The Art of Presiding
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Editor
J. FRANK HENDERSON

Editorial Office:
NATIONAL LITURGICAL OFFICE
90 Parent Avenue (613) 236-9461
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1 extension 176

Business Office:
NOVALIS
P.O. Box 990
Outremont, Quebec
H2V 4S7 (514) 948-1222

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The Art of Presiding

What is the nature of liturgical presiding, and what makes a good presider? What does it mean to speak about the sacramentality of the presider? How might a reappraisal of the practice of concelebration be carried out?
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The Art of Presiding

Presiding in the liturgical assembly is a great privilege. It is also a serious responsibility and a considerable challenge. It is not easy to be a good presider, yet it is such an important ministry in the church.

The bishops who gave direction to the contemporary liturgical renewal in Vatican Council II's Constitution on the Liturgy understood clearly that this renewal required more than just a set of revised liturgical books. It also required appropriate training — indeed a conversion of heart — of those we now call liturgical presiders — mainly presbyters.

In the same section of the Constitution that enunciates the first principle of liturgical renewal - full, conscious and active participation of all the baptized — the bishops also say:

> Yet it would be futile to entertain any hopes of realizing this goal [that is, full participation] unless the pastors themselves, to begin with, become thoroughly penetrated with the spirit and power of the liturgy and become masters of it. It is vitally necessary, therefore, that attention be directed, above all, to the liturgical instruction of the clergy. (n. 14)

Elsewhere they say:

> Pastors of souls must therefore realize that, when the liturgy is celebrated, more is required than the mere observance of the laws governing valid and licit celebration. It is their duty also to ensure that the faithful take part knowingly, actively, and fruitfully. (n. 11)

With zeal and patience, pastors of souls must promote the liturgical instruction of the faithful, and also their active participation in the liturgy both internally and externally. The age and condition of their people, their way of life, and degree of religious culture should be taken into account. By so doing, pastors will be fulfilling one of the chief duties of a faithful dispenser of the mysteries of God; and in this matter they must lead their flock not only in word but also by example. (n. 19)

These goals have been achieved only in part, even after 30 years.

It is not simple to define the essence of liturgical presiding. It is not the rubricism of former days: reading words, following rubrics, turning pages with great exactness and with a law-and-order mentality. It is not saying prayers on behalf of the people or in their stead. It is not domination or paternalism. It is not the private devotion of the presider.

Images that express some dimensions of liturgical presiding positively include leadership, enabling, facilitating, animation, and midwifery.
The word "preside" often is followed by a preposition. In civil society we usually say "preside over." Within the context of liturgy the use of "over" needs to be questioned. Perhaps "preside in" or "preside with" better expresses the nature of liturgical presiding. After all, it is the assembly as a whole that is the principal agent of liturgical celebration.

Great impetus was given to our appreciation of the nature of liturgical presiding by the book *Strong, Loving, and Wise*, written in 1975 by the late Robert Hovda. Originally published by the Liturgical Conference, it is still in print, now available from the Liturgical Press. It is still worth careful study, and still continues to inspire many a presider.

In this issue of the Bulletin, we reprint a relatively new document on liturgical presiding, *Leading the Prayer of God's People. Liturgical Presiding for Priests and Laity*. It was prepared in 1991 by the directors of national offices of liturgy for the countries of Europe. (There these officials are called "national secretaries.") This takes lay persons who preside at liturgical celebrations into account, as well as presiders who are ordained. It is an insightful and helpful document, though as with any such effort, readers will find occasional passages that they might wish were nuanced or worded somewhat differently.

The theme topic of The Art of Presiding is completed by several other articles on presiding and on concelebration.
Leading the Assembly into Prayer:
Reflections for Presiders

Once a year, presiders need to stop for a while and reflect on their ministry. They might begin by asking themselves these two questions:

• Am I still growing as a presider?
• What do I think I'm doing when I preside?

Pondering these questions might be appropriate on the anniversary of ordination, or New Year's, or the First Sunday of Advent, or Pentecost, or some other significant date in the presider's life.

A Life-Long Task

Continual growth: Becoming a good presider is a life-long task. One does not emerge a perfect presider upon ordination or completion of some program of training. It is a never-ending challenge, as well as a privilege and opportunity. Presiders are called to their ministry, and a faithful response to their call includes continual growth and development in this ministry.

Be specific: Once a year presiders ought to ask themselves in very concrete terms: How have I improved as a presider this year? Write the answers down in a "presiding journal." Then reflect on the question, In what ways do I still need to improve? Write these down as well. Then a few specific goals ought to be set for the year ahead. Write these down too, and put them where they will be seen each time one presides.

Tape recording: This process might be facilitated if, once a year, presiders ask someone to audiotape — or preferably, videotape — a liturgy at which they preside. Then, in private or with friends, they ought to play and replay the tape and analyze it for good points as well as for areas in which there is still room for improvement.

It's hard to be fresh: Most presiders exercise this ministry frequently, and it is easy to get in a rut; it is easy to level off at some particular plateau of skill as a presider. It is hard to be fresh all the time, and difficult to continue to be self-critical and have a conscious desire to improve in this ministry. Nevertheless, an appreciation of the fact that one's presiding can always be a little better needs to be part of the self-understanding of every presider.

Rationale

False assumptions: Again, because the experience of presiding is such a common one in the lives of many presiders, one tends to assume that one
knows exactly what it is all about. And yet the meaning and rationale of presiding also needs to be a regular subject of meditation and reflection.

The title of this article gives one perspective on presiding: *Leading the Assembly into Prayer.* Each word is significant.

A leader goes ahead of the group. He or she therefore enters into the liturgy fully, actively, consciously, and fruitfully first. The leader then brings the others along as well. Leaders know their people, know what problems they have, know their joys, know what makes worship difficult. Leaders persuade, entice, cajole, push and pull, as necessary, in order to bring the group along.

Two related terms are enabler and facilitator. Here the emphasis is on helping the people do what they are able to do (though they might not realize it), and what they are called to do (though they might not be fully aware of this). Enablers and facilitators allow the people to have the power that is their right; they do not keep them passive or in any way disempowered. Enablers and facilitators help people discern the gifts God has given them, honor these gifts, and provide opportunities so they can come to expression.

Another related term is animator. This term reminds us, if we need reminding, that what we are about is liturgy, the worship of God. As the Constitution on the Liturgy tells us, "more is required than the mere observance of the laws governing valid and licit celebration. It is [the duty of presiders] to ensure that the faithful take part knowingly, actively, and fruitfully" (no. 11). Animators keep everyone mindful of the deeper dimensions of the liturgy; make sure that people do not stop at external words and actions but know and appreciate their deeper meaning. Animators themselves experience the presence of God in liturgical celebrations and minister to this experience of the Holy One for each person present.

In relationship: The terms leader, enabler, facilitator, and animator all are relational terms. That is, they do not apply to presiders in isolation from other people. Instead, they apply to persons in relationship with a larger group of people. Presiders all by themselves are only half there; for completeness they need the rest of the people.

This is what the term "assembly" signifies. Presiders are not there for themselves but for the rest of the people. They in fact are part of the assembly, while still having a particular role. Presiding is one form of pastoral care for the rest of the parish and for the guests and strangers who have been brought into the assembly for that celebration.

Assembly is not a static term. Each assembly is unique; even within a given parish community the assembly varies somewhat from one celebration to another, from one Sunday to another. Presiders will be aware of this.

Into prayer: Though we are used to the phrase "leading in prayer," the title of this article deliberately uses "into" rather than "in." Presiders are not there to say prayers on behalf of the assembly, or to pray while others look on. The assembly is the primary minister – the main prayer – of the liturgy, and it is the presider's role to help the assembly achieve this goal.

Prayer: Again, we are talking about liturgy, the work of Christ and the People of God, in the Holy Spirit. It is not a political rally, nor a party, nor a business meeting, nor a sports event, nor a family reunion. It is the worship of God.
Walking in Other People's Shoes

**What is difficult?** When presiders are fully conscious that they have a responsibility to help other persons — the assembly and each of its members — to participate in the liturgy fully, actively, consciously and fruitfully, then they will be aware of what makes such full participation difficult for the other members of the assembly. Presiders, in a sense, need to walk in the shoes of members of the assembly, to get inside their minds and imaginations, to empathize with their difficulties.

**People are different:** One part of this is to appreciate that not every member of the assembly is the same as you — a middle aged male, perhaps, with a certain ethnic, family and educational background, and a certain standard and style of living. Presiders need as well to know something of the hopes and aspirations, the fears and difficulties of small children and teenagers, of young adults and the elderly, of single parents, of persons who live in poverty or ill-health, of women.

**Waiting**

**Presiders need to wait** for other members of the assembly. Experience shows that presiders often begin to pray or carry out an action when they are ready. But often the people are not yet ready to pray or to act. Lay people sometimes change posture just before a prayer, action or reading. This takes a certain period of time. They have to move, and different members of the assembly will do this more quickly or more slowly than others. Then they have to bring their minds and hearts to attention again.

**Jumping the gun:** Presiders need to wait until the entire assembly has moved and has refocused its attention. It is an abuse of the presider's role — and a waste of time — to begin a prayer, action or reading before people are ready to participate in it.

**Don't be too quick:** Much of the liturgy is dialogue between presider and the rest of the assembly, or between cantor or choir or reader and the rest of the assembly. In such dialogues, presiders need to respect the other members of the assembly. Sometimes the impression is given that the assembly's role — in an acclamation, for example — is simply an unwelcome interruption in the presider's prayer. This impression can be given, again, by not waiting.

**Pauses are important:** Speech is not just word after word; it is also silence and pause between words. In a thoughtful conversation, we often pause after one person has spoken in order to respect their words, in order to make sure they really have finished what they want to say, in order to give rhythm to the dialogue. When we rush in immediately we may give the impression that we were not really listening to the other person.

**Mutual respect:** Presiders therefore need to pause for a brief moment after a congregational text or song or acclamation before beginning what comes next. Not too long, of course, but long enough to show that the congregation's part is an important part of the liturgy and that the presider knows this and respects their role in the liturgical dialogue.
Modes of Participation

**Different modes of participation:** Presiders also need to remember that they participate in ways that are not permitted the rest of the assembly. For example, they can move around, use their hands and arms, look around; they often sit on cushioned chairs. Lay people are most often confined to pews that may be hard and uncomfortable, and that certainly restrict their movement. They are not invited to gesture or look around.

**Speaking and listening:** In addition, presiders speak more than they listen, and they most often speak by reading out of a book. Other members of the assembly mostly listen. When they speak, they often do so without looking at texts: they use memorized texts. Only when they sing out of the hymnal do they see the words they are saying. Presiders mostly speak texts that are not memorized; with lay people it is just the opposite.

**Being aware:** There is nothing basically wrong with these differences in ways of participation. But presiders need to be aware of them, and take these into account when animating the prayer of the assembly.

With Care and Engagement

**Care for people:** Presiders need to reveal, through words, actions and attitudes, that they care for the other members of the assembly, and that they care for the liturgy. Good intentions here are not enough; this care needs to be communicated. Lay persons are aware when this care is not communicated, and feel hurt and disempowered. Presiders who obviously care for their people, who obviously care that everyone participates fully in the liturgy, who care for the church's liturgy itself, are highly valued (and their human frailties are more easily overlooked and forgiven).

**With care goes engagement.** Are presiders personally involved and engaged in the liturgy and with their responsibility of presiding? Or are they remote, neutral, uncaring? Is there a conviction that what they and the rest of the assembly are doing is terribly important?

**Witness:** To care and engagement may be added the term "witness." Presiders need to witness to faith in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, in God. This is part of the process of preaching; it is also part of being authentic in prayer. Do presiders really mean what they say in the prayers?

Dialogue and Invitation

**Our liturgy is characterized by dialogue and invitation.** The presider and people speak back and forth; they pray for each other; they urge each other on. The presider (and sometimes, the deacon) also often invites the rest of the assembly to enter into prayer or engage in some action.

**In relationship:** Both dialogue and invitation are experiences of relationship. This relationship is not as between strangers, but fellow believers, fellow disciples, people who care for and trust in each other. They are also experiences of going out of oneself to meet others. To be authentic and convincing, presiders have to show that they want to enter into a relationship with the other mem-
bers of the assembly. They want to speak with them, pray with them, gather them into prayer. And the presiders want their response and will seek to draw them out; presiders want them to enter into relationship. Barriers go down between presiders and people.

**Eye contact:** In dialogue and invitation, eye contact is important. These are occasions when looking at the rest of the assembly is not only permissible or desirable, but required; it is the only authentic thing to do. Dialogues and invitations, therefore, are texts that presiders should memorize in order to be able to look at the people and not at the book.

**Tone of voice:** Dialogues and invitations also require the use of tones of voice that are authentic and fit these forms of ritual speech. The way they are spoken needs to communicate the presider's desire to enter into relationship with the people.

**Preparation**

**Reflection needed:** Presiders need to look at their texts before the liturgy starts, and spend some time reflecting on them. When the liturgy becomes routine, this preparation tends to be omitted. And of course pressures of other responsibilities are obstacles to such preparation as well. Preparation, however, is important for several reasons. Among others, it keeps presiders from being surprised. It allows them opportunities to see how prayers might be read with greater effectiveness. It provides an opportunity to enter more deeply into the prayers they read. Preparation shows that one cares and wants to do a good job.

**Authenticity**

**Communicate meaning and prayer:** Presiders surely want to mean what they say and do, and surely they want the other members of the assembly to know that they mean what they say and do. First, presiders need to understand intellectually what they are saying. Next, they need to communicate this meaning. Finally, and most important, they need to make it real prayer for themselves and for everyone else: an experience of the Holy.

**Nonverbal difficulties:** There can be all sorts of problems and obstacles that keep presiders from being fully authentic. At one level, some presiders seem ill at ease in their bodies. They walk awkwardly, stand rigidly, are uncomfortable with gestures. They may also wear their vestments poorly and avoid eye contact. These things, which are so apparent to the rest of the assembly, suggest that presiders are not happy in their calling, not really ready to preside.

**Other presiders** may have little or no sense of ritual or of symbol.

**Listening and silence:** As already mentioned, other problems include difficulties in listening – in attending to what other members of the assembly are saying, singing or doing. There may be difficulties as well in waiting (as already considered), and in being silent. Silence is an important part of our liturgy. Times for silent prayer are clearly indicated in the rubrics, and yet sometimes these are ignored.

**Mean what you say:** Authenticity in presiding means sounding like you mean what you are saying; sounding as if the prayers are really prayer for you
(again, good intentions and interior prayer are not enough; presiders have to convince the rest of the assembly that they really are praying). This is not some kind of test, but rather part of leading – animating – the assembly into prayer; the presider has to go first and show the way.

**Reading from a book:** Some presiders sound convincing when speaking spontaneously, but not when reading. It is not easy to read a prayer text well from a book; it takes practice and skill not to have either a voice that is too flat, or one that is "preachy" or "churchy." One needs appropriate inflection, so that the voice is interesting and conveys meaning. It has to be loud enough, and not drop off at the end of sentences. The pace has to vary, again to convey meaning and draw people's attention, and yet never too fast nor too slow. One needs to project the voice so that it carries for a good distance. And when one has to speak loudly, it should still have inflection and not sound as if one is yelling.

**Liturgical knowledge:** Authentic presiding also means that one understands the structure of the rites and parts of rites, and of individual prayers. One needs also to appreciate priorities: which elements are most important, and which less so. To convey meaning and prayerfulness, presiders also need to know what kind of prayer is being spoken – there are different genres of prayers. Long prayers and short texts require somewhat different approaches.

**Continuing Formation**

**Our Father:** One way to continue one's formation as a presider, year after year, is to put the liturgical books aside and use a familiar prayer such as the Our Father. Speak it out loud, as if to a church full of people. Practice in a church, and with someone who at first will stand near you, and then farther and farther back in the church. Can you pray this familiar prayer well, in a way that convinces the hearer that you are really praying, and in a way that draws the hearer into praying it as well? If there is difficulty here, then analyze what is not working well, and practice until this goes very well.

**Liturgical texts:** When you can speak the Lord's Prayer extremely well, then move on to texts in a liturgical book. Take one short text and one longer prayer, practice reading them aloud, and tape record each effort. Start by reading them to yourself, then to someone close to you, and finally to someone standing far back in the church. Listen to the tapes and see if you sound convincing – as if you are really praying. Repeat and repeat.

**Tools or barriers?** Assess your attitude towards the liturgical books. Are they tools, to help your prayer and the prayer of the rest of the assembly? Are they things to hide behind and keep your relationship with the assembly safe and comfortable?

**Nonverbal elements:** When your reading skills are satisfactory, then move to videotape and to the nonverbal elements of worship: posture, gesture and movement, listening and silence, etc.

Part of being a liturgical presider is to grow in this ministry.
The Sacramentality of the Presider

Catholic theology sees the liturgical presider as more than just someone who carries out a particular function, in this case, leadership in prayer. As the European Secretary's document printed elsewhere in this issue states,

The exercise of liturgical presidency does not find its basic justification in a certain hierarchy of rank and dignity within the Church, nor in professional competence, nor in the need to share out various tasks. These have their place, but the fundamental reason why every liturgical celebration needs someone to preside is that no celebrating assembly can exist except in the name of Christ and called together by Christ, rooted in the living tradition of the catholic and apostolic faith. This reality is what presidency in the assembly expresses. (p. 11)

Kathleen Hughes explains:

The Epistle to the Hebrews describes Jesus as the one and only high priest, the leader of prayer, the one who stands before the throne of grace interceding on behalf of the community. That is the theological presupposition that we express every time we pray "through Christ our Lord." To preside at prayer is to exercise a ministry in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the prayer of the assembly is always mediated by Christ in the power of his abundant and life-giving Spirit. Thus any who would exercise leadership of the community's prayer, ordained or lay, do so as icons of Christ. That means that the leader strives first of all to be a person of prayer and one who attempts, in all the facets of his or her life, "to put on Christ." Orders or jurisdiction matter less for authentic liturgical leadership than the moral authority of holiness born in prayer.

Thus the presider points to the presence of Christ as the real and effective leader of the assembly and of its prayer. This is what we mean when we speak about the "sacramentality" of the presider.

Contemporary Difficulties

Not widely appreciated: One gets the impression that the concept of the sacramentality of the presider is one that is not widely appreciated in the church at the present time. One feels that neither presider nor people experience this point of theology very deeply. Are presiders clearly conscious that they point to the presence and leadership of Jesus Christ? Do other members of the assembly really and effectively experience Jesus Christ as their leader in prayer in the ministry of our real-life presiders?

Not spoken about: Why might such a gap between theory and practice exist today? For one thing, the idea of the sacramentality of the presider seems to have dropped out of our conversation and teaching. It seems rarely to be taught in parishes, or at least not effectively or convincingly. Perhaps the modesty and humility of presiders keeps them from talking about their sacramentality. Or perhaps they are not very conscious of this aspect of their ministry.

What language do we use: Questions also arise about the language that we use to speak of this sacramentality. In particular, some expressions seem to emphasize the power of presiders, not their service. Today we feel differently about power than in former times; lay people do not want to be dominated by their leaders, and liturgical presiders do not wish to dominate the rest of the assembly.

A problem with persons: At a more general level, it seems difficult to appreciate the sacramentality of persons today. It seems easier to appreciate the sacramentality of sharing bread and wine, bathing in water, anointing with oil, than the sacramentality not only of presiders, but also of baptized persons, married persons, and sick persons anointed with oil.

Too human: In part this is because we see the humanity of such persons: we see them warts and all. In a way it was easier when ordained presiders were put on pedestals; but this is no longer appropriate.

Rethinking Sacramentality

An initial reflection: The subject of the sacramentality of the liturgical presider (and other sacramental persons) needs rethinking, needs new modes of expression, and needs new methods of teaching. Here we simply offer some initial reflections on this subject; more study and thought needs to be given to it. Today it is inappropriate to simply reiterate the formulas and ways of thinking about sacramentality that were current prior to Vatican Council II. We need a modern approach, one that takes into account contemporary views of sacraments and liturgy. What are some of the topics that need to be considered?

Modes of Christ's Presence

Several modes of Christ's presence: The sacramentality of the presider needs to be related to and integrated into the other modes of Christ's presence in the worshipping assembly: the assembly itself, the word, and the eucharistic bread and wine. As already mentioned, it also needs to be related to the sacramentality of persons through baptism, marriage, anointing and ordination. The sacramentality of the presider therefore cannot be an isolated subject.

Christology

What assumptions? When we speak about the effective presence of Jesus Christ in our liturgical celebrations, we inevitably make assumptions about Christ, and these need to be examined and made explicit.
Absence or presence? At some period in the past there was a tendency to think of Christ as absent from our celebrations in a certain way; he was in heaven, and the ordained presider acted as a substitute and replacement for Christ here and now in the liturgy. Today, however, we think more about the real (though invisible) presence of Christ in the liturgical assembly. Sacramental persons point to this presence, and not to Christ's absence.

Today we also appreciate more than before that Christ is present in the Holy Spirit.

Divinity and humanity: Theologians today talk about "high" and "low" christologies, that is, those that emphasize, respectively, the divinity of Christ or his humanity. In a previous period the emphasis definitely was on the divinity of Christ, and this influenced our appreciation of the presider. Today a more balanced christology seems to be called for, with greater emphasis than before on Christ's humanity. This might allow us to appreciate the humanity of the presider and allow us to see that truly human presiders can indeed point to the presence of Christ.

What images? We may also ask what images of Christ are evoked when we speak of him as leader of the assembly's prayer? Previously people tended to think mainly of the image of "priest." Today a primary image of Christ is as servant; is this the one that is embodied in the presider? Vatican Council II also emphasized the triple images of priest, prophet and king. We also encounter a variety of aspects of the life and ministry of Christ in the gospel readings proclaimed in each eucharistic celebration. Our renewed appreciation of the paschal mystery always brings us back to Christ crucified and risen.

Just what image or images of Christ are we thinking about when we speak of the sacramentality of the presider?

Christ and the Assembly

How does Christ lead? The concept that Jesus Christ in the Spirit is the leader of the assembly's prayer raises the question: What exactly is the relationship between Christ and the assembly? What do we mean by leadership of prayer, and in particular the leadership of prayer that is exhibited by Jesus Christ in the Spirit?

Close or far away? For example, do we think of Christ as distant — heavenly — or as close to us — imminent? What balance between transcendence and imminence do we have in our minds and imaginations?

Head and body: One traditional image that is still important with respect to the relationship of Christ and the assembly comes from the letters of Paul: the image of Christ as head, and the church as body. This very anthropomorphic image is easy to grasp, and has much to commend itself. But it can be interpreted in more than one way, and as an image, it inevitably is incomplete. We know that it has sometimes been used to justify the power of the clergy over the people, and that is no longer considered appropriate. How might the image of head and body best be interpreted today?

Other images: Today many would prefer to think of Christ as companion, friend, enabler, healer, as well as master and Lord; the one who called the children, who
was a friend of women; the one who urges and teaches but does not force; the one who takes pity upon but does not look down upon. How do we apply these images of Jesus Christ to the concept of the sacramentality of the presider?

Sacrament

**Authenticity of symbols:** We also will need to think about the sacramentality of the presider in terms of modern concepts of sacrament and sacramentality. For example, today we speak about "authenticity of symbols" with respect to the bread and wine that are shared in the eucharist, the use of water in baptism and of oil in anointing. How does this authenticity apply to the person of the presider? How do we apply the concept of authenticity without denying or disvaluing the real humanity and quite apparent frailties and limitations of the presider?

**Sacraments as actions:** Today we also speak of sacraments as actions and not simply as things (or persons). It is therefore in their presiding (an action) that presiders are sacramental, not in their persons isolated from this action. As well, the action of presiding always involves a relationship with other persons, the other members of the assembly. The sacramentality of the presider therefore involves an action which is at the same time the expression of a relationship with other persons.

Liturgical Principles

**Full participation:** Many of the ideas and ways of speaking about the sacramentality of the presider come to us from an age when the ministry of the assembly was not valued — or even allowed. Today we know that the first principle of the modern liturgical renewal is the full, conscious, active and fruitful participation of all of the baptized in the liturgy. Any appreciation of the sacramentality of the presider must not diminish this principle; indeed the latter concept must find its place within the primary principle of full participation. Thinking about the sacramentality of the presider must therefore be a way of enhancing and facilitating the ministry of the assembly as a whole.

Consequences

**What difference?** Finally, we need to ask the crucial question: What difference does it make to have a deep appreciation of the sacramentality of the liturgical presider? What difference does it make for presiders and assembly as a whole to experience the presence of Christ with us in our liturgical celebrations in this way? This makes a worthy subject for our prayerful meditation.
Leading the Prayer of God's People.
Liturgical Presiding for Priests and Laity.

The Association of National Liturgical Secretaries of Europe

This important and insightful document is published with the permission of the Association of National Liturgical Secretaries of Europe. Several "Forewords" have been omitted.

Liturgical Formation, an Urgent Priority

We Need to Rekindle the Enthusiasm of the Council

Pope John Paul II recently stated that, twenty-five years since the Constitution on the Liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium, appeared, 'the most urgent task we have is that of the biblical and liturgical formation of the people of God, both pastors and faithful.' In saying this he was underlining once again, particularly for priests, what the Council had already said: 'There is no hope that full and active participation on the part of the faithful can be achieved unless the pastors themselves become imbued more deeply with the spirit and power of the liturgy' (Apostolic Letter on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Constitution on the Liturgy, 1989, no. 15). 'This,' he added, 'is a long-term programme, and it must be begun in the seminaries and houses of formation, and continue right throughout their priestly life' (Ibid.).

As secretaries of National Liturgical Commissions of the European countries, we would like to highlight this need. Our experience convinces us, without exception, of its urgency. There is no doubt that commitment to liturgical formation is uneven from country to country. In some areas great strides have been made, with very encouraging results, and the promotion of liturgical reflection and formation is actively pursued at many levels. In spite of this, however, it is all too frequently true that liturgical formation falls far short of what was called for by Vatican II.

1 A Document of the Association of National Liturgy Secretaries of Europe (Dublin: Columba Press 1991)
A word on seminaries. A simple reminder that the Instruction of the Congregation for Catholic Education (6 January 1970) directed that ‘in future Sacred Liturgy is to be considered one of the principal subjects’ (n. 79), and that it should come next in importance to Dogmatic Theology. This arrangement indicates a liturgical course which is both theoretical and practical. It should include formation in the art of presiding – and should provide for this by a sufficient number of periods devoted to practical workshops.

The weakest area in liturgy is undoubtedly the manner of exercising the ministry of presiding. Many celebrants, while there can be no doubting their personal worthiness or their good will, don’t seem to be able to preside effectively. But have they been adequately trained to preside? Sometimes it would appear that they lack something of the enthusiasm which provides the motivation necessary to animate an assembly and focus the celebration of the liturgy.

This is what the Holy Father is underlining when he writes that ‘the time has come to recover that wave of enthusiasm which lifted the whole Church on its crest in those days when the Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium was prepared, discussed, voted upon and introduced into the life of the Church’ (Ibid., no. 23).

Why Have We Written This Document?

It would have been a waste of time to produce a document unless we believed it could lead to concrete decisions, especially as regards the seriousness with which liturgical formation is taken at all levels of the Christian community, in its ministries and apostolic mission. Since we are secretaries of the National Liturgical Commissions, we will be very closely involved with such concrete decisions, and this document is an indication of our desire to commit ourselves to their success.

In preparing for our assembly of 1990 in Bruges, we conducted a survey throughout Europe. The findings of this survey prompted this present document. Its immediate concern was the topic Presiding at Liturgy, but what emerged with great clarity was the urgent need for liturgical formation of high quality.

Consequently, our intention is to place before you the results of our common reflection on the kind of formation which is necessary to ensure good liturgical presiding, including the conditions under which it is conducted and the spirituality it implies. We address ourselves primarily to the bishops of the Conferences of Bishops of Europe and to all in Europe engaged in and responsible for liturgical formation.

Our reflection on the presiding ministry of priests and deacons (and of course of bishops) in no way wishes to exclude consideration of lay leadership of worship. Pope John Paul, in the message already quoted, writes that ‘an appropriate formation is indispensable for lay people also, especially since in many regions they are called upon to assume ever more important responsibilities in the community’ (no. 15).

Liturgical Presiding at the Present Time.

The chief celebrant of the liturgy is the assembly: The liturgical assembly itself is the primary and most fundamental celebrant of liturgy. It is called together in order to carry out, in faith and in praise, its baptismal priestly ministry.
When it is duly constituted, the assembly is the outstanding sign of the presence of Christ to his Church. 'Liturgical actions are not private functions but are celebrations of the Church, the sacrament of unity, namely, the holy people united and ordered under the guidance of the bishops. Liturgical actions, therefore, belong to the whole body of the Church . . . though they involve individual members in different ways, according to the diversity of orders, functions and levels of participation' (S.C. no. 26).

According to the same teaching of the Second Vatican Council, the presence of Christ to his Church is also signified by the proclamation of the word, the eucharistic celebration and the minister who presides.

Our main concern in this document is the presiding minister. We wish to underline, however, that it is not our intention to overlook the primary role of the assembly.

When an ordained minister presides: Various questions of a practical as well as a theological nature are posed in our countries by the function of presiding in the liturgy. The very use of words like 'presiding' and 'presider' is a source of astonishment to some. The fact is, however, that this usage is in line with the structure of the liturgy and with the most ancient tradition of the Church.

We must, nevertheless, be clear about the specific implications of this kind of vocabulary when we are dealing with the liturgy. Every aspect of the liturgical assembly and of its celebrations — and particularly the ministries of presiding over and animating the assembly — must flow from the unique nature of the assembly itself. This is also true of the various means and techniques used in ensuring a fruitful celebration in which everybody is involved, even though in this case it is legitimate also to consult and apply the various communication sciences.

The exercise of liturgical presidency does not find its basic justification in a certain hierarchy of rank and dignity within the Church, nor in professional competence, nor in the need to share out various tasks. These have their place, but the fundamental reason why every liturgical celebration needs someone to preside is that no celebrating assembly can exist except in the name of Christ and called together by Christ, rooted in the living tradition of the catholic and apostolic faith. This reality is what presidency in the assembly expresses.

This is easily seen in the case of episcopal and priestly ministry. They are entrusted, by virtue of the sacrament of orders, with the task of ensuring, in persona Christi, the building up of Christ's Church; they are to gather it together and preside over the sacraments and other liturgical celebrations. Their ministry of presiding is a constant reminder and expression of the fact that it is Christ himself who convokes, assembles and animates his Church.

There is a risk — and it must be strenuously resisted — of looking on the one who is thus called to preside as one now placed outside the assembly or in a position of dominance over it. Bishops and priests are charged with presiding over the prayer and praise of the people of God (its 'spiritual sacrifice'), but they cannot accomplish this except insofar as they are themselves members of the Body of Christ, since it is the church as the baptised people consecrated by the 'royal priesthood of the faithful' which is the 'subject' of liturgical action, and especially of the eucharistic sacrifice. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (Introduction, no. 5) reminds us of this truth when it is establishing that the participation of the faithful in the eucharistic action is necessary.
Presidency, and the exercise of the 'ministerial priesthood' which presiding involves in certain cases, are always a service offered to the 'baptismal priesthood' of all the faithful.

To be successful, the liturgical celebration must express all the wealth of meaning contained in this sense of Church and must convey it effectively to the gathered community. This will happen most easily and securely if it is symbolised in the manner in which the presider and the assembly experience their interaction during the celebration. Where this is achieved, the assembly finds that it has a genuine experience of being the true 'subject' of the liturgical celebration, as a result of how the presider relates to it, but also that, through the presence of the presider, it experiences what it is to be the Body of the one Lord, Jesus Christ.

Deacons are also ordained ministers, and may be called upon to preside over certain celebrations. The document entitled Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest (Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988) offers some reflections on what the presidency of the deacon implies.

The deacon presides in virtue of his ordination. 'He is ordained to guide and increase the people of God. He is empowered to direct prayers, proclaim the Gospel, preach the homily and distribute the eucharist' (no. 30). Nevertheless, the presidency of the deacon is a supplementary one. Diaconal ordination does not have as its goal liturgical presiding. In fact, the deacon cannot preside over the primary celebration of the liturgical assembly, which is the eucharist.

When lay Christians are called to lead the assembly: Lay Christians are being invited more and more frequently to take responsibility for celebrations of the people of God, when priests are not available. Under what title do they undertake this task? The Directory mentioned above offers some indications, which may also be useful in considering other kinds of liturgical celebrations.

In the first place, Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest are unequivocally referred to as 'assemblies' and 'celebrations of the Word of God' (Ibid., no. 20). This means that these celebrations are truly gatherings of the Church and not just devotional meetings. One might think of the parallel case of the Liturgy of the Hours. The General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours declares that 'when the faithful are invited to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours and gather together in unity of heart and voice, they constitute a manifestation of the Church which celebrates the mystery of Christ' (GILH no. 22, cited by the Directory, no. 33).

In speaking of lay people the Directory speaks not of presiders but of 'leaders' (Latin: moderator). The distinction is interesting from the point of view of grasping what is involved. The term 'leader' implies that one guides the unfolding of the celebration, ensuring that there is a proper balance between its various elements and between the different roles undertaken by members of the assembly. What the concept does not imply is a pastoral responsibility for the gathered faithful; this falls to the priest. Neither does it suggest a permanent ministry. In this sense it is correct to say that a lay presider acts as one member of the assembly among others. And yet his or her exercise of the ministry must show that this is a genuine assembly of the Church.

In most cases of lay leadership it is envisaged that the one who leads will use the official texts and rites of the liturgical books. This implies a 'certain form of
presidency’ which must be guided by the meaning, symbolism and laws of the liturgy which apply to all presiding. The basis of the exercise of presidency is the mandate received to conduct the celebration, but also — and more fundamentally — the responsibility proper to every baptised Christian and rooted in the ‘common priesthood of the faithful.’ Pope John Paul refers to this in the Apostolic Letter cited at the beginning of this text: ‘We must give thanks to God for the movement of the Spirit in the Church represented by the liturgical renewal . . . for the ministries exercised by lay people and the responsibility they have assumed in virtue of the common priesthood into which they have been initiated through baptism and confirmation’ (no. 12).

The normal situation in which a lay person may be called upon to lead a liturgical assembly, in accordance with the law and with local regulations of the bishop, would be at the Sunday assembly, the celebration of marriage (Canon 1112) and the celebration of funerals when a priest or deacon is not available. More commonly, however, lay people might lead the Liturgy of the Hours, certain blessings, vigils, and group celebrations such as those for children or young people.

In these situations, one must be careful to avoid causing confusion in roles. For this reason it is envisaged that a lay leader of liturgy does not use the presidential chair or stand at the altar as the priest does. Rites which are proper to ordained ministers (some greetings, blessing the assembly) are replaced by other formulas which do not suggest that the leader is in a ministerially representative role before the assembly. Thus the leader does not speak to the assembly by addressing them as ‘you’, but always refers to ‘we/us’ to indicate his or her being one among the group. It may also be a good idea, to underline this relationship further, that the celebration be led by different members of the assembly from celebration to celebration.

It is also necessary, however, that it clearly appear that every assembly is more than a merely human get-together, that it is in fact gathered by Christ and exists in communion with all other ecclesial communities, especially with the local diocese. The attitude with which leadership is undertaken and the demeanour of the leader should be such as to convey these truths. The signs of the presiding presence of Christ, the cross and the book of the word, will also be duly highlighted and held in reverence, as indeed happens in every assembly.

We felt it necessary to clarify the various roles and degrees involved when we speak of presiding in liturgical celebrations. All that follows takes these distinctions into account. But we will now address ourselves to all forms of liturgical presiding and leadership/animation. This will make for simplicity. The general terms presider and presiding will be employed; the reader will make the necessary distinctions.

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**General Guidelines**

**What Does the Task of the Presider Involve?**

**Welcoming and coordinating:** The one who presides at a Christian assembly does not simply present himself before the gathered people as a total
stranger. As far as possible, he will welcome the faithful as they gather, greet them warmly and make them feel truly at home as members of God's family in God's house.

The presider will not do this alone, but surrounded by all those who are to carry out ministries during the celebration. This will usually be a fairly sizable group of people.

This raises immediately the relationship between the presider and all the other ministers among whom his own ministry is exercised. To preside is not to feel one must do everything that needs to be done, to the exclusion of the ministries of others. The first role of the presider is to be present, to regulate the distribution of ministries and to coordinate their exercise within the unity of the celebration. Too many presiders yield to the temptation of monopolising all liturgical tasks.

But a presider may also risk letting other ministers take over, forgetting that their role is a subordinate one. It is up to the presider to ensure that this is not allowed to happen – that, for instance, the cantor or the animator or the organist do not set themselves up as dictators of what happens in the assembly.

**Being present:** This means more than actually being in the church and not leaving during the celebration (e.g. if someone else is delivering the homily). It means first of all that, by means of his presence, both in visible demeanour and by inner attentiveness and reverence, the presider succeeds in conveying to the entire assembly that the celebration in which they are engaged is, even in its smallest details, something important and wonderful. The personal presence of the one who presides is a vehicle of the presence of Jesus Christ to his Church at prayer.

**Opening and closing the celebration:** It falls to the presider to open and close the liturgical rites. This is true of the ensemble of the celebration (the opening greeting, the concluding blessing). But it is also true of the different liturgical units which may go to make up the celebration (for example: the introductory rites, the prayer of the faithful, the dialogue who opens the eucharistic prayer, the introduction of the Lord's Prayer, and so on).

In many instances it will be sufficient that the presider begin and conclude the rites. This will be enough to establish presidency. All the elements in between can – often must – be entrusted to the entire assembly or to other ministers.

**Leading the prayer of the Church:** It is the task of the presider to pronounce, in an audible and appropriate tone of voice, those prayers which are called ‘presidential prayers.’ These prayers obviously presume that all the people are involved and consciously participating, while the fact that they are said by one person, the presider, signifies that they are greater than the prayer of any one individual and are in fact the prayer of the Church, the body of Christ. Standing to pray in *medio ecclesiae* and *in persona Christi* will always be the expression par excellence of what it means to preside in the liturgy.

An inescapable consequence of this is that it is not sufficient that the one who presides be a man or a woman of prayer. A close familiarity with the prayer of the Church – its content, its style, its theological basis and its ritual context – is also indispensable in the one who leads liturgical prayer.
Positing the sacramental actions: According to the circumstances, it belongs to the presider in the liturgical assembly to posit the essential actions which are constitutive of the Church's sacraments.

Preparing for each celebration; preparing oneself: It would not be right to embark on a liturgical celebration, much less to assume the presidency of a celebration, without careful and detailed preparation. All the ritual books nowadays envisage the possibility of choices among texts and rites, as well as points when the presider is invited to speak freely and personally to the assembly.

The most effective improvisations are invariably those which have been foreseen and carefully prepared. The presider must also gauge the assembly over which he is to preside, if his words are to be authentic and his actions confidently pitched.

Preparation, therefore, may be envisaged under a double heading:

• What kind of assembly am I called to lead in this celebration?
• What are the component elements of the celebration and their relationship to each other?

These questions are not simply technical ones. They imply also the need for an interior preparation of soul and body, of heart and mind.

Communication Through Ritual and Sign

Communicating: One does not preside for one's own benefit. Presiding is inextricably linked with others — and therefore with communication. It is important to reflect on what this entails, since the kind of communication we are concerned with is specific to the liturgy, and in fact differs from one liturgical action to another.

The presider must never tire of asking himself the questions:

• To whom am I speaking?
• In whose name am I speaking?
• For whom am I performing this action?
• In whose name am I acting?

This is not as easy as it may sound; acting accordingly requires a degree of sensitivity. For instance, in a greeting one is speaking to the assembly and in the name of God, while in a prayer one is speaking to God and in the name of the assembly. These are two very different modes of speech. One must find in each case an appropriate tone of voice, a manner of directing one's eyes which reinforces the words, and a suitable style of gesture.

In this matter of presidential texts, the Instruction Eucharistiae Participationem makes a telling point which reinforces what we have just said: 'One should avoid, on the one hand, a monotonous, uninflected style of speech, and, on the other, a manner of speaking and gesturing which are too personal and dramatic. As the one who presides over the rite, the priest should, by his speech, singing, and actions help those taking part to form a true community that celebrates and lives out the memorial of the Lord' (no. 17).
Ease and dignity of presiding: The presider must be at ease in celebrating with the Christian assembly. He must also convey an appropriate gravity. Being at ease does not imply any indifference or couldn’t-care-less approach, since it has to mesh in with a sense of the dignity required in celebrating the mysteries of God. On the other hand, a sense of seriousness or gravity in liturgy is not the same as forced or artificial behaviour. It should flow with great naturalness, in the freedom of the Spirit, from a profound sense of what is involved in every liturgical act rather than from a stilted rubrical literalness.

It comes down to a sense of being at home with a mode of behaviour which is both ritual and symbolic.

The ritual aspect is a matter of the repetition of liturgical elements which are compact and of necessity well known to all. But it must be done in such a way that the assembly is enabled to appropriate them as so many expressions of its identity.

The symbolic aspect, for its part, is introduced in order to enrich and vitalise the seeming fixity of ritual by opening it up to new dimensions which go beyond what is apparent; in liturgy these dimensions centre on the living relationship of the assembly with the Christ who is invisibly present.

One who presides must therefore acquire the ability to engage in the liturgical gestures and speak the ritual words in such a way that these actions and words will lead the assembly to experience an ever-greater identity with its one Lord as his living Body. This is a very different agenda from simply mouthing the words and getting through the actions because the rubrics prescribe them.

Authentic signs: In the liturgy everything must be genuine, notably the signs used and the attitudes these express. Liturgy is an activity of the human body. Its celebration engages the whole universe. It is an orchestration of creation. Since the presider is at the heart of the assembly and constitutes a kind of reference-point, it is particularly vital that he or she embody a realisation of this cosmic openness.

The gestures of the presider, sparing and authentic, welling up from a profound sense of the celebration, will speak far more eloquently of the symbolism which is the life of liturgy than a spate of words or an interminable commentary. The beauty and noble simplicity of environment, artifacts, vesture, and above all the elements necessary for the sacraments, will evoke far more effectively the mystery being celebrated than a surfeit of explanations which are just a doomed effort to cover up for miserably inadequate signs.

In stressing the above, we do not mean to suggest that the relationship between presider and assembly should be devoid of warmth and spontaneity. Far from it. Symbolic presence is a way of being which is rooted in each one being genuine, true to himself. This is totally consonant with a deep sense of seriousness about serious things. Perhaps the fusion of these elements is best expressed by the way in which one looks at people, since the eyes are the soul of the outer self. All the ministers in the liturgy, when they understand and experience themselves as ministers, will look at their brothers and sisters in the assembly with a gaze which ‘reflects the countenance of Christ, which is the glory of God.’

The presider is also responsible for creating periods of silence during the celebration and for highlighting their value. Some of these are, of course, envis-
aged by the liturgical books. The presider will ensure that they do not become inordinately prolonged, or cut short in an urge to 'get on with it.' A sensitive presider will acquire the ability to 'feel' the mood of the assembly; even more, he will succeed in establishing and moulding it.

A sense of inner silence and recollection should be created by all those who minister – by their deportment and their very manner of speaking and singing. This should be the case even when a pause for physical silence is not appropriate.

**Should the presider sing?** Should the ritual words be chanted by the presider?

First of all, if the presider's singing voice is totally off-key or he is utterly tone deaf, then common sense would say: don't inflict 'singing' on the people!

Having said that, different cultural groups have different expectations and different standards. This must be taken into account. A further factor is that the places where the possibility of singing may arise are not all of equal significance. The dialogue before the preface (for instance) or the opening greeting are not in the same genre as the preface itself or the collect. Where there is an answer to be elicited from the assembly, experience shows that it comes more readily when the phrase of the presider is sung rather than said. This would indicate that, even if the presider doesn’t feel up to singing the collect, he might sing the conclusion. And so on.

Directives to the assembly, however, are of a different genre, and not intended for singing.

**Liturgical Space and Liturgical Vesture**

**The presidential chair:** As we have said, the presence of a presider in the assembly is symbolic in function. This symbolism is expressed in various ways, among them the place from which he presides, the chair. In the case of a bishop or a priest, the chair should be 'an expression of the function of the one who presides over the assembly and directs its prayer' (GIRM no. 271).

When the liturgical space is being designed, the importance of this factor should not be overlooked. The presider's chair should be so positioned that the one seated in it is genuinely seen to preside over the whole gathering. It should also be an effective statement in symbol of the presidential function. But it should never assume the appearance of a throne.

The chair is the place of presidency. The presider remains there unless it is required that he be in another place for a specific purpose. It is a pity that in very many cases the altar is still treated as the place of presidency. It is scarcely necessary to add that when the church is equipped with an amplification system there must be a microphone at the chair.

The broad principle which we have applied to the chair is relevant to liturgical space in general: each liturgical area should be clearly reserved for the function allotted to it, and should not be used for anything else. Thus, the area of the presidential chair must not become a place for storing books and leaflets, or a site for the amplification control-box. The altar is not to be treated as a side-board or a lecture podium.
Liturgical vesture: The importance of liturgical garments lies in the fact that they are always in expression, in one way or another, of our status as baptised Christians: in baptism we have ‘put on Christ.’ The liturgical garment is the sign of the glorified Lord. In our countries it is not customary that all who gather for liturgy put on such a garment (the alb). Yet we should be aware that celebrating together calls for the ‘festal robe.’ This does not offend against simplicity.

When a lay person presides it will be necessary to take each cultural context into account in deciding about vesture. Should the lay presider wear ordinary street clothes, or wear a symbolic garment, or simply wear an emblem?

The vestment proper to the priest, over the alb, is the stole. When presiding at the eucharist he also wears the chasuble (GIRM no. 299). Choosing vestments calls for special care, and will involve discussion with the craftspersons who make them. And a final thought: one wonders if it is a development to be welcomed when one sees in various regions that the use of the chasuble is being discontinued. It is, after all, a sign of the presidential function and it ‘contributes to the beauty of the liturgical celebration’ (GIRM no. 297).

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Presiding at the Eucharist

Please note: What is indicated in this chapter as regards presiding at the Eucharist may be applied, insofar as it deals with parallel liturgical structures and prayer forms, to liturgies in which a deacon or a lay person presides.

The Introductory Rites

The assembly and the presider: Before taking his place at the presidential chair, the priest is encouraged to walk through the assembly with the other ministers of the celebration, especially the deacon who solemnly carries the book of the Gospels. This procession takes place during the opening song. This ritual action already gives symbolic expression to the relationship — itself theologically complex — between the assembly and the presider.

Having reached the sanctuary, the priest is invited to venerate the altar and the cross. He should recall what the GIRM says about the dignity of each (nos. 259 and 268-270). In executing these gestures of veneration with deliberate-ness and reverence, the presider manifests to all his sense of the source from which his ministry flows, since the altar represents Christ.

Greeting and opening words: The priest opens the celebration by saluting the assembly in a ritual greeting. Various forms of this greeting are proposed, but all have a christological or Trinitarian content. There is more at stake here than a simple ‘Good Morning’. The greeting is a symbolic rite; its purpose is to evoke the nature of this ecclesial assembly. It is a faith-statement: it is the Lord alone who summons and welcomes his Church.

When greeting the assembly, the presider extends his hands towards the people. In a short while, when he prays in their name, he raises his hands towards
God. These symbolic gestures are similar – in fact the rubrics mixed them up for a long time. But they are different and should appear as such. However, no exaggerated poses are called for in carrying out these gestures. They will be seen as true and authentic only if they are an expression of a genuinely free and relaxed body and an inner spirit of reaching out to communicate.

The priest may now say a few words which will introduce his brothers and sisters to the mystery of the day’s celebration. How well one can do this is perhaps the best indicator of successful presiding. It will combine friendliness and dignity. It will not be a precis of what is going to follow. Neither will it be a string of woolly phrases indicating vague goodwill. Its task is to evoke the mystery of this assembly, gathered together by the Lord. Priests might ask themselves whether they have developed a sufficient ability to speak to the people about the surpassing mysteries which outstrip their capacity and which nevertheless are the very heartbeat of their lives.

As the penitential rite and the singing of the Gloria unfold, the presider acts as one of the assembly – as he did during the entrance song. His ministry is not a dispensation from being a brother among sisters and brothers! He sings with them (though he will make sure that he is not drowning them out by singing into the microphone in front of him). He responds to his own invitation to silent prayer as they do, as a prelude to his gathering together (‘collecting’) the prayers of all.

The Opening Prayer: The ‘gathering together’ of the prayers of the assembly is the first presidential utterance of prayer by the one who presides. It is a first climax of the liturgical action, which is convoked primarily for prayer. A case could well be made for saying the conclusion (‘through Jesus Christ’) is actually more important than the content of the prayer, because when the priest expresses in this ritual way the mediation of Christ the Lord, he is declaring that he is presiding over the assembly not just in its name but also in the name of the one who presides in truth over all the cult rendered by the Church to God.

In the case in which the presider is not an ordained minister, it is appropriate to turn toward the cross when saying the prayer.

The Liturgy of the Word

Hearing the Word: When the Church gathers, it is not on the initiative of its members but because it is called by the Lord. Since this is so, the first liturgical activity of every assembly is to listen to and reflect on the word of God.

So now the centre of gravity of the assembly moves to the ambo, the place of the word. This liturgical space must be worthy of its purpose and symbolise the importance of the word (GIRM no. 272). At this point in the liturgy, the presider sits and listens to the readers. His function is the same as that of the other members of the assembly during this time – unless there is no deacon or priest to proclaim the gospel. The task of delivering the homily is usually entrusted to the presider, though it need not be.

One might ask: if the presider is doing nothing special, is he not abandoning his role as presider? Not at all! In fact the opposite is the case. By his attitude of attentive listening and his obvious respect for the word which is being proclaimed, and by his wholehearted participation in the singing of the psalm and the gospel acclamation, he is an encouragement and a stimulus to the people.

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in their undivided attention to the proclamation of God's word. His attentive presence at this moment is far more valuable than anything else he might do – apart from the fact that he would be usurping the ministry of readers, psalmists and deacon, which must be respected in every celebration.

**Biblical formation as a liturgical requirement:** One of the vital elements in the formation of all presiders is a biblical grounding. The presider ensures that the word of God is duly proclaimed in the assembly. The presence of the presider is a guarantee that the Liturgy of the Word is celebrated integrally and worthily, and that the Church experiences itself constantly as being under the judgement of God's word and at the same time the grateful beneficiary of that word.

Presiders therefore must do more than just know the word. They must, as it were, be one with it. We might ask ourselves to what degree this has happened.

Solid exegetical studies are ready to hand nowadays. But on their own they are not sufficient to ensure a full liturgical preparation. It is the liturgy which makes of the letter of the scripture a living word: 'When the scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people and Christ, present in his word, announces again his gospel' (GIRM no. 9). Where this reality is mediated and experienced, a dialogue between the living God and those who listen to his word can take place. In fact the goal of biblical formation is precisely such a dialogue, deeply personal and fully communitarian at the same time. Only God can summon his gathered people to speak with him. Facilitating such an exchange is the privilege of the presider and also his first responsibility; its object is the moulding of the Body of Christ, which is the Church, by God's own word.

**The Homily:** We still need to underline what a homily is meant to be. Too many homilies fail by remaining at the level of moral or social reflection, or by stringing anecdotes together or mounting polemical attacks. Or else they insult the word of God by reducing it to the level of a common denominator of human acceptability. The General Instruction is clear: 'The homily is an integral part of the liturgical action' (GIRM no. 9). Since this is so, it must appear clearly as an authentic liturgical act. It must be consciously attentive to God. It must be fashioned in praise and prayer. It must serve and foster the covenant between God and humankind. Whatever its thought or information content, the homily can never be reduced to being simply an 'exposition.' There are other forums in which we can expound the faith. [Is it] too wild to help and trust that if we permit the homily to be true to its own nature 'all the rest will be given as well'?

We do not advocate abandoning the effort to apply the word of God to concrete situations and to address contemporary life. What we wish to stress is that the first requirement of the homily is that it convey in the words of today the message of God. The homily is a liturgical act. It is also, by that very fact, a prophetic act. And true prophets have always been those who can be quiet and allow God to speak.

Would we be overstating the case if we said that our suspicion is that many presiders are very sluggish about preparing their homilies and immersing themselves in the word of God? We should be wary of the situation in which improvisation rules the roost and our whims become the order of the day. It would be appropriate for each of us to examine his or her conscience to see whether we have been guilty of making the homily a soap-box for personal causes.

There is of course an equal obligation to ask ourselves if our homilies really strike a chord with the congregation and speak to its real life.

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The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The sacramental actions required in the eucharist mirror those of the Last Supper: 'He took bread and the cup . . . he gave thanks . . . he broke the bread . . . he gave the bread and wine to his disciples.' The different stages of the celebration correspond to those basic actions: preparation of the table, eucharistic prayer, breaking of the bread, communion (GIRM no. 48). The priest presides over each of these activities, although he does so in each case in a manner appropriate to the rite.

The preparation of the altar: The preparation of the altar falls to the deacon and the servers. It is done, however, as an expression of the activity of the whole assembly; the bread and wine and 'the offering of the people of God.' It is therefore the normal practice that the gifts be carried to the altar from the assembly. When all is ready, the priest comes to the altar and completes the preparation by the rites and prayers prescribed. It should be noted that the gestures involved do not denote an act of offering; they simply indicate the preparation of the gifts.

The missal is clear that the only texts which must be recited aloud are the Prayer over the Gifts with its introduction. Some of the other prayers may be said aloud (the prayers at the presentation of the bread and wine), while the remainder are silent, since they belong to the category of private prayers of the priest. The private nature of such prayers should be respected – if only to spare the people from a flood of undifferentiated words.

The Eucharistic Prayer: The Eucharistic Prayer is the presidential prayer par excellence. We would like to highlight some of its characteristics in view of its recitation by the presider.

It is a presidential prayer: It must therefore be pronounced always in a clear and audible voice. When there are concelebrants and they are praying parts of it together, they must do so in a low voice (submissa voce), in such a way that the voice of the presider is clearly heard. In this case the intercessory sections of the prayer may be assigned to individual concelebrants, but this is not obligatory.

The presidential character of the prayer implies that the whole assembly is involved in it. The people express their endorsement of the prayer at its beginning and at its completion. The singing of the Sanctus, the memorial acclamation and (in some cases) other acclamations also express participation in the prayer. The presider must never lose sight of this, and should aim at evoking the praise and prayer of all those who are gathered, by his manner of proclaiming the prayer and his prayerful attitude.

It is from start to finish a prayer: The entire text of the Eucharistic Prayer is addressed to God the Father. This is true even when the text is ‘narrating' the ‘wonderful works' of God, especially when telling of the Last Supper. It is in prayer that the presider asks that the Father send the Holy Spirit so that the bread and wine may become the body and blood of Christ. The consecration, also, of the bread and wine is expressed within the structure of a prayer addressed to the Father: ‘he gave you thanks and said . . .'

This form of prayer is called a memorial. The Church stands before God, recites to him the wonders of his grace and begs that he continue his saving work.

It is important, therefore, that the narrative sections of the Eucharistic Prayer do not become stories told to the assembly, or mimed for its benefit. It is God who
is being addressed all through. By listening to the prayer and by intervening when called to do so, the assembly fulfils the duty of making the prayer its own.

**It is the prayer of the eucharistic table:** The bread and wine are placed on the Lord’s table. They are consecrated by the Eucharistic Prayer. But the Eucharist is not the place for copying the ritual acts used by Christ at the Last Supper -- apart from that of 'giving thanks.' Care must be taken that the gestures which are prescribed do not turn into a mime. Above all, it is totally inappropriate to break the bread at the moment of the consecration.

**The Communion Rites. The breaking of the bread:** Among the rites and prayers which precede the communion, the breaking of the bread has a privileged position which derives from the symbolism of the action. ‘The gesture of the breaking of the bread, as the eucharist was called in apostolic times, will more clearly show the eucharist as a sign of unity and charity, since the one bread is being distributed among the members of the one family’ (GIRM no. 283).

If the presider takes the time to break the bread for the communion of the entire assembly, while the faithful sing the accompanying chant, the symbolism of his function in regard to the Lord’s Supper will be fittingly highlighted. This important action of the presider is often reduced, unfortunately, to almost total insignificance.

As far as possible, taking communion for the faithful from the tabernacle during the course of the eucharistic celebration is to be avoided. The reserved Blessed Sacrament is intended primarily for communion of the sick and should therefore be small in quantity.

The singing of *Agnus Dei* has a ritual purpose, that of accompanying the breaking of the bread and, where necessary, the distribution of communion to concelebrants.

**The Communion:** The priest, in his capacity as presider, introduces the praying of the Our Father, wishes his brothers and sisters the peace of the Lord and invites them to share in ‘the wedding-feast of the Lamb.’

Presenting the body and blood of Christ to the members of the assembly is not, strictly speaking, a presidential function. It belongs to the deacons to minister the cup, while other ministries may be associated in distributing the gift of the eucharist. But it is the presider who first gives to the communion ministers the consecrated bread and wine which they will distribute to the faithful.

**Concluding the Celebration**

The presider concludes the celebration by saying the Prayer after Communion and giving the blessing. It is very suitable – especially if one is using a more solemn form of blessing – to chant the blessing formula so that the people can chant the ‘Amen’ without any hesitation.

It is not appropriate for all the concelebrants to pronounce the blessing together: it is a presidential act and therefore of its nature should be given by one person.
Concelebration, Acolytes

Concelebrations raise a practical difficulty for the notion of presidency. Presiding cannot be shared out, and the concelebrants must avoid infringing on the role of the presiding priest. The presence of concelebrants can serve as a reminder that the ministry of the bishop or priest is exercised within an ordo, while the focus on just one presider refers symbolically to Christ, the one Lord of the Church.

In concelebrations, one sometimes notices a tendency to allocate to some of the concelebrants functions properly reserved to other ministers – the deacon, the readers, acolytes – in order to have them 'doing something'. This is wrong. The various ministers are called to fulfil their proper roles, no matter who else is present. They are not simply supplementary ministers 'in the absence of a priest'!

A final word as regards acolytes. In order to carry out the ministry of presider in a competent manner, the priest needs the assistance of competent persons. The ministry exercised by such persons must not be devalued. After all, how can we expect a presider to be at ease if there is nobody at hand who can foresee what he may need? At the presidential chair, how can a priest lift his hands in prayer if there is nobody to hold the sacramentary?

We believe that the ministry of acolyte (or 'server') is an important one which is necessary to facilitate good presiding, and we recommend it be revived and renewed in our celebrations.
Concelebration

Concelebration has a long history in the church, but immediately prior to Vatican II it was practiced only on special occasions. The Council, however, promoted its use on a wide variety of occasions and made it a common experience in the church today. The reasons the Council gave for encouraging concelebration were entirely theological ones, and they will be considered below. At the practical level there was a desire to curb the frequency of so-called private masses.

After thirty years experience with frequent concelebration, it would seem appropriate for the church as a whole to reflect on this form of liturgical celebration. The possibility that some of the practical rules regarding this form of celebration that were thought appropriate in 1963 might need revision or updating needs to be considered. Such a process of reflection and re-evaluation might:

- Reflect on the actual experience of concelebration from the point of view of priests, other ministers, and lay people.
- Review the principles upon which this practice is based, and see if they are appropriately balanced and appropriately related to other liturgical principles.
- Review the rules that were proposed to guide the actual practice of concelebration, and see if they need revision.

Multiple Experiences

Many experiences: “Concelebration” really refers to a variety of circumstances and types of celebration. We may divide them into occasions when the bishop is present, and those when he is not present.

With the bishop: Priests concelebrate together with their bishop at the chrism mass, ordinations, confirmations, priest’s funerals, priest’s retreats, other diocesan celebrations, and perhaps other liturgies at the cathedral or wherever the bishop is visiting.

Without the bishop: Priests may concelebrate in the absence of the bishop in communities of male religious, in parishes on Sundays, weekdays and the Triduum, at funerals and weddings, baptisms and anointings of the sick, and at anniversaries of a priest’s ordination.

Other variables include the number of priests who concelebrate, the architectural space in which these priests sit and stand, the number of lay persons present, and whether deacons also participate.

Common sense: All of these variables make it difficult to spell out rigid rules to govern the practice of concelebration. Basic principles and common sense are important in making sure that concelebration is a good liturgical experience for all concerned in each case.
What Do We Experience?

**How do priests feel?** What is the experience of presbyters with respect to concelebration? Do they gain a greater appreciation of their membership in a college of presbyters? Do they value the collegial nature of their ministry? How do they feel about not always being a main presider? About celebrating in a less prominent role? How do they feel about the gestures they make and the relatively few (and softly spoken) words that they speak? How does concelebration make them feel about their relationship with the laity who are present? How do they feel about their relationship with the bishop, if he is present? These and other questions might well be the subject of a research study, which would help us reflect more deeply regarding concelebration.

**How do deacons feel?** What is the experience of deacons and lay liturgical ministers? Do deacons find that concelebrating presbyters respect their ministry and help them, or do the presbyters show disrespect and impede the deacon's ministry? Are lay liturgical ministers (readers, acolytes, etc.) respected, or displaced?

**How do lay people feel?** What is the experience of the lay people who constitute the rest of the liturgical assembly? Do they see concelebration as a positive experience? Is the sight of many priests together with the bishop a positive one? Does it speak to them of the collegial ministry of priests and bishop? Do the numbers of presbyters together provide an experience of the unity of the church?

**Difficulties?** There are also less positive possibilities. For example, do lay people ever experience concelebration as an exercise of clerical domination, or as an excessively male expression of church, or as a demonstration of rank and status?

**Obstacles:** At a more concrete level, do they ever find concelebrations an obstacle to their own participation, through making it more difficult to see altar, ambo and chair? Do the concelebrants ever speak so loudly that the main presider's voice becomes unclear or indistinct? Do they ever find that the sharing of holy communion is unduly delayed by having to wait on the prior communion of concelebrating priests? Do the variety and varying quality of vestments ever provide a negative visual experience?

**Prestige?** Are concelebrating priests at funerals, for example, ever viewed as a symbol of prestige? That is, do people feel that the more priests who concelebrate, the more important was the person so honored?

**Full participation?** Overall, do lay people ever find that concelebration diminishes their own full, active, conscious and fruitful participation? Does it diminish their appreciation that it is the assembly as a whole that is the primary minister of the liturgy? Again, these questions might be the subject of a valuable research project.

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**Theological Principles**

**Basic principles:** Concelebration has been dealt with in a number of official documents, all of which begin by stating certain theological principles on which this liturgical practice is based. What are these principles, and how are they to be understood?
Constitution on the Liturgy, 1963. This basic document says, "Concelebration, which aptly expresses the unity of the priesthood . . ." (no. 57; DOL 57)\(^1\).

Decree Ecclesiae Semper, promulgating the editio typica of the rites of con-celebration and of communion under both kinds, 7 March 1965. It names three characteristics that are particularly conspicuous in the rite in which several priests con-celebrate the same Mass:

- the unity of the sacrifice of the cross
- the unity of the priesthood
- the more striking expression of an activity that belongs to the entire people of God (DOL 222).

Instruction Eucharisticum Mysterium, on worship of the eucharist, 25 May 1967. It tell us that:

Concelebration of the eucharist aptly expresses the unity of the sacrifice and the priesthood; wherever the faithful take an active part, the unity of the people of God stands out in a special way, particularly if the bishop presides.

Concelebration also symbolizes and strengthens the fraternal bond between priests, because 'by virtue of the ordination to the priesthood that they share all are linked together in a close bond of brotherhood.' (no. 47; DOL 179:1276)

In Celebratione Missae, Declaration on Concelebration, by the Congregation for Divine Worship, 7 August, 1972:

In the celebration of Mass 'all in the assembly gathered for Mass have an individual right and duty to contribute their participation in ways differing according to the diversity of their orders and functions . . . so that the very arrangement of the celebration makes the Church stand out as being formed in a structure of different orders and ministries.' Because of the distinct sacrament of orders, priests exercise a function peculiar to them in the celebration of Mass when, either individually or together with other priests, by a sacramental rite they bring about the presence of Christ's sacrifice, offer it, and through communion share in it.

Consistent with this, priests should celebrate or con-celebrate in order to take part in the Mass more fully and in their own distinctive way; nor should they simply receive communion in the manner proper to the laity (DOL 226).

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 4th edition, 1975. "Concelebration effectively brings out the unity of the priesthood, of the sacrifice, and of the whole people of God" (no. 153). This does not differ appreciably from the English text of the first edition (1969) of this document: "Concelebration, which

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appropriately manifests the unity of the priesthood and of the sacrifice, as likewise of the entire people of God . . . ".

**Several principles:** It is interesting that the number of principles, and the way they are enunciated, have varied somewhat from one document to another. Nevertheless, there is a basic unity among them.

**Incomplete:** These principles, though valid and expressing important values, are nevertheless limited and incomplete. They focus, understandably, on the ministry of the priests, especially on their unity with the bishop and with each other, and with their place in the hierarchical structure of the church.

"Unity of the sacrifice" means in effect that there is only one eucharistic celebration instead of the many that would be celebrated if each priest (plus a server) celebrated separately.

"Unity of the church/people of God" means, at least in part, that the priests and servers who might be absent from an assembly because of their individual celebrations of mass, are now together with other members of the church, in a single assembly.

**Unstated Principles**

**What other principles,** not stated above, also have to do with concelebration? One of these is what Vatican Council II calls the primary and fundamental principle of the contemporary liturgical renewal: full, active, conscious and fruitful participation of all the faithful in the liturgy because of their baptism (Constitution on the Liturgy, nos. 14 and 11). If this is primary, then other principles, including those having to do with concelebration, are secondary to it and have to be related to it in a suitable manner. Experience has shown that at least on some occasions, the practice of concelebration has diminished this full participation of all the faithful.

**Priest-liturgist John Baldovin adds:**

Any theory of concelebration which begins with the ordained priesthood and ignores the central purpose of the eucharist as the unity of the gathered church will ultimately reach a dead end; it will remain extrinsic to the real nature of the eucharistic liturgy. The major question to be asked of any aspect of the celebration of the eucharist is: What will best express the unity of the assembly in its praise and adoration of God and in its growth as a community in the image of God? To be sure, there must be roles in any hierarchically ordered church, but roles in the Christian assembly are secondary and subservient to this primary goal of the eucharist.²

**Integration needed:** Further discussion of the theology of concelebration needs therefore to integrate all of the principles that govern such celebrations, not simply state those that are special to this particular form of celebration.

² John F. Baldovin, "Concelebration: A problem of symbolic roles in the Church" in his Worship: City, Church and Renewal (Washington: Pastoral Press 1991) 79-97; the quotation is from page 80. This article was originally published in Worship 59 (1980)
Several simple rules would greatly improve the practice of concelebration. They are addressed to the presbyters involved.

- Do not displace or interfere with the ministry of the deacon.
- Do not displace or interfere with lay readers and servers. (The relationship between concelebrants and lay communion ministers remains a controversial issue and is not considered here.)
- Do not interfere with the ability of the congregation to see the altar, ambo and chair.
- Do not wear vestments that are aesthetically unworthy.
- Do not speak so loudly that the voice of the main presider cannot be clearly and distinctly heard by the congregation.
- Do not try to sing together with the main presider unless this has been rehearsed and you can do it well.
- Do not sit in front pews in such a way that the people feel isolated and disempowered.
- Do not delay the communion of the people until all priest concelebrants have finished receiving communion.

A number of other valuable practical suggestions are made in the Study Text prepared by the United States Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy. These include the following points:

- The planning of the liturgy should always include prior choice of the eucharistic prayer. If the intercessions are to be prayed by designated concelebrations these should be assigned before the celebration begins.
- During the doxology only the presiding celebrant elevates the bread, while the deacon raises the chalice. The concelebrants do not elevate other chalices, ciboria, etc. If there is no deacon, one of the concelebrants may elevate the chalice.
- The prayers of the communion rite may not be distributed for recitation among the concelebrants. Nor may they be recited by the concelebrants together with the presider.
- The sign of peace ought not be over-extended, delaying the breaking of the bread rite.
- Only the presiding celebrant shows the host to the assembly when he proclaims, “This is the Lamb of God...”. Concelebrants do not elevate their hosts.
- All in the assembly may receive communion under both kinds.
- Before leaving the celebrant reverences the altar in the customary manner. The concelebrants do not kiss the altar.

Eucharistic prayer: John Baldovin also points out that concelebration can disrupt the unity of the eucharistic prayer. He especially objects to the distribution of portions of the prayer to one or more concelebrants. "The practice can reach ludicrous proportions. All have witnessed occasions on which the prayer has been so apportioned that every concelebrant 'gets a chance' to recite a part of the prayer no matter how brief. The eucharistic prayer is not an honorific; it is a prayer."

Frequency of Concelebration

The U.S. Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy acknowledges that the question arises: "Should all the priests concelebrate... or might some decide not to concelebrate but participate from the assembly?" They respond:

There is no requirement in law which determines that a priest must concelebrate when present at the eucharist. Whereas, there are instances... when the logic of the occasion seems to demand concelebration, the decision to concelebrate is nevertheless, in most cases, left to the individual priest. In arriving at a decision the priest should be moved by such considerations as: 1) the communal nature of the liturgy; 2) his pastoral responsibilities; 3) the proper roles of members of an assembly hierarchically ordered; 4) the appropriateness of the occasion, etc.

John Baldovin takes a more rigorous approach:

Frankly, although I think that concelebration can be an effective sign of the unity of the church, there are circumstances in which priests should assist at the eucharist in the same manner as lay people and that ritual concelebration should be extremely rare. These circumstances certainly include any occasions on which the priests outnumber the lay people present. It has been my experience, as well as the experience of many lay people with whom I have spoken, that such occasions make the eucharist more a sign of the disunity and differentiation of the church than a sign of unity. That such a circumstance might warrant priests assisting in the same way as the laity was not envisioned at the time of the recent liturgical reform, but is much clearer today when lay people have become much more conscious of their baptismal dignity and active role in the eucharistic assembly.

Another occasion which seems to warrant priests refraining from concelebration is the frequent or daily eucharist. Here no sacramental or ecclesial purpose is served by the outward manifestation of the unity of the priesthood, especially where there may be a very small minority of non-ordained people present. Concelebration should be limited to those relatively few occasions on which the corporate ministry of the presbyterate ought to be made evident. It is never merely a sign of honor or dignity, since the highest dignity one can have in the assembly is the status of being a baptized member. Of course, eucharistic celebrations presided over by a bishop or great feasts do warrant concelebrants. It does not seem to me that one can legislate precisely on which occasions one

4 Baldovin, p. 92
5 Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, p. 21
should concelebrate or refrain from concelebrating. Ultimately, competent ecclesiastical authorities like bishops and major superiors can decide such matters, especially in limiting numbers of concelebrants, but usually this will be left up to the common sense of individual priests.⁶

The Bishop's Role

The bishop's responsibility: The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (no. 155), as well as other official documents, makes it quite clear that the bishop has the right, as well as the responsibility, to regulate the practice of concelebration.

The right to regulate, in accord with the law, the discipline for concelebration in his diocese, even in churches and semipublic oratories of exempt religious, belongs to the bishop. The right to decide on the advisability of concelebration and to permit it in his churches and oratories belongs to every Ordinary and even to every major superior of nonexempt clerical religious institutes and of societies of clerics living in community without vows.

Conclusion

Concelebration is a mixed blessing. It can be of great value; it can also be an obstacle to full participation of all the baptized. It needs to be regulated in a sensitive manner. On many occasions it would seem best to limit the number of concelebrating priests.

Just as priest presiders should seek to facilitate the full participation of the lay members of the assembly, this should also be the intention of each concelebrant.

We may conclude with John Baldovin's own conclusion:

The current practice of concelebration has raised a host of questions which were understandably not considered when the Second Vatican Council extended this practice for the whole church. The experience of celebration of the reformed rite, historical investigations, and further theological reflection have taught us that the unity of the church is a primary focus in any celebration of the eucharist. It is this unity which should always be the governing norm in the decision to concelebrate or not.

One last word on the underlying issue in the question of concelebration. It seems to me that when all is said and done, concelebration is about the exercise of power and symbolic roles in the church. This is indeed a neuralgic issue. The manner in which ordained ministers exercise their power can and will have either good or ill effect on the people of God. For those who do hold the office of presbyter in the church, the issue of concelebration might serve as a reminder that leadership will never be truly effective unless it is practiced in terms of service. They might well come to the conclusion pointed to in this study: that those presbyters also serve who from time to time insist not on their office or rank but on their equality with the baptized and their dignified membership in the assembly of God's people.⁷

⁶ Baldovin, p. 90-91
⁷ Baldovin, p. 93-94
The Lord's Prayer

In its publication, *Praying Together*, the English Language Liturgical Consultation has provided helpful notes on the texts of many commonly used liturgical texts. Here we print the notes on the text of the Lord's Prayer. From *Praying Together*. Copyright © 1988 by the English Language Liturgical Consultation. Excerpted by permission of the publisher, Abingdon Press.

Our Father in heaven,
    hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
    Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

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

As was pointed out in *Prayers We Have in Common*, the Lord's Prayer lies at the heart of Christian devotion, and it is laden with rich personal and traditional associations. Change therefore prompts all kinds of reactions. But change is no new thing in the history of this prayer, and today no single, invariable version is in common use throughout the English-speaking world. Comparisons of the text of Matthew 6:9-13 in the King James (Authorized) version of the Bible with the version in The Book of Common Prayer of 1662 at once reveals differences. Such variations remind us that between our traditional versions and the Greek texts of the prayer, as recorded in the New Testament, stand earlier English, and even earlier Latin, renderings. To retranslate the Lord's Prayer for a new situation is no new procedure. It should also be emphasized that in the task of producing translations the Church has never been in the position of working from one "original" text. The Greek texts of the prayer as preserved in the Gospels are themselves translations from Aramaic or Hebrew, and the texts which appear in Matthew and Luke do not agree. The extent of the divergence is clear from the following quotations (taken from the Revised Standard Version):

Matthew 6: 9-13

Our Father who art in heaven,
    Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
    Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.

(Nashville: Abingdon 1988) 13-16
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven
our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.

Luke 11:2-4

Father,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread;
And forgive us our sins,
For we ourselves forgive
everyone who is indebted to us;
And lead us not into temptation.

The ELLC translation of the Greek text is based mainly on that in St. Matthew's Gospel, since that version has always been the basis of the Church's liturgical tradition.

Except for one letter, a lower-case n for "name," and the addition of the final "Amen," the text printed above is identical to that proposed by ICET in 1975. Its acceptance has been growing steadily but is still far from universal. Many Christians are deeply attached to more traditional versions. Some Churches await a greater measure of agreement before they can consider adopting any modern version. ELLC believes that the above version is likely to commend itself for widespread ecumenical use, although it acknowledges that some would prefer a negative rendering of line 9.

Line 2. "hallowed be your name." This may be a petition or it may be a doxology. If it is a doxology, it refers to the preceding line rather than the two which follow it, and it is parallel to such Jewish acclamations as "The Holy One, blessed be He." If it is a petition, it is linked with the lines that follow it. Then it has a profound eschatological significance and is a prayer that something be done – whether by God or human beings. There are weighty reasons for thinking that what is being sought is the action of God. If so, the whole opening section of the prayer represents an urgent seeking for the great eschatological deed of God to be executed and revealed – "Father, show yourself to be the Holy One; bring in your kingdom; establish your will, on earth as in heaven." Nevertheless, comparison with similar Jewish prayers reveals that a strong case can also be made for viewing the petitions as referring to human action and as embodying the prayer that we may so act that God's name may be sanctified, the kingdom established, and God's will accomplished.

No final decision on these lines, or on the interpretation of the prayer as a whole, can be fairly made. The translation should allow the whole breadth of interpretation, whether doxological or petitionary for the action of God and/or human beings. "Hallowed be your name" is probably the translation which keeps most of the options open. Though the word "hallowed" has an archaic ring, it has not entirely passed out of currency ("hallowed ground," "hallowed memory"), and no satisfactory synonym for it is at hand.
The reason for removing the capital N of "name" is that it appears unnecessary. The capital letter indicated that in Hebrew thought a name referred to the essential being of a person. Here "Name" would be a reverent way of referring to God (as many Jews say ha-shem, "the Name," rather than "God"). The Consultation thought that something rather less was needed here and noted that, as in modern versions of Scripture, honorific capitals are now used more rarely than they were formerly.

**Line 6.** The translation of epiousios, commonly rendered "daily," is notoriously uncertain. The phrase may mean "bread for tomorrow," referring not only to the next day but also to the "great tomorrow" or the final consummation. The petition would then be for the food of the heavenly banquet, and this would fit well with the eschatological perspective which, on one interpretation, controls the whole prayer. On the other hand, as in some Syriac versions, it may mean simply "the bread which is necessary," without any particular temporal reference. There seem to be no sufficient reason for substantially varying the familiar translation. In a world where so many are hungry, there is good reason to retain the traditional phrase "daily bread," which leaves the meaning open.

**Lines 7-8.** "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." Here the traditional rendering has been substantially preserved, and the Lucan text allowed to affect the translation. "Sins" and "sin" have been used to convey the sense, and "trespasses" and "tresspass," and even "debts" and "debtor," which many find puzzlingly concrete and narrow, have been avoided.

**Line 9.** "Save us from the time of trial." Two errors must be avoided in this line. The first is the misconception that God would "tempt" or entice people to evil, and the second is to think that the original Greek word peirasmos means "temptation" as it is meant today. The reference here is primarily eschatological — a petition for deliverance from the final "time of trial" which, in biblical thought, marks the last days and the full revelation of anti-Christ. The peril envisaged is that of apostasy — the renunciation of the Christian faith in the time of suffering and persecution which is expected to herald the final triumph of God's kingdom (Luke 22: 31, 32, 40; Revelation 3: 10). Yet a reference to any occasion of testing, including the lure to sin, is not excluded. Commenting on this line, Luther speaks of "despair, unbelief, and other great and shameful sins," which is his way of saying that ultimately all sin is a failure of faith.

The Consultation considered whether to restore the negative of the original by writing a more literal version of the Greek — "Do not bring us to a time of trial." The practical problem of making a change at this stage, however, when many Churches have overcome the difficulty of adopting the ICET version, was too great to be countenanced. In the end, the Consultation was persuaded that the preposition "from" sufficiently conveyed the negative sense (compare "Do not let the children starve" and "Save the children from starving"), while avoiding the misleading inferences mentioned above. Attention was also given to a request that "from" be changed to "in." Apart from weakening the negative force of the original, it was considered that "in" conveyed only one of the two principal meanings of the line, that is, either a request to be spared from coming to the time of trial or a request to be spared, when one is in a time of trial, from its effects, especially from apostasy.

**Line 10.** "and deliver us from evil." While a strong case can be made for the translation "deliver us from the Evil One," or "deliver us from Evil," the Greek
text does not demand either. It seemed wise to preserve the familiar rendering. That this line begins with "and" rather than "but" is a consequence of the rendering of line 9.

Lines 11-12. “For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever.” The presence of this doxology in many Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, even if not the earliest and most reliable ones, and in quotations by early Christian writers (for example, the Didache), reflects the normal Jewish practice of concluding prayers of petition with a doxology of praise. This formula has enjoyed a wide and long use. It is therefore commended for liturgical use.
Why Sing the Liturgy?

Today liturgists are convinced that singing is intrinsic to liturgical celebration: the liturgy is made to be sung. (This is the general rule; there are always valid exceptions.) But not everyone is convinced; not everyone wants to sing the liturgy. We need to teach the reasons why singing is normative, about why we ought to want to sing the liturgy. Thirty years after the Constitution on the Liturgy, we are still learning how to teach on this subject, and still having to persuade some people to sing.

The question, Why sing the liturgy?, has in fact been around for a long time, and Christians have reflected on this matter throughout Christian history. Over the centuries a variety of answers have been formulated; different eras have needed different modes of persuasion and reasoning.

Here we present four answers to the question, Why sing the liturgy? One comes from the fourth century, from the writings of the great Saint Augustine. A second comes from fifteenth century England, from someone who was writing about the liturgy for religious sisters. The third is the very influential Music in Catholic Worship, prepared in the United States shortly after Vatican II. The fourth was published last year, and is perhaps the most sophisticated statement.

All four statements are presented here, to allow us to see how thinking has changed over the centuries, to help us formulate our own answer, and to stimulate us to find ways of teaching about the centrality of singing in the liturgy in our local church communities. All four statements agree, however, that singing the liturgy is normative.

Augustine¹

How much I wept at your [God's] hymns and canticles, deeply moved by the voices of your sweetly singing church. Those voices flowed into my ears, and the truth was poured out in my heart, whence a feeling of piety surged up and my tears ran down. And these things were good for me [Confessions, book 9].

The delight of the ear drew me and held me more firmly, but you [God] unbound and liberated me. Now I confess that I repose just a little in those sounds to which your words give life, when they are sung by a sweet and skilled voice: not such that I cling to them, but that I can rise out of them when I wish. But it is with the words by which they have life that they gain entry into me, and seek in my heart a place of some honor, even if I scarcely provide them a fitting one.

¹ Quotations from Augustine are taken from Music in Early Christian Literature, edited by James McKinnon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1987) 154-155

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Sometimes I seem to myself to grant them more respect than is fitting, when I sense that our souls are more piously and earnestly moved to the ardor of devotion by these sacred words when they are thus sung than when not thus sung, and that all the affections of our soul, by their own diversity, have their proper measures in voice and song, which are stimulated by I know not what secret correspondence. But the gratification of my flesh — to which I ought not to surrender my mind to be enervated — frequently leads me astray, as the senses do not accompany reason in such a way as patiently to follow; but having gained admission only because of it, seek even to run ahead and lead it. I sin thus in these things unknowingly, but afterwards I know.

Sometimes, however, in avoiding this deception too vigorously, I err by excessive severity, and sometimes so much so that I wish every melody of the sweet songs to which the Davidic Psalter is usually set, to be banished from my ears and from the church itself. And safer to me seems what I remember was often told me concerning Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, who required the reader of the psalm to perform it with so little inflection of voice that it was closer to speaking than to singing.

However, when I recall the tears which I shed at the song of the Church in the first days of my recovered faith, and even now as I am moved not by the song but by the things which are sung, when sung with fluent voice and music that is most appropriate, I acknowledge again the great benefit of this practice. Thus I vacillate between the peril of pleasure and the value of the experience, and I am led more — while advocating no irrevocable position — to endorse the custom of singing in church so that by the pleasure of hearing the weaker soul might be elevated to an attitude of devotion. Yet when it happens to me that the song moves me more than the thing which is sung, I confess that I have sinned blamefully and then prefer not to hear the singer. Look at my condition! Weep with me and weep for me, you who so control your inner feelings that only good comes forth. And you who do not behave thus, these things move you not. You however, O Lord my God, give ear, look and see, have pity and heal me, in whose sight I have become an enigma unto myself: and this itself is my weakness. (Confessions, book 9)

The Myroure of Oure Ladye

What benefit is there in the singing of divine service?

Though the devil be busy to excuse folk from the singing of this holy service, in devout singing and hearing thereof is manifold profit to our souls.

First, because it stirs a person's soul sometimes to contrition and compunction for their sins. For the holy doctor Saint Isidore says this: Though the sweetness of the voice of song ought not to delight, nor stir a Christian man's heart, but rather the words of God that are sung — yet I know not in what way more compunction

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arises in the heart, than by the voice of singing. For there are many, he says, that by sweetness of the song, are stirred to bewail and weep their sins. And the sweeter the song is, the more they follow through by weeping tears.

The second, because it melts the heart into greater devotion, and therefore says Saint Augustine to God himself in his Confessions: Yes, Lord, he says, how I was stirred to joy, and I wept in hymns and songs of your church that sounded sweetly. Though voices flowed into my ears, and though my heart was melted, and thereby the affection of pity and of love was made hot in me, and tears ran out of my eyes, and I was full of them.

The third, because it sometimes causes devout souls to be ravished and to received spiritual gifts of God, as you read in Saint Maud's [Matilda] book, how she had many of her revelations at the time of God's service [the liturgy]. And therefore one time, when Elisha the prophet did not have ready the spirit of prophesy, he got himself a singer of psalms on the harp or on the psaltery. And while he sang, the spirit of God came upon the prophet, and then he spoke by the spirit of prophesy to them that came unto him what they should do.

The fourth benefit holy church's song is, that it does away with inappropriate heaviness of heart. And therefore says the apostle Saint James: If any of you, he says be depressed: sing and pray with an even heart, for as the commentary says here, The sweetness of singing and of psalmody puts away harmful thoughts. And Isidore says that devout singing in holy church comforts heavy hearts, and makes souls more gracious; it refreshes them that are weary and tedious, it quickens those that are dull, and it stirs sinners to bewail their sins. For though the hearts, he says, of fleshly people be hard; yet when the sweetness of that song sounds in them, their souls are stirred to the affections of pity.

The fifth is that it chases and drives away the fiend [devil], and that was prefigured in David, when the fiend vexed king Saul, and David smote on his harp and the fiend fled away. And more he is more likely to fly away where the psalms of David and other divine service is devoutly sung.

The sixth benefit is, that it confounds and overcomes the enemies of holy church, and of God's servants both bodily and spiritual. And this is showed in holy scripture by king Josaphat, who was king of Jerusalem. For when his enemies came against him in so great power that he knew well he might not by human power withstand them; he ordered singers of God's service to praise God, and to go before his army singing. And when they began to praise God, God turned those enemies each of them against the other, and each of them slew the other, so that none of them at all escaped alive. A marvellous working of God's service . . . .

The seventh benefit of holy church's song is that it pleases God so much, that he desires and enjoys hearing it. And therefore he says to his spouse holy church: Thy voice may sound in my ears [from the psalms]. Glad then ought you to be to sing that song that God himself desires to hear. But so it ought to be sung, that it sounds well in his ears, for else you avail but little. For he takes more heed of the heart, than of the voice. But when both are in accord, then it is best. And if either should fail, it is better to lack the voice than the heart.

Therefore they that should praise God with voice of singing, and cannot or may not; our Lord will hold them excused, if they say devoutly such service as they can, and keep their hearts clean in meekness and obedience. For as our Lady says to Saint Bridget [of Sweden]: A clean heart and a meek one pleases God in silence as well as in singing. And therefore as we see that all members
of one body have not all one function, for the eyes see, the ears hear, the
tongue speaks, and hands work, and so each does whatever belongs to it, and
helps the other. Right so ought each of us to help and to bear with one anoth-
er, and to serve our God with the gifts that he has given us, that in all things he
be worshipped in us all.

Music in Catholic Worship

Music Serves the Expression of Faith

23. Among the many signs and symbols used by the Church to celebrate its
faith, music is of preeminent importance. As sacred song united to the words it
forms an integral part of solemn liturgy. Yet the function of music is ministerial;
it must serve and never dominate. Music should assist the assembled believ-
ers to express and share the gift of faith that is within them and to nourish and
strengthen their interior commitment of faith. It should heighten the texts so
that they speak more fully and more effectively. The quality of joy and enthusi-
asm which music adds to community worship cannot be gained in any other
way. It imparts a sense of unity to the congregation and sets the appropriate
tone for a particular celebration.

24. Music, in addition to expressing texts, can also unveil a dimension of
meaning and feeling, a communication of ideas and intuitions which words
alone cannot yield. This dimension is integral to the human personality and to
[our] growth in faith. It cannot be ignored if the signs of worship are to speak to
the whole person. Ideally every communal celebration of faith, including funer-
als and the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, penance, anointing and mat-
rimony, should include music and singing. Where the liturgy of the hours is
able to be celebrated in a community, it too should include music.

The Milwaukee Report

Music as a Language of Faith

13. Music is part of the symbolic language of worship. Music's sacramental
power is rooted in the nature of sound, the raw material for music. Sound itself is
our starting point for understanding music and its capacity to serve as a vehicle
for God's self-revelation. Sound's temporality, for example, symbolizes a God
active in creation and history; its seemingly insubstantial nature symbolizes a

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3 Music in Catholic Worship (Washington: Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy 1972)
4 The Milwaukee Symposia For Church Composers: A Ten-Year Report, July 9, 1992 (pub-
lished in Pastoral Music, vol. 17, October- November 1992, and by Liturgy Training Publica-
tions, Chicago. The text of this document is copyright © 1992, Archdiocese of Milwaukee.
God who is both present and hidden; its dynamism symbolizes a God who calls us into dialogue; its ability to unify symbolizes our union with God and others; its evocation of personal presence symbolizes a God whom we perceive as person. So sounds themselves, from a Judaeo-Christian perspective, can be part of the self-revelation of God. Although sound can also be destructive and a source of division, our tradition affirms music’s capacity to serve as a vehicle of God’s self-revelation without localizing or confining God. Music is able to elicit wonder without distancing us from God’s presence and is able to effect our union with other worshippers and with God in a particular and unparalleled way.

14. Music, as the most refined of all sound phenomena, does even more to serve as a vehicle for God’s self-revelation. For example, rhythmic elements underscore the temporality of human existence into which God has intervened, and a familiar melody can contribute to a heightened experience of unity with each other and God. In Christianity, music becomes one with the liturgy, which is the church’s first theology and the primary expression of the church’s belief. Because sound and, by extension, music are natural vehicles for the self-revelation of the God of Judaeo-Christian revelation, and because liturgy is the locus for encounter with and the revelation of such a God, it is understandable why music unites itself so intimately to Christian liturgy. The combination of the two enables the possibility of encounter and revelation as no other combination of human artifacts and faith event.

15. Music’s power in ritual can be further understood by reflecting on the word-centered nature of Judaeo-Christian revelation and liturgy. The God of Abraham and of Jesus is not only perceived as a personal God but also as the God who speaks and whose word is both law and life. God’s word is at the core of Judaeo-Christian revelation and worship. Just as the inflection of human speech shapes the meaning of our words, so can music open up new meanings in sung texts as well as the liturgical unity that is the setting for such texts. Furthermore, the extended duration that music performance adds to a text, which usually takes more time to sing than to speak, can contribute to the heightening and opening up of a text.

The natural alliance between text and tune is at the heart of the relationship between music and Christian liturgy. Music, like no other art form, has a special capacity to heighten and serve the word that occupies a central place in worship. Such an awareness was reflected in [the Constitution on the Liturgy]: When noting the integral relationship between music and liturgy, the bishops pointed in particular to the binding of sacred song and text as the main reason for this integrity.

16. Music has a natural capacity to unify the singing with the song, the singer with those who listen, singers with each other. Christian ritual song joins the assembly with Christ, who is the source and the content of the song. The song of the assembly is an event of the presence of Christ. What fuller assertion could there be of the sacramental nature of Christian ritual music, especially the song of the assembly? Sacramental language should be employed for Christian ritual music because, more than any other language available to us, it effectively underscores and communicates music’s power in worship.

17. Christian ritual music, as a sacramental event, expresses and shapes our image of God. Many factors come together in the music event, and each of
these contributes to the expressive and creative quality of music. Text, music forms, styles of music leadership, and even the technology employed in our ritual music making express and shape our faith. They are, therefore, foundational elements in the church's first theology, the liturgy. Appreciating the theological import of the various facets of Christian ritual music is, thus, an essential task in the forging of our sung worship.
Women Saints of October and November

A number of women saints are celebrated in the liturgical calendar during October and November. These holy women, of all periods of Christian history and from many countries, provide models for both women and men today. Two feasts of Mary also occur in these months.

The liturgical observance of some of these women saints is found in the Sacramentary. Here there is a special opening prayer for each saint, and this text is given below.

A great many more women saints are named in the Martyrology, which gives only a little biographical information, some of which is clearly pious legend. The martyrology often contains quite graphic descriptions of the tortures to which some of these saints were subjected; these have been shortened or omitted.

October 1. St. Theresa of the Child Jesus

God our Father,
you have promised your kingdom
to those who are willing to become like little children.
Help us to follow the way of St. Theresa with confidence
so that by her prayers
we may come to know your eternal glory.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

October 1. At Lisbon in Portugal, the holy martyrs Verissimus, and his sisters Maxima and Julia, who suffered in the persecution of Diocletian.

October 4. At Paris, St. Aurea, virgin.

October 5. At Messina in Sicily, the birthday of the holy martyrs Placidus, a monk, who was a disciple of the blessed Abbot Benedict, and of his brothers Eutychius and Victorinus, and the virgin Flavia, their sister.

At Auxerre, the death of the saintly deacon Firmatus and the virgin Flaviana, his sister.

Also, under Emperor Diocletian and the proconsul Domitius, St. Charitina, virgin. She was exposed to the fire and thrown into the sea, but escaping uninjured, [was tortured], and finally she yielded up her spirit in prayer.

At Rome, St. Galla, widow, daughter of the consul Symmachus. After the death of her husband, she remained for many years near the church of St. Peter, devoted to prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and other pious works.

October 6. Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher

Lord,
— you filled the heart of Blessed Marie-Rose
with burning love
and the desire to work as a teacher in the Church.
Give us active love
to respond to the needs of the world today
and so lead our brothers and sisters to eternal life.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

October 6. At Agen in France, the birthday of St. Faith, virgin and martyr, by whose example blessed Caprasius was aroused to martyrdom, and by martyrdom happily fulfilled her own trial.

At Naples in Campania, the death of St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds of Our Lord, a nun of the Third Order of St. Francis. Because of her reputation for virtues and the working of miracles, she was placed among the holy virgins by Pope Pius IX.

October 7. Our Lady of the Rosary

Lord,
fill our hearts with your love,
and as you revealed to us by an angel
the coming of your Son as [one like us],
so lead us through his suffering and death
to the glory of his resurrection.
He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

October 7. In the province of the Euphrates, St. Julia, virgin, who suffered martyrdom under the governor Marcian.

At Padua, St. Justina, virgin and martyr, who was baptized by blessed Prosdocimus, a disciple of St. Peter. Because she remained firm in the faith of Christ, she was put to the sword by order of the Governor Maximus, and thus went to God.

October 8. At Caesarea in Palestine, in the reign of Decius, St. Reparata, virgin and martyr. For refusing to sacrifice to idols, she was subjected to various kinds of torments and was finally struck with the sword. Her soul was seen to leave her body in the form of a dove and ascend to heaven.

In the country of Laon, St. Benedicta, virgin and martyr.

At Ancona, Saints Palatius and Laurentia, who were sent into exile during the persecution of Diocletian, under the governor Dion, and were overcome by the weight of toil and misery.

At Jerusalem, St. Pelagia, surnamed the Penitent.
October 9. At Antioch, St. Publia, abbess. While Julian the Apostate was passing by, she and her religious sang these words of David: "The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold," and "Let them that make them, become like unto them . . .". By the command of the emperor, she was struck on the face and severely rebuked.

October 10. At Nicomedia, the holy martyrs Eulampius, and his sister the virgin Eulampia. Upon hearing that her brother was tortured for Christ, she rushed through the crowd, embraced him, and became his companion. Both were cast into a caldron of boiling oil, but being uninjured, their martyrdom was completed by beheading along with two hundred others, who, impressed by the miracle, believed in Christ.

October 11. At Tarsus in Cilicia, the holy women Zenaides and Philonilla, sisters, who were relatives of the blessed apostle Paul and his disciples in the faith.

In the neighborhood of Vexin in France, in the time of the governor Fescenninus, the passion of the holy martyrs Nicasius, bishop of Rouen, the priest Quirinus, the deacon Scubiculus, and Pientia, a virgin.

At Verona, St. Placidia, virgin.

October 12. In Lycia, under Emperor Diocletian, St. Dommina, martyr.

October 13. At Subiaco in Italy, St. Chelidonia, virgin.

October 15. At Strasbourg, St. Aurelia, virgin.

In Germany, St. Thecla, abbess and virgin. She governed the convents of Kitzingen and Ochsenfurt, and departed to heaven filled with merits.


Father,
by your Spirit you raised up St. Teresa of Avila
to show your church the way to perfection.
May her inspired teaching
awaken in us a longing for true holiness.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

The Martyrology says: At Avila in Spain, the virgin St. Teresa, mother and mistress of the Brothers and Sisters of the Carmelite Order of the Strict Observance.

October 16. St. Hedwig

All-powerful God,
may the prayers of St. Hedwig bring us your help,
and may her life of remarkable humility
be an example to us all.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

The Martyrology tells us: At Cracow in Poland, St. Hedwig, duchess of Poland, who devoted herself to the service of the poor, and was renowned for miracles. She was inscribed among the saints by Pope Clement IV.
October 16. St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Lord,
pour out on us the riches of the Spirit
which you bestowed on St. Margaret Mary.
May we come to know the love of Christ,
which surpasses all human understanding,
and be filled with the fullness of God.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

The Martyrology says: At Paray, in the diocese of Autun, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. She made her profession in the Order of the Visitation of Blessed Mary the Virgin, and she excelled with great merit in spreading devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and in furthering its public veneration. Pope Benedict XV added her to the list of holy virgins.

October 16. Blessed Marguerite d'Youville

God our Father,
you called Blessed Marguerite
to seek your kingdom in this world
by striving to live in perfect charity.
With her prayers to give us courage,
help us to move forward with joyful hearts
in the way of love.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

October 16. Likewise [in Africa, in the reign of the Arian king Genseric], the saints Marinian and Saturnian . . . . They were converted to the faith of Christ by Maxima, a slave like themselves . . . Maxima, after enduring many tribulations, was miraculously delivered and became the superior of a large monastery of virgins, where she ended her days in peace.

October 18. At Rome, St. Tryphonia, at one time the wife of Caesar Decius, the mother of St. Cyrilla, virgin and martyr. She was buried in a crypt near that of St. Hippolytus.

October 19. At Antioch, the holy martyrs Beronicus, the virgin Pelagia, and forty-nine others.

At Oxford, in England, St. Frideswide, virgin.

October 20. At Cologne, the martyrdom of the holy virgins Martha and Saula, with many others.

In Portugal, St. Irene, virgin and martyr. Her body was honorably buried in the town of Scalabris. Since that time the town has been named Santarem, which is derived from her name.

October 21. At Cologne, the birthday of St. Ursula and her companions, who gained the martyr's crown by being slain by the Huns for the Christian religion and their constancy in keeping their virginity. Many of their bodies are buried in Cologne.
At Laon, St. Cilinia, mother of blessed Remegius, bishop of Rheims.

**October 22.** At Jerusalem, St. Mary Salome, the mother of the apostles James and John, who is referred to in the gospel as having cared for the burial of our Lord.

At Cologne, St. Cordula, who was one of the companions of St. Ursula. Being terrified by the punishments and slaughter of the others, she hid herself; but repenting her deed, on the next day she declared herself to the Huns of her own accord, and thus was the last of them all to receive the crown of martyrdom.

At Huesca in Spain, the holy virgins Nunilo and Alodia, sisters, who endured martyrdom by being condemned to capital punishment by the Saracens for the confession of the faith.

**October 24.** At Nagran in Arabia Felix, the passion of St. Aretas and his companions, to the number of three hundred and forty, in the time of Emperor Justin, under the Jewish tyrant Dunaan. After them, a Christian woman was burned alive, whose five-year-old son confessed Christ in a lisping voice and could not be prevented by caresses or threats from rushing into the fire in which his mother was burning.

**October 25.** At Rome, the holy martyrs Chrysanthus and his wife Daria. After many sufferings endured for Christ under the prefect Celerinus, they were ordered by Emperor Numerian to be thrown into a sandpit on the Salarian Way, where, being still alive, they were covered with earth and stones.

**October 27.** At Avila in Spain, under the governor Dacian, the Saints Vincent, Sabina, and Christeta. They were tortured.

In Cappadocia, the holy martyrs Capitolina, and Erotheides, her handmaid, who suffered under Diocletian.

**October 28.** At Rome, the holy martyrs Cyril and Anastasia the Elder, virgin. In the persecution of Valerian, under the prefect Probus, Vanastias was tortured. Adorned with her sufferings as with so many jewels, she went to her Spouse. At her request, Cyril gave her some water to drink, and for his reward became a martyr.

In the same city, during the reign of Claudius, St. Cyrilla, virgin, daughter of St. Tryphonia, who was pierced through the throat for the faith of Christ.

**October 29.** At Bergamo, St. Eusebia, virgin and martyr.

**October 30.** At Aegea in Cilicia, in the reign of Diocletian, under the governor Lysias, the martyrdom of Saints Zenobius, bishop, and his sister Zenobia.

At Alexandria, the martyr St. Europia, who was arrested while visiting the martyrs, and rendered up her soul after being cruelly tortured with them.

**October 31.** At Rome, the translation of blessed Nemesius, a deacon, and his daughter, the virgin Lucilla, who were beheaded on the 25th of August.

**November 1.** St. Mary, a servant girl. Being accused of professing the Christian religion in the time of Emperor Hadrian, she was subjected to cruel torture.

At Tarsus in Cilicia, under Emperor Maximian, the Saints Cyrenia and Juliana.
November 2. At Tarsus in Cilicia, in the reign of Julian the Apostate, St. Eustochium, virgin and martyr, who breathed her last in prayer in the midst of severe torments.

November 3. In England, St. Winifred, virgin and martyr.
At Rome, St. Sylvia, mother of Pope St. Gregory.

November 4. At Treves, St. Modesta, virgin.

November 5. St. Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist.

At Emesa in Phoenicia, during the persecution of Decius, the holy martyrs Galation and his wife Epistemis, who were tortured and finally fulfilled their martyrdom by beheading.

November 9. At Constantinople, the holy virgins Eustolia, a Roman maiden, and Sopatra, the daughter of Emperor Maurice.

November 10. The birthday of the holy martyrs Trypho and Respicius, and the virgin Nympha.

At Iconium in Lycaonia, the holy women Tryphenna and Tryphosa, who profited by the preaching of blessed Paul and the example of Thecla to make great progress in Christian perfection.

In the island of Paros, St. Theoctistis, virgin.

November 13. At Caesarea in Palestine, the martyrdom of the Saints Antoninus, Zebina, Germanus, and the virgin Ennatha. Under Glariaus Maximian, Ennatha was scourged and burned alive, while the others, for boldly reproaching the governor Firmilian for his idolatry in sacrificing to the gods, were beheaded.

November 14. In France, the holy virgin Veneranda, who received the crown of martyrdom under Emperor Antoninus and the governor Asclepiades.

At Emesa in Phoenicia, the martyrdom of many holy women, who were barbarously tortured and massacred for the faith of Christ under Mady, a savage Arabian chief.

November 16. St. Margaret of Scotland

Lord,
you gave St. Margaret of Scotland
a special love for the poor.
Let her example and prayers
help us to become a living sign of your goodness.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

The Martyrology says: At Edinburgh, Scotland, the birthday of St. Margaret, queen of the Scots and widow, renowned for her love of the poor and her voluntary poverty.

November 16. St. Gertrude

Father,
you filled the heart of St. Gertrude
with the presence of your love.
Bring light into our darkness
and let us experience the joy of your presence
and the power of your grace.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

The Martyrology says: At Hedelfs in Saxony, the birthday of St. Gertrude, virgind of the Order of St. Benedict, who was famous for her revelations.

**November 17. St. Elizabeth of Hungary**

Father,
you helped Elizabeth of Hungary
to recognize and honor Christ
in the poor of this world.
Let her prayers help us to serve our brothers and sisters
in time of trouble and need.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

The Martyrology tells us: At Marburg in Germany, the death of St. Elizabeth, widow, daughter of King Andrew of Hungary, and member of the Third Order of St. Francis. After a life spent in the performance of works of piety, she went to heaven, having a reputation for miracles.

At Dordona in Spain, during the same persecution [Diocletian], the holy martyrs Asisculus and his sister Victoria, who were most cruelly tortured by order of the governor Dion, and thus merited to be crowned by our Lord for their glorious sufferings.

**November 21. Presentation of Mary**

Eternal Father,
we honor the holiness and glory of the Virgin Mary.
May her prayers bring us
the fullness of your life and love.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

**November 22. St. Cecilia**

Lord of mercy,
be close to those who call upon you.
With St. Cecilia to help us
hear and answer our prayers.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

**November 23. At Rome, St. Felicitas, mother of seven martyred sons. After them she was beheaded for Christ by order of Emperor Marcus Antonius.**

At Merida in Spain, St. Lucretia, virgin and martyr, whose martyrdom was fulfilled in the same persecution, under the governor Dacian.
November 24. At Amelia in Umbria, during the persecution of Diocletian, St Firmina, virgin and martyr. After being subjected to various torments... she yielded up her spirit.

At Cordova in Spain, the holy virgins and martyrs Flora and Mary, who after a long imprisonment were slain with the sword in the Arab persecution.

November 25. At Alexandria, St. Catherine, virgin and martyr, in the time of Emperor Maximnus. For the confession of the Christian faith she was cast into prison, endured a long scourging with whips set with metal, and finally ended her martyrdom by having her head cut off. Her body was miraculously carried by angels to Mount Sinai, where pious veneration is paid to it by great gatherings of Christians.

In Emilia, a province of Italy, St. Jucunda, virgin.

November 27. At Sebaste in Armenia, in the reign of emperor Diocletian and under the governor Maximus, the holy martyrs Hirenarchus, Acacius, a priest, and seven women. Struck with the constancy of these women, Hirenarchus was converted to Christ, and with Acacius died under the axe.

November 29. At Todi in Umbria, St. Illuminata, virgin.

November 30. At Constantinople, St. Maura, virgin and martyr.

Also, St. Justina, virgin and martyr.
November 1: All Saints

The wonderful feast of All Saints is an opportunity to recall and celebrate all faithful Christians, past and present. It is a family feast, for all are sisters and brothers in Christ. It is a feast that calls our minds to the future, when we will join those who have gone before us.

The liturgical texts for this feast are rich in biblical images, from the Beatitudes to the wonderful scenes of the book of Revelation.

All Saints is also an important ecumenical feast, for many churches include it in their liturgical calendars.

A variety of Catholic, Anglican and Protestant texts for the feast of All Saints are printed here. Readers are invited to take these for their meditation and reflection. Prior study of these texts hopefully will help parish celebrations of this feast be the richer.

This collection begins with texts from the Sacramentary, Liturgy of the Hours, and Office of Readings.

Opening Prayer

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God,
today we rejoice in the holy men and women
of every time and place.
May their prayers bring us your forgiveness and love.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Alternative Opening Prayer

God our Father,
source of all holiness,
the work of your hands is manifested in your saints,
the beauty of your truth is reflected in their faith.
May we who aspire to have part in their joy
be filled with the Spirit that blessed their lives,
so that having shared their faith on earth
we may also know their peace in your kingdom.
Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Preface

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks.
Today we keep the festival of your holy city,
the heavenly Jerusalem, our mother.
Around your throne
the saints, our brothers and sisters,
sing your praise for ever.
Their glory fills us with joy, 
and their communion with us in your Church 
give us inspiration and strength 
as we hasten on our pilgrimage of faith, 
eager to meet them. 
With their great company and all the angels 
we praise your glory 
as we cry out with one voice.

**Entrance and Communion Antiphons**

Let us rejoice in the Lord and keep a festival in honor of all the saints. Let us join with the angels in joyful praise to the Son of God.

Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, they shall be called the [children] of God. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for the sake of justice; the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

**Antiphons of Evening Prayer and Morning Prayer.**

Eternal light will shine upon your saints, O Lord, and they will live for ever, alleluia.

Jerusalem, city of God, you will rejoice in your children, for they shall all be blessed and gathered together with the Lord, alleluia.

Before the throne of God and the Lamb the saints will sing a new song; their voices will resound throughout the earth, alleluia.

The glorious company of apostles praises you; the noble fellowship of prophets praises you, the white-robed army of martyrs praises you, all the saints together sing your glory, O Holy Trinity, one God.

The saints find their home in the kingdom of heaven; their life is eternal peace, alleluia.

Saints of the Lord, sing praise to the Lord for ever.

Sing a hymn of praise in honor of the saints, the children of Israel whom God has chosen as his own; celebrate the glory of all his holy ones.

The saints will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father, alleluia.

I saw a vast crowd of countless numbers from every nation, standing before the throne.

God tried them and found them worthy of himself; they shall receive a crown of glory from the Lord.

By your own blood, Lord, you brought us back to God; from every tribe and tongue, and people and nation, you made us a kingdom for our God.

How glorious is that kingdom where all the saints rejoice with Christ; clothed in white robes, they follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

**Office of Readings**

How great is your name, O Lord, for with glory and honor you have crowned your saints; you have set them over the works of your hands.
Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.
You have shown your saints the path of life, you have filled them with joy
in your presence, O Lord.
We give you thanks, Lord God almighty,
who is, who was and who is to come,
for you have begun your reign.
And now the time has come
to reward your servant
and your saints.
May all creation praise you, O Lord;
may all your saints bless you.
Praise God, all you who serve him,
both great and small,
for the Lord God Almgihy
has begun his reign.
Sing for joy, God’s chosen ones,
let all the saints give him
fitting praise.

Lutheran Book of Worship†
Anglican Book of Alternative Services‡

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God,
whose people are knit together in one holy Church,
the body of Christ our Lord:
Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints
in lives of faith and commitment,
and to know the inexpressible joys
you have prepared for those
who love you;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Preface

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all
places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through
Christ our Lord.
In the blessedness of your saints you have given us a glorious pledge of
the hope of our calling; that, moved by their witness and supported by
their fellowship, we may run with perseverance the race that is set before
us and with them receive the unfading crown of glory. And so, with the
Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join
in their unending hymn.

† Lutheran Book of Worship (Minneapolis: Augsburg 1978)
‡ The Book of Alternative Services of The Anglican Church of Canada (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre 1985)
Prayer after Communion

God,
we give you praise and glory
for all your saints,
who have followed the way of Christ
in the power of the Holy Spirit.
May we learn from their example
and rejoice in your call to us
to bring your kingdom to all.

We praise and thank you Holy Spirit of God,
for the men and women you have called to be saints;
from your first fallible, frightened friends
who followed you to Jerusalem,
through the centuries of discovery and growth,
people of every class and temperament,
down to the present day.

We praise you, Holy Spirit, for calling us
to serve you now,
for baptising us to represent you
in this broken world.

Help us to be Christ's united body to heal and reconcile;
help us to share Christ's life with everyone.

Lord of hosts,
we praise your glory reflected in your saints;
may we who share at this table
be filled with the joy of your eternal kingdom,
where Jesus is Lord
now and for ever.

Prayer of Confession

Eternal God, in every age you have raised up men and women
to live and die in faith.
We confess that we are indifferent to your will.
You call us to proclaim your name,
but we are silent.
You call us to do what is just,
but we remain idle.

You call us to live faithfully,
but we are afraid.

\[ A \text{ New Zealand Prayer Book. The [Anglican] Church of the Province of New Zealand (Auckland: Collins 1989)} \]
\[ Book of Common Worship \text{ (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press 1993)} \]
In your mercy, forgive us.
Give us courage to follow in your way,
that joined with those from ages past,
who have served you with faith, hope, and love,
we may inherit the kingdom you promised in Jesus Christ.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (not eucharist)

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of the ages,
we praise you for all your servants,
who have done justice, loved mercy,
and walked humbly with their God.
For apostles and martyrs and saints
of every time and place,
who in life and death have witnessed to your truth,
we praise you, O God.

For all your servants who have faithfully served you,
witnessed bravely, and died in faith,
who still are shining lights in the world,
we praise you, O God.

For those no longer remembered,
who earnestly sought you in darkness,
who held fast their faith in trial,
and served others,
we praise you, O God.

For those we have known and loved,
who by their faithful obedience and steadfast hope,
have shown the same mind that was in Christ Jesus,
we praise you, O God.

Keep us grateful for their witness,
and, like them, eager to follow in the way of Christ.

Then at the last, bring us with them
to share in the inheritance of the saints in light;
through Jesus Christ the pioneer and perfecter of our faith,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever. Amen.
The Advent Wreath

Questions regarding the use of the Advent wreath, especially in church in relation to the Sunday eucharistic liturgy, seemed to come up quite frequently last December. It is an important part of the Advent season for some, and there are those who want to know whether this or that practice concerned with the Advent wreath is "liturgically correct." It may be appropriate, therefore, to reflect briefly on the meaning and use of this symbol.

These are some of the questions people are asking:

- Must there be only four candles?
- What about a fifth, "Christ" candle?
- Do they have to be arranged in a circle?
- Must they be surrounded by greenery?
- Do the four candles stand for hope, peace, love and joy, or something else?
- Do three candles have to be purple, and the fourth one pink or rose?
- When should they be lit, and when should they be put out?
- Who should light them?
- Should something be sung while they are being lit, or just beforehand?
- When should the Advent wreath be removed from the church?
- When should the Christ candle be lit and extinguished?

These and other questions tell us a number of things.

- Something that is not mentioned at all in the liturgical books of the church is getting to be fairly important in the Sunday liturgy in some places.
- Something that is quite secondary is achieving considerable importance, at least in some places.
- Even secondary aspects of the Advent wreath (for example, the color of the candles) sometimes come to dominate the primary meaning of this symbol.
- All this suggests that other aspects of the Advent liturgy of the church probably are not receiving the attention they deserve, or are not understood and appreciated by people.
- In summary, there is a need to pay close attention to perspective and balance in the liturgies of the Sundays of Advent.

History of the Advent Wreath

Some perspective may be achieved by considering what we know of the ancient and modern history of the Advent wreath. Its origins go back to the ancient, pre-Christian Germanic peoples of central and northern Europe. One
of their many deities was a sun god, and in December, as the days grew shorter and shorter, people were anxious that their sun god not die, but return and become vigorous again. To assist this process, they took wheels off their wagons (which could not be used because of the snow, anyway), brought the wheels indoors, wrapped them in greenery and put as many candles on them as they could. Songs and prayers presumably accompanied all of this.

With the christianization of the germanic peoples, this practice, associated as it was with a pagan deity, ended.

Within the last two hundred years this ancient pagan practice was rediscovered through historical research. Some found it an attractive winter practice that could be dissociated from its pre-christian religious context. It was therefore christianized by associating it with Advent, especially with the four weeks of this liturgical season. As it is a humanly attractive symbol and practice, the Advent wreath “caught on” and has become increasingly popular.

Those who reintroduced the Advent wreath in modern times originally thought of it for use in homes and public buildings. In parts of Germany today, almost every restaurant, hospital and other public building, has an Advent wreath. It was especially attractive for family devotions, with children lighting the candles one by one to accompany the growing sense of anticipation as Christmas grew near.

In recent years, it has become more and more popular to have Advent wreaths in church, and to light them on Sunday before the eucharistic liturgy begins.

The Color of the Candles

Questions are frequently asked about the color of the candles. Though they often are purple and rose, they may be of any color. Originally, three candles were purple because that is the color associated with penitential seasons. Before Vatican II, Advent was a second penitential season, after Lent. Today Advent is clearly identified as a season of anticipation, not of penance. Purple is not required, and in fact seems inappropriate.

As well, the third candle used to be pink or rose because the Third Sunday of Advent had a non-penitential character. It was called “Gaudete” Sunday, after the first words of the introit antiphon and epistle, “Rejoice (Gaudete) in the Lord always: again I say, rejoice” (Philippians 4. 4). Though this is still the entrance antiphon for this Sunday, the antiphon itself is almost always replaced by a hymn and hence never heard or sung. In addition, Philippians 4. 4 is read only every third year, in cycle C of the liturgical calendar. Hence we no longer use the expression, Gaudete Sunday, and a special pink candle no longer makes much sense.

In fact, the candles may be any color, or any combination of colors. The traditional one rose and three purple candles often are promoted by church goods dealers and candle manufacturers, who do not understand what has happened to Advent in recent years.

In some churches each candle – and each Sunday of Advent – has a special name, such as peace, hope, love and joy. There are no liturgical or historical
traditions behind this practice, and it has the potential of disrupting the development of Advent according to the scripture readings assigned in the lectionary.

The key symbolism of the Advent wreath is in danger of getting lost behind questions of color, "theme," etc. It really is very simple: there is light in the darkness. This in itself is entirely biblical, and goes well with the readings for the Advent and Christmas seasons. With the successive lighting of one, two, three and finally four candles, there is the idea of increasing light. The number four was determined by the four Sundays of Advent, but is not sacred in itself. As we have seen, in its origins there were as many candles as space allowed. If Advent were to have two weeks, or eight, we would adapt the number of candles.

The use of the Advent wreath in church – if this is our practice – should be used to promote its use in homes as well. It would be sad if this became one more case of putting all our religious practice into the one hour of Sunday worship.

Finally, the Advent wreath is not any part of the official liturgy of the church, though this does not mean that we cannot use it in church. But its use should be modest, and should respect the primary liturgical symbols of assembly, ordained ministers, water, word and eucharist. Official liturgical books tell us nothing about placement, number, size, color, when and how it is to be used. This is for us to decide, using common sense and respecting liturgical principles.
Visitation of the Dying in the Fifteenth Century

It has always been important that priests and others visit fellow Christians who are dying. During such visits words of comfort are spoken, prayers are said, and confessions are heard. In the Rituals (which were called Manuals in England) of the late middle ages, the rite termed Visitation of the Sick was really the visitation and anointing of persons who were on the point of death. The liturgical rite was carried out in Latin.

To the official liturgical texts, however, were sometimes added informal and more personal — and optional — texts in the vernacular languages. They were written in the vernacular for the sake of the dying person, who if a lay person or religious sister was assumed not to know Latin. In addition, these texts were for the use of persons other than priests.

One liturgical book from fifteenth century England provides two such vernacular texts for the visitation of the dying; a third is incomplete. They have been rendered into modern English, but an attempt has been made to retain something of the flavor of the original.

These pious and touching words may lead us to reflect on what we say today when we visit someone who is dying.

First Text
How one who is healthy should visit sick persons.

My dear son or daughter of God, it seems that thou goest quickly on the way from this life toward God. There ye will see all your predecessors, apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins, and all men and women that are saved. And for gladness of such fellowship be thou in good comfort in God.

Think how thou must after this life lay a stone in the wall of the city of heaven, without noise or strife. Therefore, before thou wend out of this world, you should polish thy stone and make it ready, if you will not there be negligent.

This stone is thy soul, which thou must make strong through right belief. Thou must cleanse it fair, through hope of God's mercy and perfect charity, which covers the multitude of sins.

1 English Fragments from Latin Medieval Service-Books, ed. by Henry Littlehales (London: Early English Text Society, Extra Series 90, 1903)
Second Text

Brother or sister, art thou glad that thou shalt die in Christian faith? 
Response: Yea.

Believest thou in God, Father almighty, maker of heaven and of earth? 
I believe.

Believest thou in his Son, the second person in Trinity, Christ Jesus, the which was conceived by the might of the Holy Ghost, and born of the blessed maiden, our lady Saint Mary? Credo.

Believest thou that he lived here two and thirty year and more, and suffered at the last, death on the cross for the love of humankind? Credo.

Believest thou that he went to hell and took out Adam and Eve and the souls that were therein, which might not come to bliss til Christ's passion? Credo.

Believest thou that he rose up from death on Easter day, and dwelled here til Ascension day, to prove verily his resurrection? Credo.

Believest thou that then he rose up into heaven by his might, God and man, and there is equal in majesty with his Father? Credo.

Believest thou that he shall come at the day of judgement to judge the good and the bad? Credo.

Believest thou in the Holy Ghost, the third person in Trinity, and in holy church, and that the sacraments of holy church are given for the remission of our sins? Credo.

Believest thou in the sacrament of the altar, that is Christ's body which was born of Marie, which Christ left among us for the most precious jewel, when he should depart by death from his disciples? Credo.

Believest thou that all those that been in good life shall have part in all the good deeds and prayers that been done in holy church, and that all those that have been knit together here in holy church by grace, shall be knit together in everlasting joy? Credo.

Trustest thou in the mercy of God, which wills not the death of a sinful man if he be sorry of his sin and is forgiven, and desires to amend himself? Credo.

Trustest thou that thou shall have mercy if thou be sorry for thine sin? Credo.

Trustest thou that thou, and every man and woman, shall rise up at the day of doom [judgement] in body and in soul, the bad to be dammed in endless pain, and the good to be taken, body and soul, into everlasting bliss? Credo.

Do you intend fully to forgive all manner of men and women that have trespassed against thee, so that you do not desire to keep any ill will nor malice to them in thy heart, but to be in love and charity with each man and woman?
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