvation involves transformation from being victims to becoming responsible subjects.54

Jesus is understood as the one who empowers, not the one who oppresses women. This logically leads to an examination of ecclesiology. The church is called to empower, not dominate persons and must reflect its universality of experience. The application of all these reflections to liturgy is an important and momentous task.

Youth

Every study shows that there are difficulties in attracting our youth to the liturgy. Fortunately, there are exceptions, but they do tend to be exceptions. Some research has been done on the relationship between young people and the liturgy. I will at least posit some of the observations and questions around the issue.65

54 Ellen Leonard, loc. cit., p. 158.
Young people often experience the liturgy as being separate from their lives, their questions, and their experience. The experience of community is often tenuous, leading to a sense of anonymity rather than encounter. For some this is desirable but it is questionable whether this is a positive development in the understanding of the liturgy. As in all other situations, the degree to which youth can be agents of liturgical experience, can speak of their experiences and share their symbols, tends to be quite limited. Even in the best of worlds it is not easy to know how the process of inculturation can take place because of the tremendous diversity of young people and the rapid change which is a part of the youth culture. An appreciation of history and tradition do not tend to be highly developed in the world of youth. Once we have a clearer sense of inculturation in other areas, we may gain more insight into possible approaches involving youth.

Conclusion

Bishop Wilton Gregory, one of the United States' African American bishops, states very succinctly that inculturation is the "single most significant liturgical concern facing the contemporary church."\(^{66}\) Overall we can see that there has been a tremendous advance in the theory of inculturation. However, the practice of inculturation, especially in the liturgy, has been very slow. Canon law embodies western cultural presuppositions.\(^{67}\) The papal magisterium reflects a certain culture which certainly is not a universal culture, for none exists. The experience of collegiality seems to be more and more one-sided so that national hierarchies are not able to develop programmes that would reflect their unique gifts to the universal church. Ordained leadership, which is always male, and mostly white middle class, does not lend itself to the inculturation of natives and women.

When one examines this issue carefully, there seems to be a fear of true universality which recognizes the reality of the unity of unique communities. We may have to decide whether this is a necessary step in becoming who we are called to be.

The process of inculturation must involve, from the bottom up, those who are expressing their faith in their cultural expression. As Archbishop Exner states, "the leadership in the church can encourage inculturation but the actual process of inculturation has to come from the people who have the experience in the culture".\(^{68}\) Also, the criteria by which we would judge inculturation would need to be formulated by those who live in the culture.\(^{69}\) "Every church, if recognized as a local church, should be treated as equal and free, and fully responsible for its mission, which is evangelization and inculturation, and

\(^{67}\) Aylward Shorter, loc. cit., p. 252. (Also see pp. 69-70.)
\(^{68}\) Adam Exner, loc. cit., p. 11.
which includes initiatives, programmes and evaluations." Obviously within this discussion, the "oneness" which is the mark of the church must be kept in healthy tension with the "different," but this "oneness" cannot remain understood as uniformity.

It is becoming more and more necessary for our bishops to have a clearer sense of collegiality. In addition, inculturation will never take place unless our local bishops have an awareness of their responsibility to be pastors of their people who are unique and different. Inculturation requires that particular churches enjoy a relative autonomy, one which does not tear apart the bond of faith and communion with the church universal.

At this point we can continue to study and nurture cultural awareness in our country. Positive and negative features must be critiqued. The laity must be actively involved in this effort or it will be too far removed from the actual life of the community. Inculturation touches every aspect of the church's life and activity. This is not only an issue for mission countries, it is an issue for all the churches of the world. The gospel is to be incarnated into every culture and as these cultures change, the incarnation must also change. We are the church, the Body of Christ, and in our union and uniqueness, the mystery of the Risen Lord is manifested and realized.

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In order to respect the bicultural or multicultural makeup of their communities, many parishes wonder about the use of more than one language in a single liturgical celebration. Indeed, many experiments have been or are being conducted with respect to bilingual or multilingual liturgies. But should this be done at all? When might it be done? How might it be done in ways that are both pastorally effective and respectful of liturgical principles?

These are not new questions. For example, in 1980 the National Council for Liturgy and National Liturgical Office sent a series of questions on bilingualism and biculturalism to diocesan liturgical commissions in order to stimulate discussion of these issues at the local level. This document began by stating certain basic principles.

- The liturgical celebration is the action of the entire assembly. This cannot fully be the case if some are excluded on the basis of language.
- Each individual member of the assembly normally has the right to participate fully in the celebration.
- Hospitality and mutual charity may lead to the use of more than one language. This is a sign of welcome to everyone and promotes unity within the worshipping assembly.
- At the same time, the use of two or more languages should not lead to disunity or disregard for other liturgical principles.
- Any second language has to be used with sensitivity and without antagonizing other groups. It should not be considered mere tokenism.
- Any liturgical use of a second language should be just one aspect of the total ministry of the church to the group concerned.
- At the level of liturgical practice, a wide range of possibilities regarding bilingualism and multiculturalism can be foreseen.

Among the questions asked of diocesan liturgical commissions were the following specifically “on bilingual or multilingual celebrations.”

1. What response usually is made to occasions when it would be possible, appropriate or pastorally advantageous to use two or more languages in a liturgical celebration?
   - use the language of the majority group only?
   - have two (or more) celebrations, one for each language group?

2. In bilingual celebrations, are any of the following problems encountered?
   - boring repetition of texts?
   - over-verbalization (due to lingualism, over and above the usual problem)?
   - lack of respect for integrity of texts (e.g., half a prayer . . . )?
• impromptu and/or unrehearsed gaffes in presidential interventions?
• incomprehensible or semi-incomprehensible homilies?
• overdependence on participation aids, leading to “wooden” celebrations?
• other problems?

3. Is Latin used in some parts of these bilingual celebrations? Is this desirable?

4. Are the acclamations which transcend language (Amen, Alleluia, etc.) and non-verbal elements (dance, music, etc.) capitalized upon in bilingual celebrations?

5. Are any texts said or sung simultaneously in both (several) languages at times (e.g., the Lord’s Prayer)? Is this desirable?

6. Do participation aids and/or their availability influence the use of one or the other language in bilingual settings? If so, how can this be changed?

7. How much do the linguistic skills of liturgical ministers affect the quality of bilingual celebrations: presiding priests, readers, ushers, musicians, cantors, others?

8. Are there situations where the use of a minority language is perceived to be mere tokenism? If so, what can be done about this?

9. In diocesan celebrations, bilingual parishes, or parishes with substantial minority groups, is music of the second language used: never? occasionally? regularly?

Diocesan liturgical commissions were not asked to respond to the National Liturgical Office, and the kinds and extent of discussions that were held across the nation are not known. The questions – and the opportunities and challenges – remain with us, however.

In the United States

Guidelines: More recently, the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) in the United States issued a document called “Guidelines for Multilingual Masses.”¹ As it was developed in collaboration with the Instituto de Liturgio Hispana, it clearly had the large Spanish-speaking population of the U.S. especially in mind. What do the FDLC Guidelines suggest regarding the use of two or more languages in a single liturgical celebration? Here is a summary.

Verbal Elements

• A bilingual commentator may be helpful. Her/his contribution should be kept to a minimum, however, and introduced only when the flow of the liturgy is not seriously interrupted, for example before the celebration, before or during the liturgy of the word, and following the prayer after communion.

¹ (Washington: FDLC 1987) (PO Box 29039, Washington, DC 20017, U.S.A.)
• Introductory greetings: The Guidelines state somewhat vaguely that “the choice of . . . introductory greetings . . . can elicit an awareness of the cultural diversity” of the assembly.

• Opening prayer: It is suggested that the invitation to pray be given in two or more languages, but that the text itself be said in one language.

• First and second readings: The FDLC suggests that one reading be in the majority language and another be in a second language. However, “a brief commentary may be offered in other languages before each proclamation . . . .”

• Gospel: This should be proclaimed in the majority language. However, “portions of the gospel, upon which the homily will be based, should also be announced in the other languages spoken by those assembled.”

• Homily: This too should be preached in the majority language, with a short summary given in other languages.

• General intercessions: A variety of languages may be used for the invitation to these prayers. However, for the sake of smoothness, the conclusion to each intercession should be in the same language throughout.

• Eucharistic prayer: The FDLC suggests that different languages could be used for the different sections of this prayer: Thanksgiving, Acclamation, Epiclesis, Institution Narrative, Anamnesis, Offering, Intercessions, Final Doxology.

• Lord’s Prayer: Each person may speak this prayer in his or her own language.

• Blessing: Different languages may be used for each part of the blessing.

• Participation aids: The FDLC discourages the use of printed booklets that provide translations of the scripture readings and liturgical prayers. These “do not enable active listening.”

Musical Elements

• Responsorial psalm: The FDLC suggests that the antiphon be sung in a single language, but that verses may be sung in both (or several) languages.

• Short texts: The FDLC believes that all can join in short texts such as “Lord, have mercy,” even “if the language is foreign to them.” Alternatively, Latin texts might be used, if these are known to all.

• Songs such as the opening song might come from the various cultures and languages represented in the assembly. Another possibility is that alternative verses be sung in different languages.

• For antiphonal music, the verses might be sung in two or more languages, while the antiphon is sung in one language.

• “Eucharistic acclamations should reflect an integral musical style and may include a blend of the diverse languages of those assembled.”
Nonverbal Elements

- The FDLC states that "the cultural and ethnic diversity of those assembled for eucharistic celebrations should be reflected throughout the celebration in the choice of gestures, postures, vesture and environmental design . . . ."

Another Perspective

Also of note is the fine book by Mark R. Francis, *Liturgy in a Multicultural Community*. The last chapter is a commentary on the FDLC guidelines, plus additional reflections and suggestions.

He makes the following comments regarding the FDLC recommendations for the liturgy of the word.

The FDLC's treatment of these aspects of the Liturgy of the Word is the most controverted of all its recommendations. This is not surprising, since one of the principal recoveries of the liturgical reform of Vatican II is that the public proclamation of the scriptures and a 'living commentary' (homily) on their meaning for the assembly is an integral part of Eucharistic worship. Many feel that if everyone does not understand every word of the readings, either through proclamation or through reading a translation, that they are somehow being shortchanged. We return here to the problem of 'understanding.' On the one hand, it is undeniable that the scriptures are an integral part of the celebration and that everyone should know what is being proclaimed. On the other hand, their full proclamation in all the languages of the assembly can be tedious and impedes the flow of the liturgy. The inclusion of translations in a booklet forces members of the assembly to bury their heads in a participation aid and separates them from the liturgical proclamation of the Word.

There are no easy solutions to this dilemma but I would suggest that the FDLC Guidelines are an appropriate way of dealing with the challenge. It is not necessary for everyone in the assembly "to understand" every word of the readings. A brief resume before their full proclamation should be enough to alert those who do not understand the language of the proclamation of what is going to be read. This is especially true when one considers that these are extraordinary celebrations which usually take place on solemnities like Easter and Christmas when the readings for the day are somewhat familiar to all. When the readings are less familiar or when one or more of the readings are a theological exposition rather than a narrative – as we often encounter in the letters of Paul – then a very good case could be made for providing a translation in the language(s) not used for their proclamation.

As for the homily, experience has shown that a brief summary in the other languages of the assembly is preferable to a paragraph by para-

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2 *Collegeville: Liturgical Press 1991*
graph translation of the homily text. At least some of the members of the congregation are bilingual and a simple translation of the homily can be tedious for the homilist and those who understand both languages. This would also afford the preacher an opportunity to offer a different slant to the reflection that could include cultural illustrations which are meaningful to the specific ethnic groups within the parish.

Assumptions

For special occasions: Both the FDLC Guidelines and Mark Francis assume that most liturgies in a parish will use only one language. That is, on most Sundays, parishes will have different eucharistic celebrations for individual cultural and linguistic groups. Thus truly bilingual or multilingual liturgies will be exceptional; they will take place on special occasions only.

A right: Francis speaks of “the undeniable reality that people pray more easily when they speak in their own language, when they sing and dance to their own music, and when they use the gestures and art developed by their own culture.” He goes on to say, “It can be asserted that, as far as possible, different cultural groups of the parish have a right to worship regularly in their own language and in their own cultural idiom.” On these grounds, he feels that truly multicultural liturgies in a parish should be infrequent.

Certain conditions: These considerations give the impression that the FDLC and Mark Francis have in mind large urban parishes, usually with only two or three large cultural groups. In addition, it would seem that the pastor must be bilingual or multilingual. Preferably, there will be several priests on staff, each one associated with a different cultural group.

Where these conditions in fact exist in parishes, then the recommendations made above seem helpful.

Other Situations

Assumptions not valid: There are many parishes in our country, however, where these conditions do not exist. Thus there may be parishioners from a great many cultural groups; one cultural group may constitute a large majority of the parish, with only relatively small groups from other cultures; the cultural mix of a parish may be changing. In addition, there may be only one priest, who almost always is from a single culture, even when he is able to speak a second language. Pastoral ministers cannot possibly be knowledgeable about all the cultures represented in the parish.

What is to be done in such situations? First, much depends on the attitudes of parish members and pastoral ministers toward multiculturalism, as is discussed further below. In addition, the roles of liturgical ministers other than the

3 Liturgy in a Multicultural Context, pages 59-60
presider needs to be taken into consideration. How bilingual or multicultural are the musicians? the readers? the ministers of hospitality? These people can have a tremendous impact, even when the presider represents only a single culture.

**What is actually happening?** The fact remains that we simply do not know what is already happening in multicultural parishes across our country. We can expect that a good deal of experimentation is going on; how can the results of this be shared with the wider church? Many creative people have been dealing with these pastoral and liturgical challenges and opportunities for some time; how can we find out about their work? This remains a challenge for dioceses and the national church.

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**Vision of Parish Life**

**A multicultural spirit:** Mark Francis emphasizes that the whole of parish life needs to be bicultural or multicultural when the people who are the parish are from more than a single culture. He suggests that communities wrestle with the following questions:

- How has the multicultural reality of the parish been addressed in the past – what has worked and what has been found wanting?
- Who are the various ethnic groups within the parish? This goes beyond language, as French or Spanish speakers, for example, from different countries of origin may have quite different customs.
- Are the different cultural groups in the parish in touch with each other?
- Are there people who are willing to be bridge-builders between cultural groups?
- Are parish leaders – lay and ordained – willing to recognize the limitations imposed by their particular cultural world view? Can they move beyond the culture in which they were raised?
- Are the diverse cultural groups within the parish willing to make compromises from time to time in order to grow and worship together?
- Are the diverse cultural groups willing to learn something of each others’ customs and traditions?
- What can be done to build a bicultural or multicultural spirit in the parish and in the Sunday liturgies? For example, can all learn bilingual or multilingual acclamations?
- Do we remember and respect the power of the nonverbal elements of our liturgy, and not focus just on the words?
One example of inculturation in official liturgical books of the church is in the liturgy planned for the visit of Pope John Paul II to the Native Peoples of northern Canada at Fort Simpson, NWT on September 18, 1984. Though bad weather forced the postponement of this liturgy, it is presented here to show how the Canadian church and the Bishop of Rome together identified with our native cultures and affirmed them.

Greeting

Standing between the fire and the monument, and facing the East, the Holy Father greets the people in the Dene language:

Soṭ'ie Noóhtsį hēh tene lié Ɂédlį máhsį Tene’déh k’eh nahe ɣåeh’dá t’āh nahega ḣaoht’hį.

Blessings

The Holy Father faces the East, and with hands raised in supplication and thanksgiving, he prays:

Most holy One,
look upon us with your blessings as we begin this new day.

Blessing of the River and all Waters

With hands still raised, the Holy Father continues:

We give thanks to you for these waters, for all waters. As the waters cleanse and heal and strengthen the air and the land, so too let your flowing love cleanse and heal us, bring us together as one people, and strengthen us.

Blessing of Fire

Turning right to face the South, the Holy Father continues, with his arms still raised:

We give thanks to you, gentle Lover, for this fire, for all home fires where offerings of love and kindness, understanding and caring, are made.

1 Sacramentary. Excerpts for the Visit of Pope John Paul II in English-speaking Canada (Ottawa: CCCB 1984)
2 (This liturgy was rescheduled and took place on September 20, 1987.)
Let this fire burn all impurities from this land and from our minds and hearts and spirits, and send a pure prayer of love from this land and from each of us to you.

Blessing of the Air and Winds

Turning right to face the West, the Holy Father continues, with his arms still raised:

We give thanks to you, Great Spirit of life, for the air and her many winds. As the winds awaken and caress the land in spring and summer, as they prepare the land for rest and sleep in fall and winter, so too let the winds of your Spirit awaken our lives so that we may always be as the seasons of your love: constant as the land in our expressions of our great creative power.

Blessing of the Land

The Holy Father turns right to face the North, and with hands still raised in supplication, he prays:

We give thanks to you, creator of all, for this land and all she produces, for the animals of the land and water and sky, for the plants which help us to live healthy lives, for the lives we live in caring for this beautiful land you have given to our care.

As you are the source of all good, we ask that you send the blessings of your great love to open and cleanse, to heal and strengthen this land, these lands, and her peoples in this new day. We ask that you open the way for a new future, a better future, for each of us, but especially today, most holy One, we ask these blessings for these holy peoples you have entrusted with the caring of these lands for which we have given thanks.

Then the Holy Father kneels and kisses a rock at the base of the monument.

Blessing of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada

Then the Holy Father stands, and with hands extended over the people, he prays:

God of all peoples, Great Spirit,
Holy One,  
listen to our prayer.  
We ask you to give your + blessing this day  
to the aboriginal peoples of Canada.  
Guide their elders and all their people,  
and give them your wisdom and your strength.  
Let them enjoy the gifts of nature  
and the fruits of their labors.

At this point, the Dene drummers begin to sing quietly the song of the angels,  
with the accompaniment of drums.

Bring them light in time of darkness,  
health in time of sickness,  
joy in time of sorrow.  
Teach them to listen to your voice,  
to live in your ways,  
and to be brothers and sisters of all.

Great Spirit, our God,  
listen to our prayer,  
for you rule the universe for ever and ever.  
Amen.

Blessing of the Assembly

My brothers and sisters,  
in bidding you farewell  
my prayer is that you may always walk in the ways of peace  
and continue to live in harmony with mother earth.

Listen to the messages our creator sends  
through your lives with the earth,  
through the lives and words of your wise elders,  
through your prophets.

Follow the way of life and truth.  
Continue to share the goods you harvest from the land,  
and to share the joys of unity  
that this brings to your families and communities.

The Holy Father continues in Dene:

 Máhsi Tene'n déh k'eh nahe gáeh' da káa nahega žaoht' i  
oléé nahi tš'h u sega haza taht' i met' áh eñehats' éndíhg'ha.  
Ti n'déh k'eh íle nídé yun daa t'áh nahegǒdá ole'é.

The Holy Father extends his hands over the people while he blesses them in  
the Dene language:

 Noónts'í sée hot'í nahe k'ñe oñdíh Et'há Mežaa tšhu  
Etätíže nezo tšhu mizi t'áh.
Images of the Holy Spirit

**Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina** is the title of an extensive – 221 large volumes – of texts written in Latin by bishops and theologians in the early and medieval period of the church’s history; some liturgical books are also included. Edited by J.-P. Migne, it is usually referred to as "Migne, PL." (He also edited a collection of writings in Greek that is almost as large; it is abbreviated “PG.”)

The **Holy Spirit**: The Latin writings are very well indexed; indeed the indices comprise the last four volumes of the collection. One of these indices is entitled (in Latin), “The various names and images by which the Holy Spirit appears” in these Latin texts.1 These names and images, arranged alphabetically in English translation, are given below.

- Burning wind
- Charity
- Compassion of the Father and the Son
- Consoler
- Dew
- Dove
- Finger of God
- Fire
- Flame
- Gatekeeper
- Gift, gift of God
- Grace
- Great river
- Kiss of the Father and the Son
- Lamb with seven candles
- Light
- Living water
- Love
- Oil of joy
- Our place (=home)
- Our repose
- Paraclete
- Peace
- Present (=gift)
- River of fire
- River proceeding from the seat (sedes) of God
- Running stream
- Sound of the mouth of God
- Spirit of excitable (*mobilis*) wisdom
- Spiritual bath
- Strong wind
- Testimony of wisdom
- Vicar (=substitute) of the Lord

**Be creative**: These thirty-three creative images might well inspire us when we name and image the Holy Spirit in written and spontaneous prayer.

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1 Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, volume 219, col. 490
Familiar Prayers in Medieval English

New insights into the prayers we frequently use can sometimes come through comparing different translations of the same text. Here we compare our contemporary versions of some commonly used prayers with the vernacular versions used in England in the year 1400. The prayers considered are the Glory Be, Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Canticle of Zechariah (Benedictus) and Canticle of Mary (Magnificat).

The source of the medieval translations is one of many "primers" that existed in that time. These were prayer books for laypeople, in English rather than Latin. They usually contained shortened versions of the liturgy of the hours, often including the little office of the Blessed Virgin and the little office of the dead. Many editions of the primers are known.

The texts of the Glory Be, Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary are given in three lines. The first is the version of 1400, without change; the second is the medieval version rendered in modern spelling. The third line is the version we now use. Some comments are added where appropriate.

Glory Be

Joye be to the fader.
Joy be to the Father
Glory be to the Father

and to the sone:
and to the Son

and to thee holygoost.
And to the Holy Ghost

This is remarkable in using "joy be to the Father" in place of the "glory be" that we are used to. "Joy" of course comes from the French brought by the Norman conquerors in 1066. An Anglo-Saxon version of this text, written just before the conquest, reads: "Wuldur thaem feder & thaem sunu & gaste halgum," literal-

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ly, “Wuldur” to the Father and to the Son and Spirit Holy. Thus “joy” is really the only French influence on the Anglo-Saxon wording.3

The idea that we might give joy or wish joy to God gives this version quite a different tone to this doxology than our contemporary version. Do we ever think about God being joyful or happy?

As hit was in the bygynnynge
As it was in the beginning
As it was in the beginning

and how and euere:
and now and ever
is now and will be for ever [is now and ever shall be]
et nunc, et semper

in to the world of worldis amen.
into the world of worlds. Amen.
world without end. Amen.
et in saecula saeculorum.

The Latin has been added to the last two verses because the medieval English versions are close literal translations of the Latin, whereas the contemporary translation gives the sense but is not a word for word rendering. In particular, “into the world of worlds” is a literal translation of in saecula saeculorum.

Lord’s Prayer

Fader oure that art in heuene
Father our that art in heaven
Our Father that art in heaven

halwed be thi name.
hallowed be thy name.
hallowed be thy name

thi kyngeom come to.
thy kingdom come to
thy kingdom come

thi will be doon in erthe as in heuene.
Thy will be done in earth as in heaven.
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

oure echedaies bred gif us to day.
our each-day's bread give us today
Give us today our daily bread

3 Joy is also spelled “loye” and “loyye”. “Joy” is also used in a paraphrase of the Gloria in excelsis intended for use by lay people, and in the Gloria patri, in The Lay Folks Mass Book, (ed. Thomas Frederick Simmons; Early English Text Society. Original Series 71; London: Trubner 1874, pp. 14, 82). This work was translated from French into English in the mid-thirteenth century. The editor notes several other uses of “joy” in place of “glory,” but reports (p. 196) that “joie” was not used in this way in vernacular French prayers. “Glory” rather than “joy” is used in the English version of the Gloria patri of another Primer, written just 20-30 years after the one considered here: The Prymer or Lay Folks Prayer Book, ed. by Henry Littlehales from the MS. Dd. 11, 82, ab. 1420-1430. Early English Text Society. Original Series 109 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner 1897).
and forgive us our debts:
and forgive us our debts
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive to our debtors
as we forgive those who trespass against us
and lead us not into temptation.
and lead us not into temptation
and lead us not into temptation
bote deiuere us from yuel amen.
but deliver us from evil amen.
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Except for spelling and some changes in word order, the medieval version is quite close to the text we use today. One interesting variant is the term "each-day’s bread" for “daily bread.” Clearly, the medieval text uses “debts” where we use “trespasses.”

Hail Mary

Heil marie ful of grace
Hail Mary full of grace
Hail, Mary, full of grace
oure lord is with the:
our Lord is with thee
the Lord is with thee
blessid be thow among all wymmen,
Blessed be thou among all women
Blessed art thou among women
and blessid be the fruyt of thi wombe: ihesus amen.
and blessed be the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Amen.
and blessed be the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

The only place in which the medieval text differs from the contemporary one is the addition of “all”: “blessed be thou among all women.”

For the two canticles, the Latin is given first for all lines. Line two gives the medieval version; line three the medieval version in modern spelling; line four our contemporary English text, from the 1975 edition of Prayers We Have In Common.

Canticle of Zechariah (Benedictus)

_Benedictus Dominus, Deus Israel_
Blessed be the lord god of israel:
Blessed be the Lord God of Israel
Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel
quia visitavit et redemit populum suum
for he hath visited and maad redemption of his folk.
for he hath visited and made redemption of his folk
he has come to his people and set them free

100
The "made redemption" is curious, rather than "redeemed." "Folk" in place of "people" gives a special tone to the medieval version.

*Et erexit cornu salutis nobis*
And hath reredeup the horne of helthe to us:
and hath (reredeup) the horn of health to us
He has raised up for us a mighty savior

"Horn" is a literal rendering of the Latin *cornu* and "health" renders correctly the root meaning of "salvation." Today we are coming to appreciate wholeness in relation to salvation; surely this is related to "health?"

*In domo David servi sui*
in the hows of dauid his child.
in the house of David his child.
born of the house of his servant David.

The translation of *servi* as "child" is noteworthy.

*Sicut locutus est per os sanctorum*
As he hath spoken by the mouth of holy prophetis:
As he hath spoken by the mouth of holy prophets
Through his holy prophets he promised

*qui olim fuerunt, prophetarum suorum*
that been fro the world.
that were before the world
of old

These two verses go together. It is strange that the medieval version has rendered *olim fuerunt*, meaning "were formerly" or "were of old" as "were before the world." Surely they did not understand the prophets to have been before the creation?

*Ut liberaret nos ab inimicis nostris*
Health of owre enemyes:
Health from our enemies:
that he would save us from our enemies

Here "health" renders not just "salvation," as above, but also "liberation."

*et e manu omnium qui oderunt nos*
& of the hond of alle that hateu de us.
and from the hand of all that hate us.
from the hands of all who hate us.

*Ut faceret misericordiam cum patribus nostris*
To do mercy with owre fadres:
To do mercy with our fathers
He promised to show mercy to our fathers

"To do mercy" is a very literal rendering of the Latin.

*et recordaretur foederis sui sancti*
and haue mynde of his holy testament.
and to remember his holy covenant.
"Have mind of" is a noteworthy equivalent of "remember."

*Jurisjurandi, quod juravit Abrahæ, patri nostro,*

The oath that he swore to Abraham our father
This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham:

\[ daturum se nobis \]

*to gife hym self to us. to give himself to us (\ldots \text{[that he would grant us]})*

This is most interesting. The Latin is not rendered at all in our contemporary English version; however, older translations gave, "that he [God] would grant us," leading to the next verse. The medieval text, however, gives quite a different interpretation, namely that God will "give himself to us."

\[ Ut sine timore, \]

*That with outen drede that without dread that without fear*

\[ e manu inimicorum nostrorum liberati \]

*deliverance from our enemy's hands to set us free from the hands of our enemies*

\[ serviamus illi \]

*to worship him*

Again the medieval version is quite literal in rendering the Latin. Our contemporary text interprets this service as worship.

\[ In sanctitate et justitia coram ipso \]

*in holynesse and rigtwesnesse before hym. in holiness and rightousness before him holy and righteous in his sight*

\[ omnibus diebus nostris. \]

*alle owre dayes. all our days all the days of our life.*

\[ Et tu, puer, propheta Altissimi vocaberis \]

*And thou child shalt be clepid prophete of the heyeste: And thou child shalt be clepid prophet of the highest You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High;*

The medieval text again gives a quite literal translation, "highest" of the Latin *Altissimi.*

\[ præebis enim ante faciem Domini \]

*thow shalt go be fore the face of the lord. thou shalt go before the face of the Lord. for you shall go before the Lord*
Our contemporary version omits the "face" of the Lord.

\[ ad \textit{parandas vias ejus} \]
to make redy his weyes.
to make ready his ways
to prepare his way

\[ Ad \textit{dandam populo ejus scientiam salutis} \]
For to gefe koynyge of helthe to his folk:
for to give kenning of health to his folk
to give his people knowledge of salvation

Again, "health" is given for "salvation." "Kenning" was a regular middle English term for "make known, perceive." "Folk" is again used for "people."

\[ in \textit{remissiosne peccatorum eorum} \]
in forgeuenesse of here synnes.
in forgiveness of their sins.
by the forgiveness of their sins.

\[ Per \textit{viscera misericordiae Dei nostri} \]
Be the entrayles of mercy of oure god:
By the entrails of mercy of our God
In the tender compassion of our God

"Entrails of mercy" is a literal translation of \textit{viscera misericordiae}. 

\[ qua \textit{visitabit nos Oriens ex alto} \]
in whiche he hath uisited us comen fro an heye.
in which he hath visited us coming from on high
the dawn from on high shall break upon us

The medieval version fails to translate \textit{Oriens}, "dawn" in our contemporary text.

\[ Ut \textit{illuminet eos, qui in tenebris} \]
To gifen Iygt to them tht sitten in darknesses
to give light to them that sit in darkness
to shine on those who dwell in darkness

\[ et \textit{in umbra mortis sedent} \]
and in schadwe of deeth:
and in shadow of death
and the shadow of death.

\[ ut \textit{dirigat pedes nostros in viam pacis}. \]
to dressoure feet in to the weye of pees.
to dress our feet into the way of peace
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

"Dress" is a correct translation of \textit{dirigat}, though it seems curious in this setting. This usage, with the connotation of making straight or directing, is still given in our dictionaries.

Canticle of Mary (\textit{Magnificat})

\[ \textit{Magnificat anima mea Dominum} \]
My soule worschipeth the lord.
My soul worships the Lord
My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
"Worship" had a wider range of meanings in medieval English than today, including praise and respect.

Et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salvatore meo
And my ghost made ioye in god: myn helthe.
and my ghost made joy in God, mine health
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

"Ghost" was regularly used for "spirit" in medieval English. "Made joy" gives a more earthy flavor than "rejoice." "Health" here is used for Savior, as above it was for salvation.

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae
For he lokede the mekeness of his handmayde:
For he looked the meekness of his handmaid
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes
lo therfore alle generations schulle seye y am blesssed.
lo therefore all generations shall say I am blessed
From this day all generations will call me blessed:

"Shall say I am blessed" again gives a more naive tone than our contemporary version.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est
For he that is migty hath do grete thynges to me:
For he that is mighty hath do great things to me
the Almighty has done great things for me,

et sanctum nomen ejus
and his name is holy.
and his name is holy.
and holy is his Name.

Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies
And his mercy is fro kynrede in to kynredes:
And his mercy is from kindred into kindred
timentibus eum.
to hem thata beeth dredynge hym.
to them that be dreading him.

These two verses are rearranged in our contemporary translation:

He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.

"Kindred" is used in place of "generation," and "dread" in place of "fear."

Fecit potentiam brachio suo
He dyde migt in his arm.
He did might in his arm
He has shown the stregnth of his arm,

dispersit superbos mente cordis sui
he scaterede proude men with thougt of his herte.
he scattered proud men with thought of his heart
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
Again, the medieval version gives an overly literal rendering of the Latin: "thought of his heart" for *mente cordis sui*.

*Deposit potentes de sede*
He putte down migti men of the sete:
He put down mighty men off the seat
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,

"Seat" is used in place of "thrones."

*et exaltavit humiles.*
and heyede meke.
and high-teth (the) meek.
and has lifted up the lowly.

The medieval text literally says "high-ed" the meek.

*Esurientes implevit bonis*
Hungry men he fylde with goodes:
Hungry men he filled with goods
He has filled the hungry with good things,

*et divites dimisit inanes.*
and riche he lefte empty.
and rich he left empty
and the rich he has sent away empty.

Here the medieval version departs from the Latin, in rendering *dimisit* as "left" instead of "sent away."

*Suscepit Israel, servum suum,*
He took up isrl his chyld:
He took up Israel his child
He has come to the help of his servant Israel

"Took up" is a literal translation of *suscepit*. Again, "child" is used in place of "servant."

*recordatus misericordiae suae*
thenkynge on his mercy.
thinking on his mercy
for he has remembered his promise of mercy.

Here we have a now obsolescent use of "thinking" as "remembering."

*Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros*
As hee hadde spoken to oure fadres abraham:
As he had spoken to our father Abraham
the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham

*ergo Abraham et semen ejus in saecula.*
and to his seede for euere.
and to his seed for ever.
and his children for ever.

The medieval version joins Abraham to "our fathers" more closely than does the Latin.

Since 1982 a series of annual symposia have been held on the subject of liturgical music, sponsored by Sister Theophane Hytrek and Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee. Some composers and liturgists have attended once or a few times, others have been present every year. This "Ten-Year Report" represents a consensus prepared during the last two years. Though not the last word on the subject, it does represent the present thinking of many experts on liturgical music, and is very much worthwhile studying.

*The Milwaukee Symposia For Church Composers: A Ten-Year Report* is published as a booklet by Liturgy Training Program, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue, Chicago IL 60622-1101. It was also published in the October-November 1992 issue of Pastoral Music, and as a booklet, by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, 225 Sheridan Street NW, Washington, DC 20011-1492.

Contents: After a Foreword, the Preamble talks about the centrality of music as a mode of liturgical expression, the transformation that liturgical music has undergone in recent years, and lists certain foundational principles of liturgy. Other parts of this document are as follows:

- Music as a Language of Faith
- Liturgical Formation
- Liturgical Preparation
- Liturgical and Musical Structures
- Textual Considerations
- Cross-cultural Music Making
- Models of Musical Leadership
- Technology and Worship
- The Musical-Liturgical-Pastoral Judgment
- Afterward

An important document: With 118 footnotes, the Ten-Year Report of the Milwaukee Symposia is a must reading for liturgists and church musicians.
Learning with the National Bulletin

Over the years, the issues of the *National Bulletin on Liturgy* have come to constitute an extensive library of liturgical theory and practice. This library is easily accessible to those who wish to learn more about our worship, as back issues are inexpensive and easy to obtain (see inside front cover for details).

Back issues of the Bulletin constitute a valuable resource for seminary and theological college teachers and students, liturgy committees and commissions, RCIA leaders, catechumens, and adults preparing for confirmation or reception, school teachers, adult study groups, and those who wish to learn on their own.

The following list present some of the issues and major articles that may be especially helpful. Complete indices are to be found in issue 61 (for 1965-1977) and issue 101 (for 1978-1985).

The numbers given below are those of individual issues of the Bulletin; the year of publication is also given.

Topics without quotation marks are titles of entire issues. Topics within quotation marks are titles of individual articles.

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The Apostles’ Creed in the Liturgy

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
   He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
   and born of the Virgin Mary.
   He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
     was crucified, died, and was buried.
   He descended to the dead.
   On the third day he rose again.
   He ascended into heaven,
     and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
   He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
   the holy catholic church,
   the communion of saints,
   the forgiveness of sins,
   the resurrection of the body,
   and the life everlasting.

This is the text in use today. It is an international and ecumenical text published in 1975 by the International Consultation on Common Texts.¹

The following text is an international and ecumenical version that was proposed in 1988 by the English Language Liturgical Consultation.²

   I believe in God, the Father, almighty,
   creator of heaven and earth.

   I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
   who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
   born of the Virgin Mary,
   suffered under Pontius Pilate,
     was crucified, died, and was buried;
   he descended to the dead.
   On the third day he rose again;
   he ascended into heaven,
   he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
   and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**Used in various ways:** The Apostles' Creed is an important liturgical text, and it is used in a variety of ways and for several different purposes. The actual words that we use also vary, as does the person(s) who say the creed. Usually it is used in the context of Christian initiation or when baptismal vows are renewed. In addition, in Canada it is an option at the Sunday eucharist (and in practice is probably more commonly used than the Nicene Creed.)

**Narrative or dialogue:** The Apostles' Creed is sometimes said straight through. At other times it is said in dialogue or question-and-answer form. Finally, sometimes some or all of the liturgical assembly assent to the creed, though it has actually been said by someone else.

**The Text**

**The full text:** When the Apostles' Creed is said straight through, the full text printed above is used. However, when it is said in dialogue or question-and-answer form, it is always abbreviated. The following parts of the full text are not included in the dialogue version:

- He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
- He suffered under Pontius Pilate
- He descended to the dead
- On the third day
- He ascended into heaven
- He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**At confirmation:** When the Apostles's Creed is used for the renewal of baptismal promises in the Rite of Confirmation, the usual third question is divided into two. They read as follows:

- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in confirmation?
- Do you believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

**The phrase,** "the Lord, the giver of life" is borrowed from the Nicene Creed, while the rest of the first part is not part of any traditional creed.

We use, therefore, three different versions of the Apostles' Creed so far as the text is concerned.

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How It Is Said

The full text of the Apostles' Creed is said straight through in the following liturgies:

- RCIA: Presentation of the Creed (or The Nicene Creed)
- RCIA: Preparation Rites of Holy Saturday (or The Nicene Creed)
- RCIA: Christian Initiation of Children Who Have Reached Catechetical Age (adults present)
- RCIA: Christian Initiation of a Person in Danger of Death (option)
- Rite of Baptism for Children in Danger of Death in the Absence of a Priest or Deacon (option).

The dialogue or question-and-answer form of the creed is used on the following occasions:

- RCIA: Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation
- RCIA: Christian Initiation of Children Who Have Reached Catechetical Age (the children)
- RCIA: Rite of Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church (when celebrated at the Easter Vigil together with the Sacraments of Initiation)
- RCIA: Other Rites for Use in Canada: Rites During the Period of Christian Formation
- Rite of Baptism for Children
- Rite of Confirmation
- Pastoral Care. Viaticum

Said by Whom?

The text of the Apostles' Creed, or the "I do" in the questions-and-answer form, may be said by various members of the liturgical assembly.

Adult Candidates For Baptism:

- RCIA: Preparation Rites on Holy Saturday
- RCIA: Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation

Parents and Godparents of Infant Candidates:

- Rite of Baptism for Children

Candidates for Confirmation:

- Rite of Confirmation

Candidates for Reception:

- Rite of Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church, when this is celebrated at the Easter Vigil. (At other times the Nicene Creed is used.)
Sick Persons:
• Pastoral Care. Viaticum

The Entire Liturgical Assembly:
• Sunday Eucharist (option)
• RCIA: Presentation of the Creed
• RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation of Children of Catechetical Age
• Rite of Baptism for Children in Danger of Death in the Absence of a Priest or Deacon
• Easter Vigil and Sunday.

In the Liturgies of Baptism
Within the liturgies of baptism, the Apostles’ Creed is used in several different ways.

• In the RCIA, adult candidates profess their faith and the faith of the church by saying the creed all by themselves.

• In the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children of Catechetical Age, the parents, godparents, and all adults present may be invited to profess their faith, using the full text of the Apostles’ or Nicene Creed, said straight through. The presider’s invitation indicates that this act is related to the responsibility that the adults have for the upbringing of the children about to be initiated. The children then make their own profession of faith using the dialogue form of the Apostles’ Creed.

• In the ordinary Rite of Baptism for Children, it is the parents and godparents who recite the Apostles’ Creed, using the dialogue form. The presider’s invitation states that this is to allow the parents to renew their own baptismal promises. The creed is a statement of the faith of the parents and godparents, the faith of the church, and the faith in which the children are about to be baptized.

• In the Rite of Baptism for Children in Danger of Death When No Priest or Deacon is Available, it is assumed that parents, godparents, and if possible some friends and neighbors will be present, with a lay person presiding. The minister says to everyone, “Let us remember our own baptism, and profess our faith in Jesus Christ...” Either the dialogue or straight-through form of the Apostles’ Creed is then recited.

Giving Assent to the Creed
When particular members of the assembly profess their faith using the Apostles’ Creed, other members sometimes add a statement – an acclamation, really – in which they give their assent to what has been professed. This is really a way of professing one’s faith through the words of another. The typical acclamation of assent is:

This is our faith.
This is the faith of the Church.
We are proud to profess it, in Christ Jesus our Lord.
The giving of assent is carried out differently in individual rites. Sometimes it is given by everyone, and sometimes just by the presider; sometimes this point is ambiguous.

**Baptism for children:** In the *Rite of Baptism for Children*, the rubric states, "The celebrant and the congregation give their assent to (the) profession of faith" just given by the parents and godparents. The presider says the acclamation printed above, and the people respond, "Amen." Thus the priest is speaking in the name of the entire assembly, and this is confirmed by the people's response.

**Confirmation:** In the *Rite of Confirmation*, it is the bishop who assents to the profession of faith just given by the candidates for this sacrament. The rubric states, "The bishop confirms their profession of faith by proclaiming the faith of the Church." However, the people are invited to respond, "Amen," but this must have a different function than the "Amen" of the Rite of Baptism for Children, as the bishop is not speaking for the whole assembly, but only for himself.

**Book of Blessings:** A somewhat similar distinction between presider and people is found in The Order of Blessing of a New Baptismal Font without the Celebration of Baptism in the Book of Blessings. Here, everyone except the presider is invited to renew their baptismal promises. The introductory rubric states, ". . . all may renew their profession of baptismal faith." The priest addresses the laity, " . . . call to mind . . . the faith you professed when you received the sacraments of Christian initiation." He then uses the dialogue form of the creed, with the people responding "I do."

Afterward, the rubric states, "The celebrant expresses his own assent to the profession of faith by proclaiming the faith of the Church in the following formulary," namely, "This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord." Again, the people respond, "Amen," and again this "Amen" must have a different function than when it is used in the Rite of Baptism for Children.

**Easter:** It may be pointed out that at the Easter Vigil and on Easter Sunday, the priest and people together renew their baptismal promises. The priest says, " . . . let us renew the promises we made in baptism . . . " The dialogue form of the Creed is used. However, the customary assent formulary is not used, but another text.

**Conclusions:** The Apostles' Creed is of great importance in many of our liturgies. However, it is used with flexibility and accommodated to pastoral and liturgical needs. The freedom with which the text is abbreviated and expanded at times, is quite remarkable.
Scripture and Preaching
According to
Our Liturgical Books

One of the remarkable achievements of the contemporary liturgical renewal is our increased appreciation of scripture and preaching. What the church says about these central elements of most of our liturgical celebrations is to be found in many documents. Of special importance are the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation of Vatican Council II, and the Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass, second edition 1981. In addition, the Constitution on the Liturgy emphasizes the Word of God in sections 24, 35, 51 and 52.

Scripture and preaching are also considered in the introductions and pastoral notes of each of our liturgical books. The relevant sections of these documents are presented here so that this important documentation may be considered all together.

Roman Missal – General Instruction

8. The Mass is made up as it were of the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the eucharist, two parts so closely connected that they form but one single act of worship. For in the Mass 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. There are also certain rites to open and conclude the celebration.

9. When the Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself is speaking to his people, and Christ, present in his own word, is proclaiming the Gospel.

The readings must therefore be listened to by all with reverence; they make up a principal element of the liturgy. In the biblical readings God’s word addresses all people of every era and is understandable to them, but a living commentary on the word, that is, the homily, as an integral part of the liturgy, increases the word’s effectiveness.

33. Readings from Scripture and the chants between the readings form the main part of the liturgy of the word. The homily, profession of faith, and general intercessions or prayer of the faithful expand and complete this part of the Mass. In the readings, explained by the homily, God is speaking to his people, opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation, and nourishing their spirit; Christ is present to the faithful through his own word. Through the

1 New Introductions to the Sacramentary and Lectionary (Ottawa: CCCB 1983)
chants the people make God's word their own and through the profession of faith affirm their adherence to it. Finally, having been fed by this word, they make their petitions in the general intercessions for the needs of the Church and for the salvation of the whole world.

41. The homily is an integral part of the liturgy and is strongly recommended: it is necessary for the nurturing of the Christian life. It should develop some point of the readings or of another text from the Ordinary or from the Proper of the Mass of the day, and take into account the mystery being celebrated and the needs proper to the listeners.

42. There must be a homily on Sundays and holydays of obligation at all Masses that are celebrated with a congregation. It is recommended on other days, especially on the weekdays of Advent, Lent, and the Easter season, as well as on other feasts and occasions when the people come to church in large numbers. The homily should ordinarily be given by the priest celebrant.

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**Christian Initiation – General Introduction**

5. Baptism, the cleansing with water by the power of the living word, washes away every stain of sin, original and personal, makes us sharers in God’s own life and his adopted children. As proclaimed in the prayers for the blessing of the water, baptism is a cleansing water of rebirth that makes us God's children born from on high. The blessed Trinity is invoked over those who are to be baptized, so that all who are signed in this name are consecrated to the Trinity and enter into communion with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are prepared for this high dignity and led to it by the scriptural readings, the prayer of the community, and their own profession of belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

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**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults**

**Introduction**

1. The rite of Christian initiation presented here is designed for adults who, after hearing the mystery of Christ proclaimed, consciously and freely seek the living God and enter the way of faith and conversion as the Holy Spirit opens their hearts. By God’s help they will be strengthened spiritually during their preparation and at the proper time will receive the sacraments fruitfully.

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2 This is printed at the beginning of the Canadian editions of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (Ottawa: CCCB 1987) and the *Rite of Baptism for Children* (Ottawa: CCCB 1989).

3 *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (Ottawa: CCCB 1987).
During the period of evangelization and precatechumenate, the faithful should remember that for the Church and its members the supreme purpose of the apostolate is that Christ's message is made known to the world by word and deed and that his grace is communicated.

Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens

44. The rite will take place on specified days during the year . . . that are suited to local conditions. The rite consists in the reception of the candidates, the celebration of the word of God, and the dismissal of the candidates; celebration of the eucharist may follow.

47. From this time on the Church embraces the catechumens as its own with a mother's love and concern. Joined to the Church, the catechumens are now part of the household of Christ, since the Church nourishes them with the word of God and sustains them by means of liturgical celebrations. The catechumens should be eager, then, to take part in celebrations of the word of God and to receive blessings and other sacramentals.

Period of the Catechumenate: Celebrations of the Word of God

75. The catechumenate is an extended period during which the candidates are given suitable pastoral formation and guidance, aimed at training them in the Christian life. In this way, the dispositions manifested at their acceptance into the catechumenate are brought to maturity. This is achieved in four ways.

1. A suitable catechesis is provided by priests or deacons, or by catechists and others of the faithful, planned to be gradual and complete in its coverage, accommodated to the liturgical year, and solidly supported by celebrations of the word. This catechesis leads the catechumens not only to an appropriate acquaintance with dogmas and precepts but also to a profound sense of the mystery of salvation in which they desire to participate.

3. The Church, like a mother, helps the catechumens on their journey by means of suitable liturgical rites, which purify the catechumens little by little and strengthen them with God's blessing. Celebrations of the word of God are arranged for their benefit, and at Mass they may also take part with the faithful in the liturgy of the word, thus better preparing themselves for their eventual participation in the liturgy of the eucharist.

79. Among the rites belonging to the period of the catechumenate, then, celebrations of the word of God are foremost. The minor exorcisms and the blessings of the catechumens are ordinarily celebrated in conjunction with a celebration of the word.

81. During the period of the catechumenate there should be celebrations of the word of God that accord with the liturgical season and that contribute to the instruction of the catechumens and the needs of the community. These celebrations of the word are: first, celebrations held specially for the catechumens; second, participation in the liturgy of the word at the Sunday Mass; third, celebrations held in connection with catechetical instruction.

82. The special celebrations of the word of God arranged for the benefit of the catechumens have as their main purpose:
• to implant in their hearts the teachings they are receiving: for example, the
morality characteristic of the New Testament, the forgiving of injuries and
insults, a sense of sin and repentance, the duties Christians must carry out in
the world;

• to give them instruction and experience in the different aspects and ways of
prayer;

• to explain to them the signs, celebrations, and seasons of the liturgy;

• to prepare them gradually to enter the worship assembly of the entire com-
  munity.

83. From the very beginning of the period of the catechumenate the catechu-
mens should be taught to keep holy the Lord's Day.

• Care should be taken that some of the special celebrations of the word just
  mentioned are held on Sunday, so that the catechumens will become accu-
tomed to taking an active and practised part in these celebrations.

• Gradually the catechumens should be admitted to the first part of the cele-
bration of the Sunday Mass. After the liturgy of the word, they should, if possi-
ble, be dismissed, but an intention for them is included in the general interces-
sions.

84. Celebrations of the word may also be held in connection with catecheti-
cal or instructional meetings of the catechumens, so that these will occur in a
context of prayer.

Period of the Catechumenate: Minor Exorcisms

92. The minor exorcisms take place within a celebration of the word of God
held in a church, a chapel, or in a center for the catechumenate...

Period of the Catechumenate: Blessings

96. The blessings may be given by a priest, a deacon, or a qualified cate-
chist appointed by the bishop. The blessings are usually given at the end of a
celebration of the word; they may also be given at the end of a meeting for cat-
echesis. When there is some special need, the blessing may be given private-
ly to individual catechumens.

Period of the Catechumenate: Anointing of the Catechumens

99. The anointing ordinarily takes place after the homily in a celebration of
the word of God, and is conferred on each of the catechumens;

Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names

116. After the readings, the bishop, or the celebrant who acts as delegate of
the bishop, gives the homily. This should be suited to the actual situation and
should address not just the catechumens but the entire community of the faith-
ful, so that all will be encouraged to give good example and to accompany the
elect along the path of the paschal mystery.
Rite of Baptism for Children

14. While the liturgy of the word is being celebrated, it is desirable that the children should be taken to some other place. Provision should be made for the mothers or godmothers to attend the liturgy of the word.

17. Then the liturgy of the word is directed toward stirring up the faith of the parents, godparents, and congregation, and praying in common for the fruits of baptism before the sacrament itself. This part of the celebration consists of the reading of one or more passages from holy scripture; a homily, followed by a period of silence; the prayer of the faithful; and finally a prayer, drawn up in the style of an exorcism, to introduce either the anointing with the oil of catechumens or the laying on of hands.

Celebration of God's Word

45. After the reading, the celebrant gives a short homily, explaining to those present the significance of what has been read. His purpose will be to lead them to a deeper understanding of the mystery of baptism and to encourage the parents and godparents to a ready acceptance of the responsibilities which arise from the sacrament.

Rite of Confirmation

13. If the candidates for confirmation are children who have not received the eucharist and are not admitted to their first communion at their liturgical celebration or if there are other special circumstances, confirmation should be celebrated outside Mass. When this occurs, there should first be a celebration of the word of God.

Emphasis should be given to the celebration of the word of God which begins the rite of confirmation. It is from the hearing of the word of God that the many-sided power of the Holy Spirit flows upon the Church and upon each one of the baptized and confirmed, and it is by this word that God's will is manifested in the life of Christians.

20. The liturgy of the word is celebrated in the ordinary way.

22. The bishop then gives a brief homily. He should explain the readings and so lead the candidates, their sponsors and parents, and the whole assembly to a deeper understanding of the mystery of confirmation.

4 Rite of Baptism for Children (Ottawa: CCCB 1989).

Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass

Rite of Distributing Holy Communion Outside Mass.
The Long Rite With the Celebration of the Word

26. This rite is to be used chiefly when Mass is not celebrated or when communion is not distributed at scheduled times. The purpose is that the people should be nourished by the word of God. By hearing it they learn that the marvels it proclaims reach their climax in the paschal mystery of which the Mass is a sacramental memorial and in which they share by communion. Nourished by God’s word, they are led on to grateful and fruitful participation in the saving mysteries.

Exposition of the Holy Eucharist

89. Shorter expositions of the eucharist are to be arranged in such a way that the blessing with the eucharist is preceded by a suitable period for readings of the word of God, songs, prayers, and sufficient time for silent prayer.

Rite of Penance

Rite for Individual Penitents

17. Then the priest, or the penitent himself, may read a text of holy Scripture, or this may be done as part of the preparation for the sacrament. Through the word of God the Christian receives light to recognize his sins and is called to conversion and to confidence in God’s mercy.

Rite for Several Penitents

24. The sacrament of penance should begin with a hearing of God’s word, because through his word God calls men to repentance and leads them to a true conversion of heart.

One or more readings may be chosen. If more than one are read, a psalm, another suitable song, or a period of silence should be inserted between them, so that the word of God may be more deeply understood and heartfelt assent may be given to it. If there is only one reading, it is preferable that it be from the gospel.

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4 In The Rites of the Catholic Church, pages 449-512.
7 In The Rites of the Catholic Church, pages 337-445.
Readings should be chosen which illustrate the following:

- the voice of God calling men back to conversion and ever closer conformity with Christ;
- the mystery of our reconciliation through the death and resurrection of Christ and through the gift of the Holy Spirit;
- the judgment of God about good and evil in men's lives as a help in the examination of conscience.

25. The homily, taking its theme from the scriptural text, should lead the penitents to examine their consciences and to turn away from sin and toward God. It should remind the faithful that sin works against God, against the community and one's neighbors, and against the sinner himself. Therefore, it would be good to recall:

- the infinite mercy of God, greater than all our sins, by which again and again he calls us back to himself;
- the need for interior repentance, by which we are genuinely prepared to make reparation for sin;
- the social aspect of grace and sin, by which the actions of individuals in some degree affect the whole body of the church;
- the duty to make satisfaction for sin, which is effective because of Christ's work of reparation and requires especially, in addition to words of penance, the exercise of true charity toward God and neighbor.

26. After the homily a suitable period of silence should be allowed for examining one's conscience and awakening true contrition for sin.

If it is judged suitable, this communal examination of conscience and awakening of contrition may take the place of the homily. But in this case it should be clearly based on the text of scripture that has just been read.

Penitential Services

36. Penitential celebrations are gatherings of the people of God to hear the proclamation of God's word. This invites them to conversion and renewal of life and announces our freedom from sin through the death and resurrection of Christ. The structure of these services is the same as that usually followed in celebrations of the word of God and given in the Rite for Reconciliation of Several Penitents.

It is appropriate, therefore, that after the introductory rites (song, greeting, and prayer) one or more biblical readings be chosen with songs, psalms, or periods of silence inserted between them. In the homily these readings should be explained and applied to the congregation. Before or after the readings from scripture, readings from the Fathers or other writers may be selected which will help the community and each person to a true awareness of sin and heartfelt sorrow, in other words, to bring about conversion of life.

After the homily and reflection on God's word, it is desirable that the congregation, united in voice and spirit, pray together in a litany or in some other way suited to general participation.
Rite of Marriage

6. In the celebration of marriage (which normally should be within the Mass), certain elements should be stressed, especially the liturgy of the word, which shows the importance of Christian marriage in the history of salvation and the duties and responsibility of the couple in caring for the holiness of their children.

21. The liturgy of the word is celebrated according to the rubrics. There may be three readings, the first of them from the Old Testament.

22. After the gospel, the priest gives a homily drawn from the sacred text. He speaks about the mystery of Christian marriage, the dignity of wedded love, the grace of the sacrament and the responsibilities of married people, keeping in mind the circumstances of this particular marriage.

Pastoral Care

Visits to the Sick

46. Those who visit the sick should help them to pray, sharing with them the word of God proclaimed in the assembly from which their sickness has separated them. As the occasion permits, prayer drawn from the psalms or from other prayers or litanies may be added to the word of God.

54. The prayers contained in this chapter follow the common pattern of reading, response, prayer, and blessing. This pattern is provided as an example of what can be done and may be adapted as necessary. The minister may wish to invite those present to prepare for the reading from Scripture, perhaps by a brief introduction or through a moment of silence. The laying on of hands may be added by the priest, if appropriate, after the blessing is given.

55. The sick should be encouraged to pray when they are alone or with their families, friends, or those who care for them. Their prayer should be drawn primarily from Scripture. The sick person and others may help to plan the celebration, for example, by choosing the prayers and readings. Those making these choices should keep in mind the condition of the sick person.

The passages found in this chapter and those included in Part III speak of the mystery of human suffering in the words, works, and life of Christ. Occasionally, for example, on the Lord's Day, the sick may feel more involved in the worship of the community from which they are separated if the readings used are those assigned for that day in the lectionary.

* In The Rites of the Catholic Church, pages 531-570.

* Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum (Ottawa: CCCB 1983).
Visits to a Sick Child

62. The following readings, prayers, and blessings will help the minister to pray with sick children and their families. They are provided as an example of what can be done and may be adapted as necessary. The minister may wish to invite those present to prepare for the reading from Scripture, perhaps by a brief introduction or through a moment of silence.

65. In praying with the sick child the minister chooses, together with the child and the family, if possible, suitable elements of common prayer in the form of a brief liturgy of the word. This may consist of a reading from Scripture, simple one-line prayers taken from Scripture which can be repeated by the child, other familiar prayers such as the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, litanies, or a simple form of the general intercessions.

Communion of the Sick

71. This chapter contains two rites: one for use when communion can be celebrated in the context of a liturgy of the word; the other, a brief communion rite for use in more restrictive circumstances, such as in hospitals.

Anointing of the Sick

100. The priest should inquire about the physical and spiritual condition of the sick person and he should become acquainted with the family, friends, and others who may be present. The sick person and others may help to plan the celebration, for example, by choosing the readings and prayers. It will be especially helpful if the sick person, the priest, and the family become accustomed to praying together.

In the choice of readings the condition of the sick person should be kept in mind. The readings and the homily should help those present to reach a deeper understanding of the mystery of human suffering in relation to the paschal mystery of Christ.

Viaticum

186. Although viaticum celebrated in the context of the full eucharistic celebration is always preferable, when it is not possible the rite for viaticum outside Mass is appropriate. This rite includes some of the elements of the Mass, especially a brief liturgy of the word. Depending on the circumstances and the condition of the dying person, this rite should also be a communal celebration. Every effort should be made to involve the dying person, family, friends, and members of the local community in the planning and celebration. The manner of celebration and the elements of the rite which are used should be accommodated to those present and the nearness of death.

188. An abbreviated liturgy of the word, ordinarily consisting of a single biblical reading, gives the minister an opportunity to explain the word of God in relation to viaticum. The sacrament should be described as the sacred food which strengthens the Christian for the passage through death to life in sure hope of the resurrection.
General Introduction

22. In every celebration for the dead, the Church attaches great importance to the reading of the word of God. The readings proclaim to the assembly the paschal mystery, teach remembrance of the dead, convey the hope of being gathered together again in God’s kingdom, and encourage the witness of Christian life. Above all, the readings tell of God’s designs for a world in which suffering and death will relinquish their hold on all whom God has called his own. A careful selection and use of readings from Scripture for the funeral rites will provide the family and the community with an opportunity to hear God speak to them in their needs, sorrows, fears, and hopes.

23. In the celebration of the liturgy of the word at the funeral liturgy, the biblical readings may not be replaced by nonbiblical readings. But during prayer services with the family nonbiblical readings may be used in addition to readings from Scripture.

25. The psalms are rich in imagery, feeling, and symbols. They powerfully express the suffering and pain, the hope and trust of people of every age and culture. Above all the psalms sing of faith in God, of revelation and redemption. They enable the assembly to pray in the words that Jesus himself used during his life on earth. Jesus, who knew anguish and the fear of death, “offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death . . . . Although he was Son, he learned to obey through suffering; but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation . . . .” (Hebrews 5: 7-9). In the psalms the members of the assembly pray in the voice of Christ, who intercedes on their behalf before the Father. The Church, like Christ, turns again and again to the psalms as a genuine expression of grief and of praise and as a sure source of trust and hope in times of trial. Parish priests (pastors) and other ministers are, therefore, to make an earnest effort through an effective catechesis to lead their communities to a clearer and deeper grasp of at least some of the psalms provided for the funeral rites.

26. The psalms are designated for use in many places in the funeral rites (for example, as responses to the readings, for the processions, for use at the vigil for the deceased). Since the psalms are songs, whenever possible, they should be sung.

27. A brief homily based on the readings is always given after the gospel reading at the funeral liturgy and may also be given after the readings at the vigil service; but there is never to be a eulogy. Attentive to the grief of those present, the homilist should dwell on God’s compassionate love and on the paschal mystery of the Lord, as proclaimed in the Scripture readings. The homilist should also help the members of the assembly to understand that the mystery of God’s love and the mystery of Jesus’ victorious death and resurrection were present in the life and death of the deceased and that these mysteries are active in their own lives as well. Through the homily members of the

family and community should receive consolation and strength to face the
death of one of their members with a hope nourished by the saving word of
God. Laypersons who preside at the funeral rites give an instruction on the
readings.

Vigils for the Deceased

85. The vigil in the form of the liturgy of the word consists of the introductory
rites, the liturgy of the word, the prayer of intercession, and a concluding rite.

87. The proclamation of the word of God is the high point and central focus
of the vigil. The liturgy of the word usually includes a first reading, responsorial
psalm, gospel reading, and homily. A reader proclaims the first reading. The
responsorial psalm should be sung, whenever possible. If an assisting deacon
is present, he proclaims the gospel reading. Otherwise the presiding minister
proclaims the gospel reading.

88. The purpose of the reading at the vigil is to proclaim the paschal mystery,
teach remembrance of the dead, convey the hope of being gathered together
in God's kingdom, and encourage the witness of Christian life. Above all, the
readings tell of God's design for a world in which suffering and death will relin­
quish their hold on all whom God has called his own. The responsorial psalm
enables the community to respond in faith to the reading and to express its
grief and its praise of God. In the selection of readings the needs of the
mourners and the circumstances of the death should be kept in mind.

89. A homily based on the readings is given at the vigil to help those present
find strength and hope in God's saving word.

Funeral Liturgy

304. The reading of the word of God is an essential element of the celebration
of the funeral liturgy. The readings proclaim the paschal mystery, teach
remembrance of the dead, convey the hope of being gathered together again
in God's kingdom, and encourage the witness of Christian life. Above all, the
readings tell of God's design for a world in which suffering and death will relin­
quish their hold on all whom God has called his own.

306. The responsorial psalm enables the community to respond in faith to the
first reading. Through the psalms the community expresses its grief and
praise, and acknowledges its Creator and Redeemer as the sure source of
trust and hope in times of trial. Since the responsorial psalm is a song, when­
ever possible, it should be sung. Psalms may be sung responsorially, with the
response sung by the assembly and all the verses by the cantor or choir, or
directly, with no response and all the verses sung by all or by the cantor or
choir. When not sung, the responsorial psalm after the reading should be recit­
ed in a manner conducive to meditation on the word of God.

308. A brief homily based on the readings should always be given at the
funeral liturgy, but never any kind of eulogy. The homilist should dwell on
God's compassionate love and on the paschal mystery of the Lord as pro­
claimed in the Scripture readings. Through the homily, the community should
receive the consolation and strength to face the death of one of its members with a hope that has been nourished by the proclamation of the saving word of God.

Liturgy of the Hours

44. After the psalmody there is either a short reading or a longer one.

45. The short reading is provided to fit the day, the season, and the feast. It is to be read and received as a true proclamation of God's word that emphasizes some holy thought or highlights some shorter passages that may be overlooked in the continuous cycle of Scripture readings.

The short readings are different for each day of the psalter cycle.

46. Especially in a celebration with a congregation, a longer Scripture reading may be chosen either from the office of readings or the Lectionary for Mass, particularly texts that for some reason have not been used. From time to time some other more suitable reading may be used . . .

47. In a celebration with a congregation a short homily may follow the reading to explain its meaning, as circumstances suggest.

48. After the reading or homily a period of silence may be observed.

49. As a response to the word of God, a responsorial chant or short response is provided; this may be omitted . . .

55. The office of readings seeks to provide God's people, and in particular those consecrated to God in a special way, with a wider selection of passages from sacred Scripture for meditation, together with the finest excerpts from spiritual writers. Even though the cycle of scriptural readings at daily Mass is now richer, the treasures of revelation and tradition to be found in the office readings will also contribute greatly to the spiritual life. Bishops and priests in particular should prize these treasures, so that they may hand on to others the word of God they have themselves received and make their teaching "the true nourishment of the people of God."

56. But prayer should accompany "the reading of sacred Scripture so that there may be a conversation between God and his people: 'we talk with God when we pray, we listen to him when we read God's words.'" For this reason the office of readings consists also of psalms, a hymn, a prayer, and other texts, giving it the character of true prayer.

64. There are two readings: the first is from the Scriptures, the second is from the writings of the Fathers or church writers, or else is a reading connected with the saints.

140. The reading of sacred Scripture, which, following an ancient tradition, takes place publicly in the liturgy, is to have special importance for all Chris-

tians, not only in the celebration of the eucharist but also in the divine office. The reason is that this reading is not the result of individual choice or devotion but is the planned decision of the Church itself, in order that in the course of the year the Bride of Christ may unfold the mystery of Christ "from his incarnation and birth until his ascension, the day of Pentecost, and the expectation of blessed hope and of the Lord's return." In addition, the reading of sacred Scripture in the liturgical celebration is always accompanied by prayer in order that the reading may have greater effect and that, in turn, prayer — especially the praying of the psalms — may gain fuller understanding and become more fervent and devout because of the reading.

Book of Blessings

20. The typical celebration of a blessing consists of two parts: first, the proclamation of the word of God, and second, the praise of God's goodness and the petition for his help. In addition, there are usually rites for the beginning and conclusion that are proper to each celebration.

21. The purpose of the first part of the celebration is to ensure that the blessing is a genuine sacred sign, deriving its meaning and effectiveness from God's word that is proclaimed.

Thus the proclamation of God's word is the central point of the first part and the word proclaimed should provide a basis for the introductory comments and the brief instruction on the readings, as well as for any exhortation or homily that may be given, as occasion suggests.

Particularly when there are several readings, an intervening psalm or song or an interval of prayerful silence may be included, in order to intensify the faith of those taking part in the celebration.

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