national bulletin on Liturgy

Planning the Liturgical Year
This bulletin is primarily pastoral in scope. It is prepared for members of parish liturgy committees, readers, musicians, singers, catechists, teachers, religious, seminarians, clergy, diocesan liturgical commissions, and for all who are involved in preparing, celebrating, and improving the community’s life of worship and prayer.

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n earlier edition of the bulletin says: "A strong Sunday celebration of worship is both a sign and a cause of a living Christian community" (no. 67, p. 21). The renewal of the liturgy has brought back into focus the centrality of the paschal mystery in the Sunday Eucharist. Yet our culture of individualism and consumerism militates against an understanding of what it means for Christians to gather on Sunday as the body of Christ. There is, among average Christians, not much appreciation that Christ is present among them when two or three are gathered in his name and that when the Scriptures are proclaimed in the assembly it is he who speaks to them.

Yet the faith of the Church prompts parishes to do what they can to make the liturgy the summit and the font of the life of the community. Liturgy committees that are effective prepare the celebrations of the liturgy so that the faith of the community is strengthened by good celebrations and not weakened by poor celebrations.

Liturgy committees that are well informed understand the centrality of the paschal mystery in the Sunday Eucharist and in the liturgical year. They know that this year has a flow that should not be interrupted by themes and "causes." They also strive to follow through on the seasons. There is a temptation to stress the anticipatory seasons, Advent and Lent, but to "lose steam," so to speak, when it comes to continuing a sense of celebration through to Epiphany for the Christmas season and to Pentecost for the Easter season. It takes careful preparation to sustain these festive seasons to their end-points. At the same time, the temptation to focus on the past event more than on the present reality is to be resisted. The heart of the liturgy is the action of Christ now, the mystery of his ongoing presence in the community. Christ continues to be incarnated as God's plan unfolds.

The hope is that the contents of this issue will assist liturgy committees in the important work they do for the parish. It is impossible to gather all the information about the liturgical year, but a listing of available resources has been provided in the hope that committees will find what best suits their needs. The most important source of information for committees is always the liturgical books themselves, and in particular the introductions and pastoral notes in these books. Someone once said that the Church's best kept secret is the Vatican II document the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. This document is not just an introduction for "the priest's book," the sacramentary; it is a "how to" for all the ministries, and above all, it gives the theological and historical basis to the structure of the Eucharist. All the ritual books have such introductions.

Liturgy committees are always busy about the business of the community's prayer, but they must never forget that they too will pray. See the opening prayer for Thursday after Ash Wednesday for an appropriate prayer for opening a meeting.
Christ yesterday and today, the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega.

All time belongs to him and all the ages.

To him be glory and power through every age for ever.

Amen.

This text is prayed at the beginning of the Easter Vigil while the paschal candle is marked with the Greek letters and the numbers of the year.
Planning the Liturgical Year

Christian McConnell

When the members of a liturgy committee gather (usually in September) to look ahead at their parish's liturgy, the prospect of planning the whole year can seem rather daunting. This committee has to contend with the different seasons, the "extra" liturgies on bigger feasts, and the details of a parish's ongoing liturgical life Sunday after Sunday. Sometimes a committee begins to function only on a totally practical level, and it is hard to develop a sense of vision even for each part of the year, let alone the whole year. However, if the community's liturgical celebrations are to have a balanced and unified focus, stepping outside of the details is important. The question is: how?

A Sequential Versus a Structural Approach

In the normal course of a liturgical year, the most pressing and immediate concerns naturally warrant the most attention. Liturgical planning becomes a "sequential" process, with the various seasons and occasions being treated in the order in which they occur. This is to be expected, but it should not be the only way that liturgy planning is done. The primary weakness of a sequential approach is that it runs the risk of losing a sense of proportion.

In the liturgical year as a whole, the feasts and seasons are not created equal. Some are very central and others less so. A liturgy committee may also spend most of its time and attention on liturgical celebrations that are more complicated and neglect the simpler celebrations, and routine—not ritual repetition but routine in the real sense of the word—can set in.

Therefore it helps to step outside of the sequential framework and look at the liturgical year in a "structural" way. A structural approach deals with the most important elements first and then moves through to the secondary ones. Of course, this cannot always be done; during the year the more immediately upcoming celebrations do need attention. But at the same time it is essential that at some time the year be planned as a whole, with a balanced sense of priorities.

Paschal Mystery and Anamnesis

Before reflecting upon the individual parts of the year, a committee needs to recognize that the primary aspect of all Christian liturgy is about the salvation won for us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and our sharing in the paschal mystery by virtue of our baptism. Because we live in time, we focus on different aspects of that mystery.

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over the course of the year, but at the same time every liturgical celebration is ultimately a celebration of the whole mystery.

In practice, this means that there is a difference between *anamnesis* and historicization. *Anamnesis* is remembering the saving acts of God so that the meaning of the events is made real for us now. It is not just a simple “calling to mind”; it encompasses past events, present reality, and future possibility. This means that it cannot be seen as nostalgia (looking back on something that is gone) nor as playacting (pretending that the event is happening all over again). At Christmas, for example, we are not pretending that Jesus is being born all over again, nor are we really looking back on a quaint scene in Bethlehem, far removed from our experience. On the contrary, we are celebrating and entering into the mystery of the Word-made-flesh, a mystery that is real and significant for us now.

Similarly, while we focus on a part of the paschal mystery at any given time, we are still celebrating the entire mystery. To continue the Christmas example, even while we are wrapped in images and songs of the newborn child, the main point is that this child has risen from the dead and saved us. Otherwise we would not be here celebrating.

**Sunday: the Original Feast Day**

Given that the paschal mystery is the heart of all liturgy, one might be inclined to start “structural” planning with Pascha itself, the Easter Triduum. But that would be skipping a step. The first and original celebration of the resurrection is not Easter, but Sunday – ever Sunday. No matter what the season is, Sunday is always a celebration of the whole mystery: the death and resurrection of Jesus and fulfilment of the kingdom. It is the first day of the week, the day when Jesus rose from the dead; according to Justin Martyr, it is also the eighth day, the time outside of time. On Sunday we are already living in the kingdom that we await.

This theological basis may appear very abstract at first, but it has practical implications. One can see that as a starting point, liturgy committees would do well to pay attention to what happens at Sunday Eucharist week after week. In my experience, the temptation is to focus on the “big” feasts and seasons and to rely on habit for the Sunday Eucharist. However, the “bigger” times of the year are extensions of what we celebrate every week, and it is imperative to ensure that the very ordinary aspects of the liturgy are always done well: homilies, music, art and environment, lectors, eucharistic ministers, and hospitality. The “routine” activities that the various ministries do should be reviewed regularly – and “tweaked” from time to time if necessary. Even Ordinary Time is not “ordinary” at all!

Also, the paschal mystery is “the point” of the Sunday Eucharist, and any other “theme” is secondary at best. The readings were not chosen to present a series of themes. By its very nature, ritual employs symbol, even in its words; when symbol functions well, its meaning is open ended, allowing a range of interpretations and inviting all who are involved to find meaning in the event. Therefore, combing the texts for an over-arching “theme” each week and making everything fit in is not the way to approach liturgical planning. Of course, homilies and
music selections, for example, should reflect the readings for the liturgy, but not in a narrow way. The broader context counts, too – the season, the ritual actions, and lives (or rather, life) of the community.

The Great Sunday: the Easter Triduum and Easter Season

While we celebrate the whole mystery every week, we also stretch out the mystery and live with it step by step. The Day of the Lord has a special prominence and intensity once a year at Easter, or Pascha. The Easter Triduum is at the heart of the liturgical year.

The great Three Days are one celebration. Originally, Pascha was one liturgical event, celebrating Jesus’ death and resurrection (and coming again!) in one night. Although we have spread it out over three days, it is important not to lose sight of the unity of those three days. Again, we are not pretending that the historical events are happening now. The Mass of the Last Supper is not primarily about the “themes” of ordination, institution of the Eucharist, or even service. It may be any or all of these things, but only as they are connected to the main point: the death and resurrection of Christ. Similarly, Good Friday is not a “funeral for Jesus,” nor does it pretend that we do not know about the resurrection. The ritual is our entering into what his self-offering means for us. At the vigil there is no single “big moment” when we pretend that the resurrection happens. Rather, the whole liturgy is a celebration of the resurrection, from the lighting of the fire onward.

The sense of the whole being one celebration should also carry through the entire fifty days, or “week of weeks,” of the Easter season. It is the whole fifty days, and not just Easter Sunday, that was called the “Great Sunday” in the early Church. To gain a sense of this one celebration, all of the aspects of the celebration that set Easter apart (such as music, art and environment) should be kept up as much as possible, all the way to (and including) the feast of Pentecost.

Preparation for Pascha: Lent

In light of what has just been said about Easter, several key points about Lent are to be kept in mind. The Sundays of Lent present an unusual situation: Lent is indeed a time of penitence, but Sunday is still Sunday. The paschal mystery is central in the liturgy, and the seemingly contradictory emphasis of Lent and Sunday must be reconciled.

Penance as such needs to be placed in the proper perspective. Lent is about preparation for Easter which, as is Sunday, is about our sharing in the paschal mystery by virtue of baptism. With the recovery of the RCIA, we have restored the original and primary purpose of Lent: It is a time of preparation for those to be baptized and time for the rest of the community to accompany them on their journey. In time this season also became a time for penitents to prepare for their restoration to the community in Holy Week.

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1 The term “Pascha” is the original word for Easter. It comes from the Hebrew term Pesach, the name for Passover. It was originally a celebration not just of the resurrection but also the death of Jesus, taking place, according to the gospels, on or near the Jewish Passover.
and by extension, for the whole community to examine their own lives.

Penance, properly speaking, is about dealing with postbaptismal sin. Penitential practices then, seen in this light, are a preparation for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter, so that we can more fully know the joy of sharing in the paschal mystery. In practice, this calls for a shift in focus. Penitential practices are part of the season, but they are secondary to the preparation for baptism and for the renewal of baptism. Lent is not a time for individualistic navel-gazing (no liturgy is), but it is a time for the whole community to be renewed as the body of Christ. Thus, an important part of the life of the Church in Lent is to celebrate the RCIA as fully as possible, making a “big deal” over the catechumens.

The Advent/Christmas/Epiphany Cycle
At first glance there may not seem to be anything explicitly “paschal” about these seasons. However, Advent is not just about the first coming of Christ but about the second – the reality celebrated in the original single Easter feast and every “eighth day.” Christmas and Epiphany obviously celebrate historical events, but the deeper and more important point is Christ’s presence among us here and now, a key aspect of every Sunday Eucharist. In fact, the increasingly accepted theory about the dates of Christmas and Epiphany is that they were calculated specifically in relation to dates when the Pascha was celebrated.²

The challenge, then, is to avoid getting carried away with the “surface features” of Christmas and to keep the focus on anamnesis rather than nostalgia. We are not really gathered at the stable; on the contrary, Christ is present among us now, and we look into his face as we look into the faces of each other. We are his body now. We like to talk about the “real meaning” of Christmas; the real meaning is that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us for a reason: to destroy death by dying and rising.

Conclusion
All of the liturgical year is rooted in the same reality: the paschal mystery and the community of the baptized being able to share in it Sunday after Sunday. This sharing, this participation, comes about through actively remembering the saving events of Christ and making them present. This remembering is not relegating them to a distant past, nor forgetting where we are in history now. It is about the deeper meaning of the events and how we can be part of that meaning today.

A liturgy committee can bring about this shift in focus by starting with the central celebrations. When the year is simply dealt with as it comes, the liturgies can become a disparate series of isolated activities. By looking out over the year and viewing the liturgical celebrations in perspective, a committee can ensure that the parish’s liturgical activities are focused and effective. 

² cf. Thomas Talley, The Origins of the Liturgical Year (Collegeville, MN: Pueblo/Liturgical Press, 1986). According to this “computation theory,” the life of a great figure was often imagined to have been a perfect number of years. The conception of Jesus would be taken to occur on the same day of the year that he died. The Jewish date for Passover, the fourteenth of Nisan, was equivalent to March 25 or April 6, depending on the way the calendars were converted. Therefore, the birth would be celebrated nine months later, on December 25 or January 6.
Mother to the Poor: St. Marguerite D’Youville (1701-1771)

Feast day: October 16

Her life: Marie-Marguerite Dufrost de Lajemmerais, born in Varennes, Quebec, on October 15, 1701, was the daughter of a Breton gentleman who had come to Canada in 1687. Her father died when Marguerite, the eldest of six children, was seven years old. The family went through difficult times while the mother waited for six years before receiving the pension due to widows of officers.

After studying for two years with the Ursulines of Quebec City, Marguerite returned at the age of twelve to her family to help educate her brothers and sisters. On August 12, 1722, she married François You de la Découverte, a fur and alcohol trader who turned out to be an untrue and indifferent egoist. After eight years of married life, François died, leaving Marguerite in her sixth pregnancy with the burden of his debts and responsibility for two children.

In 1737 she rented a house in Montreal where she harboured needy women. She and three companions made secret religious vows. For seven years the four women were insulted, lied about, and otherwise persecuted. Marguerite was suspected of being involved in alcohol trafficking with the natives as her husband had been, and was accused of drinking (from which came the French term Soeurs Grises, “tipsy sisters”), and of being a prostitute.

In 1747 Marguerite was given the responsibility by colonial authorities for the administration of the general hospital of the Charon Brothers. This appointment was later confirmed by Louis XV of France, who also authorized her to form a religious community.

To support the hospital she used her skills in trade and commerce, multiplying her industrial and business investments. The hospital received persons with all types of afflictions. During the wars which preceded and followed the Conquest of 1760, her door remained open to the prisoners, the ill, the wounded, be they French or English. From 1754 on she also received foundlings.

She died on December 23, 1771, and was canonized on December 6, 1990, by Pope John Paul II.

Her spirituality: Marguerite’s piety was conditioned by the apostolic orientation of the prayer of Marie de l’Incarnation while she was with the Ursulines. She followed the spirituality of the period, viewing the cross as the instrument of God’s love. Later, her heart broken by the scandalous life of her husband, she became overwhelmed by a sense of the personal love of God, and from then on her spiritual life drew her along the road of trust and abandonment to divine providence. When she and her three companions formed an association, they saw themselves as secular women in dress but religious women at heart, bound to forever serving the poor.

Three words sum up the spirituality of Marguerite d’Youville: Father, providence, poor. Her universal charity was so well known that it was said: “Go to the Soeurs Grises (Grey Sisters); they refuse nothing.”
Celebrating the Eucharist in Ordinary Time

Gregory Klein, OCarm

The longest "season" of the liturgical year is Ordinary Time. The eucharists of Ordinary Time focus on the fullness of the mystery of Christ present in all times and places—yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

The Eucharist makes the Church. To be Christian means to participate Sunday after Sunday with a community that celebrates the Eucharist. Participation in the Eucharist is a celebration of our life-long initiation into the mystery of Christ and his Church. In the Eucharist Christians give God thanks for all that they are, for all that they have, and for all that exists. The Eucharist is the mystery of what we are and what we receive. It is the mystery of Christ in us.

The Eucharist enables us to be the body of Christ as we assemble to hear the word of God, not as ancient historical text, but as a living word spoken to us this day, in our time and history. The Eucharist enables us to be the body of Christ as we take bread and wine, give thanks, break them, and give them to the community in memory of the ministry, passion, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, present and active in the community of faith. Just as the disciples and followers of Jesus devoted themselves to the word of God spoken in Jesus Christ, to the Lord's Supper, and to the communal life, so we devote ourselves to this ancient tradition, in new and ever-challenging ways in our contemporary eucharistic celebrations.

Celebrating the Eucharist during Ordinary Time presents us with special challenges because of the time of year (winter, summer, and fall), the length of the season (33 or 34 weeks), the assigned Scriptures and prayers, and the special circumstances of the world in which we live. The unique themes of Ordinary Time and the central belief of our faith in the mystery of Christ in all its aspects give us the opportunity to provide a context for our eucharistic celebrations within the framework of our daily life.

Christians assemble for the Eucharist during Ordinary Time to listen to the word of God, to prepare the gifts, to give God thanks, to enter into communion with one another and with the risen Christ, and to love and serve the Lord in the world in ways unique to this season of the church year. The colours and textures, together with the sights and sounds of the passing seasons, give a texture and flavour to Ordinary Time that cannot be found at any other time of year. The liturgical colour for Ordinary Time is green.

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in a variety of shades and textures appropriate to winter, summer and fall, and points to our Christian hope and life, entering into the mystery of Christ in all its fullness.

This essay provides an introduction to the history of Ordinary Time, reviews the various liturgical norms for the period, examines the Scripture, prayers, and customs associated with it, articulates some of the challenges for the eucharistic celebration during Ordinary Time, and lists some basic resources which can enrich our prayer and worship at this special time of year.

History of the Season

In many ways Ordinary Time may be the oldest custom and practice of the Church. The New Testament is filled with references to the fact that after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, his followers gathered to celebrate the Lord’s Supper.

The heart of the church year is the Paschal Triduum, the celebration of the Christian Passover. During the second and third centuries, the season of Lent, the 40-day period of fasting and preparation, and Easter, the 50-day period of feasting and rejoicing, emerged as the central and most important cycle of the church year. During the fourth and fifth centuries, the annual celebration of the incarnation developed. Christmas was preceded by a four-week period of preparation and fasting, Advent, and was followed by a three-week period of celebration and feasting, Christmas time.

Until the liturgical reforms of Vatican II, the weeks between Christmas time and Lent, and between Easter time and Advent, were called Sundays after Epiphany and Sundays after Pentecost respectively. Since Vatican II these weeks are called Sunday in Ordinary Time, numbering 33 or 34 weeks. There is a short period of winter Ordinary Time between Epiphany and Lent, and a much longer period, summer and fall Ordinary Time, between Pentecost and Advent.

The term “Ordinary Time” is problematic, however. Ordinary Time does not really mean commonplace, usual, normal, or of no exceptional quality or value. The term “Ordinary Time” means “ordinal” – counted time. The church organizes the liturgical calendar by simply assigning each Sunday a number, counting each week one after the other.

Ordinary Time is not a season in the sense that Lent/Easter and Advent/Christmas are seasons. Ordinary Time focuses on Sunday, the Lord’s Day, which has always had a dominant role in the life of the Church. The weekly Lord’s Day is the original feast day of the paschal mystery. Ordinary Time is simply the way the Church marks time Sunday by Sunday, gathered in eucharistic assembly to celebrate the good news of Christ’s death and resurrection. Ordinary Time enables the Christian community to witness to the presence of the risen Lord Jesus Christ in the community of faith.

Ordinary Time, therefore, celebrates the usual and normal pattern of the Church’s eucharistic worship – gathered in assembly to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Ordinary Time is “ordinary” only in relation to the extraordinary annual celebrations of Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter, which focus the assembly’s attention on two of the central mysteries of our faith –
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The incarnation and the resurrection. There is really nothing “ordinary” about Sunday, as Christians celebrate the Eucharist every Sunday of the year. Every Sunday is a celebration of the paschal mystery and its implications for our daily living.

**Litururgical Norms for the Season**

Ordinary Time celebrates Sunday by Sunday the fullness of the mystery of Christ. Ordinary Time is, therefore, a time to focus on the Christian meaning and purpose of Sunday. According to the Second Vatican Council, in the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*:

By a tradition handed down from the apostles and having its origin from the very day of Christ’s resurrection, the church celebrates the paschal mystery every eighth day, which, with good reason, bears the name of the Lord’s Day or Sunday. For on this day Christ’s faithful must gather together so that, by hearing the word of God and taking part in the Eucharist, they may call to mind the passion, the resurrection, and the glorification of the Lord Jesus and may thank God, who “has begotten them again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Pt 1.3). Hence the Lord’s Day is the first holy day of all and should be proposed to the devotion of the faithful and taught to them in such a way that it may become in fact a day of joy and of freedom from work. Other celebrations, unless they be truly of greatest importance, shall not have precedence over the Sunday, the foundation and core of the whole liturgical year (no. 106).

Vatican II’s vision of Sunday, the Lord’s Day, is a challenge to contemporary persons because of the hectic pace which characterizes our lifestyle. Sunday is often a day to rest, to catch up on work, to shop, and to take care of all of those things we don’t have time for during the week. But for nearly 2000 years, Sunday has only one purpose in Christian history and imagination – to gather the faithful in sacred assembly to hear the word of God and to take part in the Eucharist. Christians have established and maintained their identity by celebrating Eucharist each Sunday.

Perhaps the best place to understand the nature and purpose of the Church’s eucharistic celebrations during Ordinary Time is in the various introductions to the sacramentary and the lectionary. In articles 43 and 44 of the *General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar*, we find the following:

Apart from those seasons having their own distinctive character, 33 or 34 weeks remain in the yearly cycle that do not celebrate a specific aspect of the mystery of Christ. Rather, especially on the Sunday, they are devoted to the mystery of Christ in all its aspects. This period is known as Ordinary Time.

Ordinary Time begins on Monday after the Sunday following January 6 and continues until Tuesday before Ash Wednesday inclusive. It begins again on Monday after Pentecost and ends before Evening Prayer I of the First Sunday of Advent. This is also the reason for the series of liturgical texts found in both the *Roman Missal*
and The Liturgy of the Hours (vols. III-IV) for Sundays and weekdays in this season.

During Ordinary Time the assembly is faced with the complete mystery of Christ. The challenge is to internalize and to incorporate the teachings of Jesus in daily living. Whereas Advent/Christmas focuses attention on the incarnation and Lent/Easter on the resurrection, the Sundays of Ordinary Time focus on the words and deeds of Jesus Christ, present and active in the community of faith in our own time and place.

One of the hallmarks of Ordinary Time is the rich and varied pattern of scripture readings provided. The three-year lectionary cycle of readings during Ordinary Time provides a semicontinuous reading of the synoptic Gospels. In Year A the Gospel according to Matthew is read preferentially, in Year B it is Mark, and in Year C it is Luke. John is read toward the end of Year B, because Mark is so short, and during the Christmas, Lenten, and Easter seasons in all years because of its theological depth. As the Lectionary for Mass: Introduction indicates: “This reading is arranged in such a way that as the Lord’s life and preaching unfold the teaching proper to each of these Gospels is presented.”

The cycle of readings for Ordinary Time provides a rich fare of Old Testament readings which have some connection with the Gospel readings. Additionally, the selection of Old Testament readings provides the assembly with many of the major stories of the Jewish people and a sense of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of God’s revelation and covenant with the people of all time.

The cycle of readings for Ordinary Time also provides a semicontinuous reading of the letters of Paul and James, which usually have no thematic connection to the Old Testament and gospel selections. These readings provide the assembly with the witness of the first Christian communities as they struggled to live, in faith and action, the words and deeds of Jesus Christ. Their pattern of faith and witness to the truth challenges the assembly to forge new patterns of faith and witness to the truth and the presence of the risen Lord.

Ordinary Time is the season of the saints. While we celebrate the saints during the course of the entire liturgical year, Ordinary Time, because of its length, provides the assembly with the greatest number of saints to celebrate. During winter Ordinary Time we celebrate the Conversion of Paul, the Presentation, and the Chair of St. Peter. We also celebrate many memorials of the saints. During summer and fall Ordinary Time, we celebrate four “movable” solemnities: Holy Trinity (Sunday after Pentecost Sunday), Body and Blood of Christ, Corpus Christi (Sunday after Trinity Sunday), Sacred Heart (Friday after the Body and Blood of Christ), and Christ the King (last Sunday of Ordinary Time). We also celebrate some “fixed” solemnities: the Annunciation of the Lord (March 25), the Birth of John the Baptist (June 24), the apostles Peter and Paul (June 29), the Assumption (August 15), and All Saints (November 1). The saints of summer and fall Ordinary Time are as numerous as the stars.

Scripture, Prayers and Customs

The readings and prayers for Ordinary Time provide a wide range of images
Celebrating the Eucharist in Ordinary Time • Gregory Klein, OCarm

and themes to help the assembly continue to witness to the full mystery of Christ. The assembly hears of kings and prophets, covenants made and broken, powerful parables and wondrous miracles, disciples, both faithful and unfaithful, the ups and downs of disciples struggling to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. In many ways the readings and prayers of Ordinary Time match the sterile, cold quiet of winter, the warmth and sunlight of summer, and the rich and plentiful harvest of fall.

Ordinary Time Eucharists take us from a time of planting and sowing seeds, a time of nurturance and growth, to a time of death and judgment and readiness. The flowers and seasonal decorations available in winter, summer, and fall help to focus our attention on the fact that the fullness of the mystery of Christ is present in all times and places — yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Through the rhythms and patterns of life, from birth to death, hope is the only Christian option.

There is a variety of customs, both secular and religious, which complement our Sunday eucharistic celebrations, such as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at the beginning of winter Ordinary Time, and Thanksgiving and All Souls Day during fall Ordinary Time.

The Challenge of Eucharist in Ordinary Time

Every celebration of the Eucharist ends with these words of exhortation from the presider: “The Mass is ended. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.” The assembly responds: “Thanks be to God.” This brief and simple dialogue between presider and assembly articulates the challenge of the Eucharist during Ordinary Time.

Sunday after Sunday, Christians gather to take to heart the word of God and to give God thanks in memory of Jesus Christ. The purpose of Eucharist is to gather with one another to allow ourselves to be nourished by God so that we, in turn, can nourish and sustain one another and all the world. Christians love and serve the Lord by loving and serving one another at home, in the neighbourhood, in school, in the world.

The congregation is officially dismissed from the eucharistic assembly precisely so that it can be missioned to all the world. Ordinary Time is that long series of weeks during winter, summer, and fall when Christians focus on living the faith in hope amid the rhythms and patterns of daily living. Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter give us extraordinary opportunities to explore the implications of the incarnation and the resurrection of Jesus Christ in our lives. Ordinary Time gives us the opportunity to witness to the fullness of the mystery of Christ Sunday after Sunday.

Ordinary Time presents us with the challenge of confronting ourselves, both individually and communally, with who we are as the body of Christ, the Church. During the 33 or 34 weeks of Ordinary Time, Christians need to take a look at how they worship the Lord Sunday after Sunday. The gospels especially focus our attention on discipleship — that life-long commitment and journey of being a learner, a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sunday after Sunday we are confronted with a radically new style of living which turns upside down the usual ways of thinking which the world often teaches us. As the assembly hears of prophets who rage against
injustice, it is challenged to work to establish the justice of God here and now. As the assembly hears Jesus’ teaching about becoming like children, avoiding hypocrisy, forgiving always, etc., it is challenged to work to incarnate the kingdom of God in the here and now by keeping faith in a world bent on materialism, patriarchy, and power. The Eucharists of Ordinary Time bring us always to conversion.

Given the variety of customs, both secular and religious, which complement our Sunday eucharistic celebrations during Ordinary Time, another challenge is to carefully balance these customs with our primary responsibility to use the liturgical readings and prayers as the only essential food and drink of our worship and prayer. While civic and national holidays and favourite saints have a practical and sensible appeal to many people, the lectionary and the sacramentary provide us with the only nourishment that will really satisfy us. The Sundays of Ordinary Time provide us with a wonderful opportunity to expose ourselves to a wide range of scripture readings and many eucharistic prayers and prefaces. Local parishes can incorporate civic and national holidays and favourite saints and other parish customs in the general intercessions and in bulletin articles.

Another challenge for the long weeks of Ordinary Time is the environment and art used in the church. Many parishes find it easy to develop regular patterns for decorating during Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter, but during Ordinary Time the decorations seem to disappear.

Ordinary Time is a good time to focus on the basic beauty and dignity of the assembly area and to design decorations in keeping with seasonal items available during winter, summer, and fall. May and October are months devoted to Mary, the mother of Jesus, and so these months are good for highlighting the parish’s image of Mary. Other favourite images of saints can also be highlighted during the long weeks of Ordinary Time. The varied and beautiful flowers of summer can easily be used to enhance the environment, as can the bountiful harvest and splendid colours of fall. Ordinary Time presents the parish community with the challenge of discovering the beautiful in the ordinary.

Conclusion
This longest season of the church year, Ordinary Time, enables us to devote ourselves to exploring the mystery of Christ in all its aspects. Christians assembled for the Eucharist during Ordinary Time forge new relationships among themselves, and with society and the culture, as they respond to God’s invitation to know, name, and experience the inexhaustible mystery of God within the ordinary textures of human life.

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Traveller and Parish Woman:
Marguerite Bourgeoys
(1620-1700)

Feast day: January 12

Her life: Marguerite Bourgeoys, born in Troyes, France, in 1620, appeared to have the ability to organize and gather people around her at a very young age. A religious experience at the age of twenty led her to make a vow of chastity and to try a new type of living to honour the life of travel of Mary, the mother of God, and to be religious “without veil or wimple.”

When Governor Paul de Chomedy de Maisonneuve, in 1642, needed a teacher for Ville-Marie, Marguerite volunteered and eventually crossed the ocean with no baggage except a small parcel under her arm. She did not hesitate to look after those stricken by pestilence, and she soon gained the settlers’ respect.

She built a chapel as a place of pilgrimage to honour Mary, began her work in education in a stable given her by de Maisonneuve, opened a boarding school for settlers’ children and established a congregation for young women. At first she recruited young women from France as new companions, but when, after the third trip, permission to bring more companions was denied by the bishop, she admitted the first Canadians into her community, including two Iroquois girls.

Marguerite’s community, recognized as a group of “secular women,” provided an education for girls, preparing them for their role as mothers of families. She soon sent members of her community in pairs to new parishes to teach the settlers’ children, and in time the community was formally recognized as one of “parish women.” In 1698 the group received its constitution as a religious congregation, and the members then took their first public vows. Marguerite died on January 12, 1700, acclaimed as “mother of the colony.” She was canonized on October 31, 1982, by Pope John Paul II.

Her spirituality: Marguerite Bourgeoys was influenced by the mysticism, the apostolic preoccupations and the aspirations in the mission fields of the time, promoted by people such as Teresa of Avila, Philip Neri, Francis de Sales, Jean Eudes and Vincent de Paul. Some of them showed how a life of love of God and charity towards the poor could be lived outside the cloister and without the religious habit.

Love of God and neighbour summarizes Marguerite's whole life. She highlighted the mystery of Mary's visitation and wanted to be a disciple of Jesus according to Mary's way, noting that Mary was not cloistered and never refused to be where charity or need called for help. She was a business woman and a good organizer but at the same time promoted a simple and unpretentious life and a life of hard work in order not to be dependent on others. She trusted completely in God's mercy and said she would have hope even if she found herself “with one foot in hell.”
Evaluating the Parish’s Liturgical Celebrations

Bernadette Gasslein

Evaluation. The word itself strikes fear in the heart of many. Couple it with “liturgy” and the level of angst mounts. How, some people ask, dare one evaluate something as sacred as liturgy? How, others ask, can you evaluate the performance of ministers? How dare you stand in judgment on others? After all, they’re doing this out of the goodness of their hearts! Still others ask: What standards will you use? The Church has issued no checklist for determining good and bad liturgy. So, this is being purely subjective. We already fight enough on our liturgy committee, others contend. Why make it worse?

These are just a few of the challenges that we face when we turn to the question of evaluating liturgy. Over the past few years, I have been working on this question with students in my course on preparing and evaluating liturgy at Saint Paul University’s Summer Institute in Pastoral Liturgy. I have developed a working definition of evaluation, along with some criteria that can help people use this process in their parishes and deal with these very real questions. I hope that I can, in this article, shed some light on these questions, frame them differently, and offer some hope for the development of processes of evaluation that serve worshipping communities.

Evaluation Connected to Preparation

There is an intimate connection between the processes of preparation and evaluation. I define preparation thus:

The process by which a particular celebrating community interprets and enflses the rites (gets the words and rubrics off paper into action, proclamation, gesture, ritual, song) so that the assembly can celebrate the paschal mystery through full, conscious and active participation in the Church’s liturgy. Participants in this process listen to the community’s (e)valuation of liturgical celebrations to build on identified strengths and

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remove or transform hindrances to participation.\(^1\)

Preparation undertaken in this manner leads naturally to a certain kind of evaluation. It proceeds from an ecclesial vision of liturgical action that sees this as the central work of God’s priestly people; it recognizes the need to incarnate the rites in each community of faith. Such preparation is conscious that “when the liturgy is celebrated something more is required than the mere observance of the laws governing valid and lawful celebration; it is also (the pastors') duty to ensure that the faithful take part fully aware of what they are doing, actively engaged in the rite, and enriched by its effects” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, no. 11). Evaluation thus must ask whether the community’s attempts to enable the whole people to participate fully, consciously, and actively have succeeded.

The other link that is too easily overlooked is that evaluation leads back to preparation; the process of evaluation either affirms what has been done in the preparation or suggests adjustments that those preparing celebrations must ponder and implement as they continue the process of rooting the rites more deeply in the lives of their people.

**Evaluating Liturgy for What It Is**

It is critically important that in evaluating liturgy, we evaluate it as liturgy – not as education or personal prayer, to use two possible examples – but as the Church’s ritual action that praises God for salvation in the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ, and expresses who we are as a believing community. Liturgy has its proper way of functioning according to its ritual nature, which expresses its theological nature. Do our ritual actions express the theological nature of liturgy: trinitarian, christological, ecclesiological, eschatological, incarnational, euchological? Have we taken seriously the ritual aspects of our prayer? Are we doing what we say we are doing? Are we actually praising God? Do the various ministers – presiders, musicians, hospitality ministers, readers, eucharistic ministers, those who prepare the environment – serve this purpose? Or are people bored, disengaged or offended?

Every detail of the liturgy bears an answer to these questions, because each detail of the liturgy, from the largest to the smallest, embodies our care or inattention to this fundamental work of the Christian people. Recognizing this will help you approach the process of evaluation in the proper perspective.

**Some Standards Provided**

Are there any standards to which we can turn? Definitely. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the General Instruction on the Roman Missal, and a number of other documents provide benchmarks that we can use for the process of evaluation.

Here are some examples. After each citation or group of citations, I present a question for reflection. These very broad categories represent both a beginning and an ending point for the process of evaluation. Your ability to articulate what is actually happen-

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\(^1\) For more on this, see Bernadette Gasslein, *Preparing and Evaluating Liturgy* (Ottawa: Novalis, 1997).
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ing that supports your answer, both in your celebrations and in your parish, will be very important in responding to these questions. If you cannot do that, then perhaps your answer is more wishful thinking than actual fact.

If liturgy is
• the outstanding means whereby the faithful may express in their lives and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true church (CSL, no. 2),

Is the liturgy in your parish the outstanding source of energy and inspiration for the Christian life? Give details to support your response.

• a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem (CSL, no. 7),

What images come to your mind when you read these words? Would the overall quality of celebrations—rich symbols, well-prepared ministries, joyous song—from Sunday to Sunday allow the people of your community to catch a sense of the banquet of the kingdom of God?

• the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit (CSL, no. 14),

Can people in your community count on all aspects of your parish's celebrations to sustain their faith, their hope and their love? Do they have to turn to other sources of spirituality to find roots and resources for their Christian life?

If liturgy:
• daily builds up those who are within into a holy temple of the Lord, into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit
• strengthens their power to preach Christ …

• shows forth the church to those who are outside as a sign lifted up among the nations (CSL, no. 2),

Does the liturgy in your community foster a sense of prayer and service? If you asked people what gives them the strength to live their Christian lives, would the Sunday liturgy figure in their response?

• moves the faithful to be one in holiness,

Does the liturgy of your parish contribute to the unity of the Christian community? Or does it fragment it within the parish?

• draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire (CSL, no. 10),

What evidence do you see in your parish life of this people afire with the love of Christ? What is the role of the liturgy in this?

Full, Conscious and Active Participation

Perhaps the clearest general statement that must be considered in evaluation is this: “Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of liturgy, and to which the Christian people, 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people' (1 Peter 2.4-5) have a right and obligation by reason of their baptism” (CSL, no. 14). This statement actually determines both the thrust of preparation and the foundation for evaluation.

The Role of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) also offers a number of important criteria for evaluation. By
providing “general guidelines for planning the eucharistic celebration properly” (ch. 1, no. 6), setting out the purpose of the various elements of the Mass (for example, no. 56i), delineating the shape of the rite (for example, no. 54), and offering performance notes for its various aspects (for example, no. 12), the GIRM provides both the vision which should underpin preparation and the criteria that can help communities recognize whether they are growing towards “full, conscious and active participation.” Those involved in both preparing and evaluating liturgy should be very familiar with the content of the GIRM, for it provides invaluable resources for both these processes.

Who Evaluates?

Those involved in the ministry of preparation should definitely be involved in the ministry of evaluation. So should a few others, lest people mistake what they prepared was what actually happened. Those responsible for the various ministries obviously should participate. Inviting some interested members of the assembly is also important. “Interested” does not necessarily mean those people who have an “ax to grind” with the Church or with the liturgy. Their presence can destroy the process. For evaluation to build up the body of Christ, you need to engage in it people who care about the liturgy, who are willing to reflect on their experiences of it, and who are able to share those reflections. If you have a number of celebrations on a weekend, it will be important to involve people from all of them. You may also want to invite people who habitually sit in different parts of the church. People who sit at the front and at the front of a long, rectangular church may have very different experiences of a celebration. You will want to hear from people of different ages: children, teens, young adults, adults, and the elderly. Hearing from women and men will be important, too. People who reflect the ethnic mix of your parish should be included here, too. Publishing the basic questions you will use for evaluation (see below) in your parish bulletin can enable you to invite responses from an even larger group of people.

Since people are learning the skill of evaluating, it will be important for them to participate in this process for at least a few months. Make clear to them at the beginning the length of commitment you want. It will be important to be able to refresh this group with new people on a regular basis; encourage those who leave the immediate evaluation group to continue their reflection on their own.

What Is Evaluation?

I define evaluation in this manner: “The process of focused [mystagogical] reflection that enables a community to deepen its consciousness of its call to praise God and intercede for the world. It builds up the body of Christ by reflecting on liturgical celebrations, affirming what promotes the ‘full, conscious, active participation’ of the assembly in Christ’s work of praise and intercession, and identifying hindrances to this participation.”

- A process of focused (mystagogical) reflection …

Evaluation takes place after ritual experience. In this it bears a certain

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2 For more on this, see Gasslein, Preparing and Evaluating Liturgy.
kinship with the process of mystagogy, by which we reflect on the rites so that they can yield their deeper meaning and draw us more profoundly into the mystery that we celebrate. I believe that this kinship with mystagogy is critical in understanding and establishing effective evaluation processes. It has the added benefit, when done well, of helping us deepen our practice of mystagogy.

Evaluation should happen fairly soon after a celebration. This proximity assures that participants will remember the various elements of the celebration as they happened – not as they might have been. Even if a group cannot meet to evaluate within the few days following a celebration, its members should get into the habit of jotting down their reflections soon after the experience.

Evaluation is focused. The fundamental question I usually use to focus the reflection is this: “What in this celebration helped you praise God?” It is very important that you be concrete in your responses. These responses can affirm the work of those who prepare the liturgy and help them discern those elements on which they should continue to build.

- … that enables a community to deepen its consciousness of its call to praise God and intercede for the world …

Sometimes the question on what in the celebration helped one to praise God provides the entry point into mystagogy, since people have to grapple with praise as the point of our celebration. This is no longer just “Theresa read well,” or “I liked the opening hymn.” Rather, praise becomes the prism through which respondents engage with the various elements of the liturgy. When you are just beginning to do this, you may have to examine very consciously each part of the liturgy. Initially, people are not accustomed to recognizing that each element of the celebration contributes to our action of praise and thanksgiving. Here, the criteria provided by the GIRM will help you in this examination.

- … it builds up the body of Christ by reflecting on liturgical celebrations …

If the process ends up in division, anger, hurt feelings, resignations and other conflicts, then it is not worth undertaking. The process of evaluation must build up the community. Participants need to listen carefully and respectfully, and share their own thoughts honestly and courteously.

- … it affirms what promotes the “full, conscious, active participation” of the assembly in Christ’s work of praise and intercession …

Everyone is called to praise God in the celebration. Rather than target specific ministries, it deals with the experience of the whole assembly. The ministries merit reflection insofar as they enabled or hindered the assembly from its work of praise and thanksgiving. Problems with particular ministries should be referred to and addressed in ongoing formation programs.

- … it identifies hindrances to this participation.

Once a group has worked for a while – one or two meetings – with the question regarding what in the celebration helped one to praise God, I add another: “What in this celebration hindered your praise?” This question allows people to identify elements that detracted from praise. It also provides those
preparing liturgy with input that they must consider as they continue to shape the community's celebrations.

**Building on This Foundation**

Formulated this way, these questions do several things.

- They address the purpose of liturgy: to praise God. This is critical. It is not enough to ask, “Did this celebration help me pray?” People’s operative definitions of prayer are too diverse to allow for a common understanding of what the question might mean. For instance, if some people’s preferred place of prayer is a quiet walk in the woods or a favourite corner of their home, they may be tempted to discount the whole liturgical action as prayer because it draws them into a different setting. Those who prefer to pray to Jesus as a friend may not spontaneously find that kind of prayer in their liturgical experience, yet at the same time may be quite able to recognize what elements of a celebration helped them praise God.

- They invite respondents to assume responsibility for their own responses. “I found that the opening hymn really helped me praise.” “I was really moved by the way the homilist addressed the reality of our situation. I felt like I was part of the good news – I really could see that God was at work among us.” “The beauty of the field flowers helped me recognize the glory of God in all creation, even though I’d had an awful week.” “I appreciated the silences. At first I was uncomfortable; now I miss them if they’re not there.” “I came to church totally preoccupied with what had happened at home just before. I found it really hard to let myself be drawn into the liturgy.” “I couldn’t hear the reader or the presider. There must have been something wrong with the sound system.” “The preacher put down teenagers. I just turned off.” All of these responses are personal responses to ritual actions.

- They set a tone for the process of evaluation. This mode of reflection isn’t out to “get” anyone. It doesn’t target any one group for compliments or criticism.

- By drawing us back to the details of the ritual, they also avoid, as much as possible, issues of personality. For instance, gregarious extraverts do not necessarily make better presiders than more low-key introverts. The task of both is always the same: to draw God’s people into this action of praise. This is accomplished not through personality but through ritual action.

- They deliberately do not ask if people liked a certain element of a celebration. Frankly, our responsibility is not to like our ritual. For instance, there is the washing of feet, a critical element of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper. We have heard much debate in the last number of years about whether this gesture is “relevant” at the end of the twentieth century. That debate usually takes place before we have participated in the gesture in a significant way. People’s reluctance to have their feet washed, the humility that takes place as those who wash feet sink down to another plane, and put themselves at someone else’s feet, the tenderness, yes, even the intimacy, that the gesture establishes are, each in its own way, very challenging. We can find a good reason to avoid each one, to shrink back from or dislike the demands they make on our bodies, our hearts, our imaginations and our faith. Peter did; this is not new!
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Sharing the common cup is another example. A family may share a common cup; we say we are sisters and brothers in Christ – and still refuse to share the cup of the covenant. Yet, these actions, gestures, words, symbols and ritual patterns are for us as a community our primary entry point into the mystery of God. Elements people would not necessarily like can, over time, still lead them to praise.

By dealing thoughtfully with elements that people tend to resist, both the processes of preparation and evaluation help believers to embrace an ecclesial spirituality. Such a spirituality urges us to put aside personal or idiosyncratic preferences in favour of the shared symbols, stories, words and gestures that give birth to and nurture our common faith.

Formulating Other Questions

Are there other questions to ask in this process of evaluation? Yes! An excellent resource to help you formulate these questions is Gil Ostdiek’s Catechesis for Liturgy (Washington: Pastoral Press, 1986). His work has inspired a number of the questions I have formulated for this process. Here are just four questions you might want to use to help you examine your celebrations. You will find more in Preparing and Evaluating Liturgy.

- Were we respected as members of the body of Christ in this celebration?
  Were we expected to participate in this celebration? (For instance, were there enough hymnals for everyone?) Were the various dialogues of the celebration real dialogues? Did I have time to answer the greeting, “The Lord be with you”? Were there real silences after the invitation, “Let us pray,” so we could “collect” our own prayers?

- Were we totally engaged in this celebration?
  Liturgy engages us in praise through the senses: taste, touch, smell, hearing, sight. Were all of these senses engaged? Did any one predominate? How can we achieve better balance?

- Did we experience the eucharistic prayer as “the centre and summit of the entire celebration” (GIRM, no. 54)? Was the eucharistic prayer proclaimed or read? Were the acclamations sung? Is a common setting of the acclamations used at all masses? Were people bored or engaged in their own devotions?

- Was “the procession to receive Christ’s body ... an act of community” (GIRM, no. 56i)? Was ours a communion procession or a communion stampede? Did music that we sang while processing heighten the meaning of this activity? Was this a joyful event?

Determining Perfection Is Not the Goal of Evaluation

We do not evaluate liturgy so that we can determine if we celebrated perfectly. Liturgy is human activity. We all make mistakes, and our action at liturgy is no exception. The voice that sings off key can also praise God – if it is given the opportunity and the encouragement to sing!

We evaluate our celebrating because it is intentional human activity that has as its goal the loftiest of all we undertake as a Christian community. Our evaluation serves to remind us of that purpose. It keeps us conscious of our work as a Christian people: to praise.
God in all that we do, and to do and be each day in our work and play what we are and do around the Lord's table. We can always learn to undertake this mission more reverently, more consciously, more fully. If we are to live as a people of justice, love and hope, we have a fundamental responsibility to each other and to the whole of creation to do what is necessary so that our celebrations "draw the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and set them on fire."

For Further Reading


———, ed., Preparing for Liturgy Series. Ottawa: Novalis, 1997. This series of 48-page books provides rich resources for the process of preparation and principles and suggestions that will be useful for evaluation.


The Role of the Liturgy Committee

In the introductory notes in the Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy one finds the following in a section entitled "Goals in Liturgy":

Liturgical committees in all parishes: this is a great dream in need of realization throughout the country. Renewed commitment to fulfill this dream is required on the part of diocesan and parish leadership.¹

The need for liturgy committees in parishes came about after the revision of the liturgy following the Second Vatican Council. This revision includes many options that will allow the liturgy to be more geared to pastoral circumstances, and preparation is required to choose appropriate options for a particular liturgy and to make pastoral adaptations. As well, because the liturgy is the prayer of the community and not solely the prayer of the presider, the community will also take some responsibility for the preparation of that liturgy. The involvement of a growing number in the various ministries, readers, cantors, ministers of communion, etc., means that preparation is required to co-ordinate carefully their roles in the celebration of the liturgy. Although parish liturgy committees as such are not mentioned in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy or the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, the latter document does have this to say: "All concerned should work together in the effective preparation of each liturgical celebration as to its rites, pastoral aspects, and music. They should work under the direction of the rector of the church and should consult the faithful" (no. 73).²

Parish liturgy committees may or may not be connected to a diocesan liturgy committee, but in all likelihood they do look to their diocesan counterpart for leadership, resources, information, and educational opportunities. Therefore, a discussion on diocesan liturgy committees, usually referred to as commissions, will be included here.³

The Diocesan Liturgy Commission

Commissions at the diocesan level in liturgy, art, and music were mandated for the Church after the Second Vatican Council; that is, they were endorsed by the entire college of bishops for the entire Church. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, after advising that commissions be set up by the territorial authority to regulate pastoral-liturgical action and promote studies and necessary experiments (no. 44), says the following about dioceses:

The Role of the Liturgy Committee

For the same reason every diocese is to have a commission on the liturgy, under the direction of the bishop, for promoting the liturgical apostolate.

Sometimes it may be advisable for several dioceses to form among themselves one single commission, in order to promote the liturgy by means of shared consultation (no. 45).

Besides the commission on the liturgy, every diocese, as far as possible, should have commissions for music and art.

These three commissions must work in closest collaboration; indeed it will often be best to fuse the three of them into one single commission (no. 46).

With respect to sacred art in churches, the document says:

When deciding on works of art, local Ordinaries shall give hearing to the diocesan commission on sacred art and, if need be, to others who are especially expert, as well as to the commissions referred to in articles 44, 45, and 46 (no. 126).

A key factor for a diocesan commission is the important role of the bishop as the leader of the liturgical life in the diocese. The primary function of the commission is to assist him with his responsibility for the spiritual life of the diocesan Church.\(^5\)

These commissions were not “invented” by the Second Vatican Council; they had already been promoted by previous popes, and some dioceses had such commissions in place. Pope Pius XII in his 1947 encyclical, Mediator Dei, suggested that, to assist the bishops regarding participation of the faithful, each diocese might establish an advisory committee to promote what was then referred to as the liturgical apostolate.\(^6\) Commissions for art and music had been promoted by earlier popes.

The precept of the Vatican II document on establishing these commissions was affirmed in a 1964 instruction on carrying out the liturgical renewal, Inter Oecumenici, by the Concilium, the Commission for implementing the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The two functions suggested in CSL, education and liturgical reform, were more specific in this instruction:

The diocesan liturgical commission, under the direction of the bishop, has these responsibilities:

a. to be fully informed on the state of pastoral-liturgical activity in the diocese;

b. to carry out faithfully those proposals in liturgical matters made by the competent authority and to keep informed on the studies and programs taking place elsewhere in this field;

c. to suggest and promote practical programs of every kind that may

\(^4\) DOL, nos. 45-46.

\(^5\) For more on the role of the bishop as it applies to diocesan liturgy commission, see the National Bulletin on Liturgy, vol. 11, no. 66 (Nov.-Dec.), p. 285-286.

\(^6\) For a historical development of diocesan commissions, see Foster, “Diocesan Commissions for Liturgy....”
contribute to the advancement of liturgical life, especially in the interest of aiding priests laboring in the Lord's vineyard;

d. to suggest, in individual cases or even for the whole diocese, timely, step-by-step measures for the work of pastoral liturgy, to appoint and to call upon people capable of helping priests in this matter as occasion arises, to propose suitable means and resources;

e. to see to it that programs in the diocese designed to promote liturgy go forward with the co-operation and mutual help of other groups along the lines mentioned above (no. 45d) regarding the liturgical commission of the assembly of bishops.

The structure of these commissions, the number and kind of membership, and any further definition of their tasks are left in the hands of each diocese.

The National Liturgy Office, through the *National Bulletin on Liturgy*, has offered some suggestions for liturgy committees, though sparingly for diocesan commissions. The bulletin's first discussion of diocesan commissions included a plan to help them define their tasks. This plan, published 25 years ago, poses questions that might be helpful to a commission in evaluating its task today. They bear repeating.

1. What are the liturgical needs in the parishes of the diocese?

2. Which two or three of these are most urgent?

3. What can be done about:
   a) various areas of liturgy
      Sunday celebration
      baptism
      reconciliation
      weddings
      funerals
      other sacraments
      children's Masses
      children's liturgy of the word
      other Masses
      other prayer services
      other areas?
   b) for whom
      readers
      cantors, choirs, other musicians
      servers
      presiders and preachers
      teachers
      liturgy committees of parishes
      others?
   c) by what means
      meetings – in parishes;
      central publications
      workshops
      others?

7 DOL, no. 337.
8 In the U.S. support has been given to the various dioceses in establishing and maintaining diocesan commissions by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, in part by the following document: *Promoting Liturgical Renewal: Guidelines for Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and Office of Worship* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1988) 13. In Canada, organizations of representatives have developed to facilitate communication among commissions, such as the three regional conferences' associations of liturgy commissions and diocesan directors.
10 This issue of the bulletin, no. 35, is out of print and no longer available. Some adaptations have been made to the original text.
The Role of the Liturgy Committee

d) resource people available
   who
   in what areas of liturgy?

e) what about non-parish situations
   high schools
   communities of religious
   others?

f) co-ordinate with pastoral regions
   how?

4. Specific plans for the rest of the year
   - goals
   - helping whom
   - how to achieve this
   - when?

5. General plans for the coming year

6. The next step.

John Foster suggests that in regard to a
diocesan commission’s education, the
gathering of information not only con-
cerning diocesan activities but also in
the field of liturgical studies is essential
for the commission to fulfill its role. At
the same time, its chief responsibility is
to carry out the proposals made by
competent authority, be it the dioce-
san bishop, the episcopal conference,
or the Holy See.\textsuperscript{11} He also points out
that there is nothing to indicate that
the mandate of these commissions is
intended to be temporary. He is con-
cerned that some dioceses no longer
have a functioning commission or an
office of liturgy because the down-
sizing trend in society is also evident in
the institutional Church. In light of
the Church’s belief that its most
important activity is the liturgy, it is
odd, he says, that a liturgy commission
seems less important than a finance
committee.\textsuperscript{12} One of the tasks of a
liturgy commission – the reform of the
liturgy – may appear to have been

\textsuperscript{11} Foster, p. 137
\textsuperscript{12} Foster, p. 142.
accomplished, and now that the reform has been launched, the need to have a commission is diminished. But the renewal that was to go hand in hand with the reform is ongoing, and new opportunities to spark renewal are available as revised editions of liturgical books come into use.

It is through education, says Foster, that commissions will have the greatest influence on the life of the diocesan Church, that is, through the education of clergy, training of lay ministers, and formation of the Christian people. In the end, what justifies its continued existence is the assistance as a competent advisory body that a commission gives to the bishop in his role in promoting the liturgical life in the diocese.

The Parish Liturgy Committee

The liturgy committee in a parish parallels, to some degree, the functions of a diocesan commission: that is, taking care that the liturgy is celebrated well and that the rites of the Church are properly implemented. Past issues of this bulletin have been much more generous in providing information for parish committees, especially with issues such as membership and meetings, evaluation, information about the liturgical year, and information on the various sacramental celebrations. An alternative vision for what a liturgy committee might be, as opposed to simply being concerned about what a committee does, is also given.17

One suggestion might be added regarding the membership of the committee: that those invited to become members have a love for the liturgy and understand the importance of it in the life of the parish.

A review of some characteristics of effective parish liturgy committees might be in order, however. Ronald J. Lewinski offers some criteria;18 the following is a summary of what he offers:

- Liturgy committee members will commit themselves not only to preparing the liturgy but also to making it the basis of their own spiritual lives, allowing ample time together for prayer and reflection rooted in the liturgy.
- The committee needs a plan of ongoing formation so that members are acquainted with the rites of the Church and acquire an understanding and appreciation of liturgical tradition and current official documents, and an understanding for the meaning and purpose of liturgical law.
- The parish budget should provide funds for continuing education, including diocesan and national conferences, and for building up a resource library.
- The committee should see what it does as a ministry to the assembly and not simply choose what would be suit-

13 Foster, p. 144.
14 See Bulletins no. 35, no. 55, and no. 66.
15 See Bulletin no. 99.
16 See Bulletins no. 47 and no. 67, as well as those devoted to specific season.
17 See Bulletin 139, p. 251-53.
The Role of the Liturgy Committee

able for itself, and it should strive to be inclusive of all and sensitive to the needs of people of all ages, abilities, cultures, etc.

- The committee oversees the liturgical life of the parish, and the training, scheduling and exercise of the various liturgical ministries, and it plans the whole liturgical year so that a rhythm of the community's special events is established and properly integrated.

- Ongoing liturgical formation of the assembly, establishing standards, evaluating the celebrations, and possibly redesigning the worship space are the responsibility of the committee.

- The Sunday Eucharist takes priority, making it a worthy and dignified celebration week after week through consistent attention to details.

- The committee should be concerned about the celebration of all the sacraments, and at the same time be concerned about integrating liturgy into the whole life of the parish.

- There needs to be a regular process of evaluation, sometimes with an outside professional.

- Good communication between the committee and pastoral staff is essential, as is working with presiders and all others concerned to ensure that all are comfortable with what is planned.

- The musicians need to be integrated into the parish's liturgical organization and involved in the planning process.

- Communication with the assembly can be maintained through the parish council, and finally, the committee will include establishing clearly its long-range and short-range goals.

Dedication of the Lateran Basilica


The feast of the Dedication of the Basilica of St. John Lateran will also fall on a Sunday in 1997 (as does the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross). Being a feast of the Church, the Lord’s mystical body, it is also a feast of the Lord.

If this is a day on which the Church remembers the inauguration of the cathedral of Rome, one of the places of pilgrimage during the jubilee, it is also a day on which every church, no matter how humble can and must show forth its true significance. The mystery of the Church, in fact, transpires in the place of worship in which the baptized gather together, but only if it is a place of prayer, welcome, meeting, and which there is a sense of the presence of Christ the Lord and expectation of his return.
Preparing the Liturgy: Resources

There are many resources available to liturgy committees and others who are responsible for preparing the celebration of the liturgy in a community or who are simply interested in learning more about the Church’s worship. This list is not intended to be comprehensive but to provide some basic instructional materials and training tools for those involved in preparing the liturgy and in the liturgical ministries. Members of liturgy committees are encouraged to study the ritual books themselves, especially the pastoral notes that explain the meaning of the rites as well as other instructions (rubrics) that provide guidance for a good celebration of the rite. Many of the resources listed here give references to other sources, especially the National Bulletin on Liturgy and the new series from Novalis, Preparing for Liturgy.

For liturgy committees
Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy: Liturgical Calendar (Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 90 Parent Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1N 7B1; tel. 1-800-769-1147). This book, published each year, has an introductory section entitled “Pastoral Notes,” in which can be found much helpful information on the liturgy.

Hoffman, Elizabeth, ed. The Liturgy Documents: A Parish Resource, third edition (Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue, Chicago, IL 60622-11-1; tel. 1-800-933-1800). Also available on disk. This important volume includes the following official Vatican documents on liturgical reform: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, General Instruction for the Roman Missal, Lectionary for Mass: Introduction, General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, Ceremonial of Bishops (excerpts), and Directory for Masses with Children. A number of other documents published by the United States bishops, including several on music and on art and environment, are also part of this book.

National Bulletin on Liturgy (Ottawa: CCCB), published four times a year.


Gasslein, Bernadette. Preparing and Evaluating Liturgy. From Preparing for Liturgy series, Bernadatte Gasslein, ed. (Novalis, 49 Front Street East, 2nd Floor, Toronto, Ont., Canada M5E 1B3; tel. 1-800-387-7164).

Aldi, Kim. Preparing the Assembly to Celebrate from Preparing for Liturgy series (Novalis).

Glendinning, Barry. Preparing the Eucharistic Table. From Preparing for Liturgy series (Novalis).

Preparing the Liturgy: Resources

Searle, Mark. *Liturgy Made Simple* (The Liturgical Press, P.O. Box 7500, Collegeville, MN 56321-7500; tel. 1-800-858-5450).


Lawrence, Emeric A. *The Ministry of Believers* (Liturgical Press).


**The liturgical year**


———. *Preparing the Liturgical Year*, vol. 2: *Lent-Easter and Advent-Christmas*.

*Days of the Lord: The Liturgical Year* (Liturgical Press). This seven-volume series contains in-depth commentary on the liturgical year, aimed at the average reader but also invaluable for anyone looking for a companion to the lectionary and the sacramentary.

*Year of Grace: Liturgical Calendar* (LTP). Poster size: 26 x 26 inches, notebook size: 11 x 17 inches. Published yearly, this "picture" of the liturgical year is particularly helpful for catechists working with catechumens and candidates.

Hynes, Mary Ellen. *Companion to the Calendar* (LTP). This book is a resource that can be used with the liturgical calendar.


*This is the Night: A Parish Welcomes New Members* (LTP). VHS video, 30 minutes.

*The Sourcebook Series* (LTP). Anthologies of hymns, prayers, prose, and poetry from various times and traditions. The topics included are Advent, Christmas, Lent (two volumes), Triduum (three volumes), Easter, baptism, eucharist, reconciliation, marriage, music, liturgy, and death.

Sunday Celebration of the Word and Hours (Ottawa: CCCB, 1994). This ritual book has at the beginning of each of the liturgical seasons pastoral notes that would be helpful not only to those who use this book for worship but also for others looking for background material on these seasons.

**Aids for the parish**

- **bulletins**

*Bible and Liturgy Sunday Bulletins* (Liturgical Press).

*Three Days to Save: Handouts for Parishioners* (LTP). To be distributed at the beginning of Holy Week. Available in packs of 100.

*Paschal Mission* (LTP). An annual series of 14 handouts designed to be inserted into the parish bulletin and given to each household every week during Lent and Eastertime.
• family prayer

Table Prayer Cards (LTP), available for all seasons.


An Advent Calendar: Fling Wide the Doors (LTP). Family size: 12 inches high; community size: 18 inches high. This activity project has windows and doors for each day of Advent.

Keeping Advent and Christmas (LTP). Pocket-size booklet of prayers, especially for the home, including a blessing of the Advent wreath and the Christmas tree.

Forty Days and Forty Nights: A Lenten Ark Moving toward Easter (LTP). A project for families, with windows and doors, accompanied by a booklet with scripture readings, information and prayer, for each day of Lent.

Huck, Gabe. *An Introduction to Lent and Eastertime* (LTP). A 13-page information booklet for the parish community.

Halmo, Joan. *Celebrating the Church Year with Young Children* (Novalis).

• for names and prayer requests

Book of the Elect (Liturgical Press). This good-quality book is intended to be used during the celebration of the Rite of Election when the “elect” write their names into an enrollment book.

The Book of the Names of the Dead: Christian Communities Remember the Names of Their Dead (LTP). Intended for parishes that wish to give the book a place of honour, this book can have a special place around the feasts of All Saints and All Souls.

Deliver Those in Need: A Book in Which Members of the Assembly May Write Their Prayers (LTP). This book can be used to collect the intentions of people in the community, and it has a clear pocket into which the general intercessions can be inserted to be read at the Sunday liturgy.

**Celebrating Children's Liturgy of the Word**

Sunday Book of Readings Adapted for Children, Year A, Year B, Year C. Introduction by Sr. Paule Freeburg, DC (Novalis/T. Shand Publications, Ltd./Treehaus Communications, Inc.). These three books of Sunday readings adapted for children have been endorsed for liturgical use in Canada by the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy, CCCB.

Sunday: *Weekly Leader Guide, Sundays, Feast Days and Solemnities, Year A, Year B, Year C.* Prepared by Christiane Brusselmans, Sr. Paule Freeburg, D.C., Rev. Edward Matthews, Christopher Walker (Novalis/T. Shand Publications, Ltd./Treehaus Communications, Inc.). These guides are companion books to the books of readings for children referred to above.

How to Celebrate the Word with Children ... and Why. VHS video, 33 minutes (Treehaus Communications, Inc., P.O. Box 249, Loveland, Ohio 45140). Consultants: Christiane Brusselmans, Rev. Edward Matthews, Rev. Richard Moudry. Viewer guide included.


**Liturgical year in schools**

Jeep, Elizabeth McMahon. *Children's Daily Prayer for the School Year*
Preparing the Liturgy: Resources

Preparing the Liturgy: Resources (LTP). Published yearly, this format of prayer is a liturgy of the hours for the classroom, including an order of prayer for each school day plus meal and end-of-the-day prayers for each month that reflect the spirit of the Church's seasons and feasts. It is suitable also for a family and for a weekly religious education program. Also available are a teacher's guide, children's prayer folders, and a children's booklet containing the psalms, meal prayers, and end-of-the-day prayers.

Bick, Margaret. Preparing to Celebrate in Schools. From Preparing for Liturgy series (Novalis).

Presiding


Huck, Gabe. Liturgy with Style and Grace (LTP).


Sunday Celebration of the Word and Hours. (CCCB).

Britz, Andrew, and Zita Maier. Preparing Sunday without the Eucharist. From Preparing for Liturgy series (Novalis).

Proclaiming the Word (and preaching)


NRSV Bible, Catholic edition. Available from Novalis in paperback or leather with ribbon markers.

Bonneau, Normand. Preparing the Table of the Word. From Preparing for Liturgy series (Novalis).

A Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers. Notes by Lawrence E. Mick (LTP). Published yearly; both the NAB and the NRSV translations of the Scriptures are included.

Days of the Lord: The Liturgical Year.


Proclaiming the Word: Formation for Readers in the Liturgy (LTP). VHS video, 43 minutes.

Training the Parish Lector (Liturgical Press). VHS video, 46 minutes.


Communion ministers

Huck, Gabe. The Communion Rite at Sunday Mass (LTP).

Training the Eucharistic Minister (Liturgical Press). VHS video, 24 minutes.


Communion of the Sick: Preparation in the Home (CCCB). Contains the prayer responses from the ritual.

Music

Catholic Book of Worship III cassettes (Ottawa: CCCB). Now available: Cassette 1, Responsorial Psalms and Hymns for Advent; Cassette 2, Responsorial Psalms and Hymns for Christmas and Epiphany; Cassette 3, Music for Lent and the Triduum; Cassette 4, Music for the Triduum and Easter Season; Cassette 5, Service Music for Sunday Eucharist.


Training the Parish Cantor (Liturgical Press). VHS video, 57 minutes.

National Association of Pastoral Musicians Presents: Cantoring – A Video Notebook; Part I: The Cantor’s Craft; Part II: The Relationship of the Cantor to the Singing Assembly (NAPM, 225 Sheridan Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20011).


A Church Organist’s Primer (VHS video); Part I: Manual and Pedal Technique; Part II: Registration (Allan Organ Company). Instructor: Sally Cherrington.

McKenna, Edward J. The Ministry of Musicians (Liturgical Press).

Hospitality

Comiskey, James A. The Ministry of Hospitality (Liturgical Press).

Smith, Gregory F. The Ministry of Ushers (Liturgical Press).

Serving at the altar
Training the Mass Server (Liturgical Press). VHS video, 45 minutes.

Hibbard, John G. Preparing to Serve. From the Preparing for Liturgy series (Novalis).


Environment


Mazar, Peter. To Crown the Year: Decorating the Church through the Seasons (LTP).


Mauck, Marchita B. Shaping a House for the Church (LTP).


Kuehn, Regina. A Place for Baptism (LTP).

Re-examining Baptismal Fonts: Baptismal Space for the Contemporary Church.
By S. Anita Stauffer (Liturgical Press). VHS video, 36 minutes.

Knuth, Jill. Banners without Words (Resource Publications, Inc.).

**Liturgy and Social Justice**


**Daily prayer**


Catholic Book of Worship III.

Sunday Celebration of the Word and Hours.

The Psalter: ICEL translation (LTP). Hardcover with ribbon or paperback.

Psalms for Morning and Evening Prayer: ICEL translation (LTP). The four-week cycle of psalms and canticles arranged for morning and evening prayer and including psalms for midday and night prayer.

Proclaim Praise: Daily Prayer for Parish and Home (LTP).

**Liturgical books**


Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (Ottawa: CCCB, 1987).

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

Rite of Confirmation (Ottawa: CCCB, 1987). Ritual and pastoral notes.


[Vigils and Related Rites from the Order of Christian Funerals (Ottawa: CCCB, 1991). Book for the members of the assembly, also in funeral chapels.]


Rite of Penance (Ottawa: CCCB, 1975).

Pastoral Care of the Sick (Ottawa: CCCB, 1983). Rites of the Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum.


**General**


Eimer, Robert D., and Sarah A. O’Malley. Prayer Services for Parish Councils (Liturgical Press). This booklet contains ten short prayer services, each with a theme and a symbol.


Huels, John M. Disputed Questions in the Liturgy Today (LTP).

———. More Disputed Questions in the Liturgy.
Foley, Edward. *From Age to Age: How Christians Have Celebrated the Eucharist* (LTP). The author traces the origins of Christian worship from its Jewish roots to the present through architecture, music, books and vessels.

Fink, Peter, ed. *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship* (Liturgical Press). The entries in this dictionary include some that are strictly theological and others that are pastoral and practical, making it an excellent resource for research.

Harrington, Mary Therese. *A Place for All: Mental Retardation, Catechesis and Liturgy* (Liturgical Press).

Smolarski, Dennis C. *Liturgical Literacy: From Anamnesis to Worship* (Paulist Press, 997 Macarthur Boulevard, Mahwah, New Jersey 07430). This book is a dictionary containing over 650 names, dates, liturgical objects and actions with their definitions.


---. *Parish Weddings* (LTP).

*Canadian Studies in Liturgy* (Ottawa: CCCB). No.1 - Holy Days: Opportunities and Challenges; no. 2 – Ministries of the Laity; no. 3 – Mary in the Liturgy; no. 4 – The Catholic Priesthood; no. 5 – Culture and the Praying Church; no. 6 – Pastoral Notes: Sunday Celebration of the Word and Hours; no. 7 - RCIA and the Period of Postbaptismal Catechesis.


**Periodicals**

*Celebrate!* (Novalis). Six issues a year, each one with a commentary on the scripture passages for the Sundays and major feasts of the year.


*Liturgy 90* (LTP). Published eight times a year.


Ritual Protocol

Ritual is the way that we define our relationship with God. It sets the boundaries of encounter. It establishes the protocol for a reverent approach to the One whose majesty and power are beyond all telling. Ritual ensures that we stand in awe before the God of our salvation.

The ancient temple in Jerusalem is a good example of how ritual space and ritual action structure a people's meeting with their God. Entering the temple by the eastern steps, we would first pass through the courtyard of women and then, up some steps, the courtyard of the Israelites, reserved for the men. From the courtyard of the Israelites we would see the courtyard of the priests, with its raised platform and its huge altar of sacrifice.

Beyond the courtyard of the priests and up another twelve steps stood the sanctuary, with a curtain shielding its entrance. Twice each day, priests offered an incense sacrifice on its small gold altar. The holy of holies, a small, cube-shaped room, was located at the far end of the sanctuary. The high priest alone entered the holy of holies once a year, on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur).

It is easy to see how the ritual space and ritual action of the temple provided a religious etiquette for Israel's approach to God. Access, yes, but at a distance: This was the proper and reverent way to encounter the divine presence.

Reverence Revisited

Temple decorum seemed sensible and secure, but the incarnation changed everything. In a startling act of love, "the Word became flesh and lived among us" (Jn 1.14). Jesus is Emmanuel, “which means, ‘God is with us’” (Mt 1.23).

With this extraordinary event, the protocol for our meeting with God is changed dramatically and forever. In Jesus we come face to face with a divine presence who is in our very midst. In him we discover the breathtaking accessibility of God.

Jesus walked the dusty roads of Palestine, his presence shattering the boundaries of the temple's sacred space. He mingled with the people of the world, enjoyed the wedding feast at Cana, befriended the family at Bethany and wept at the death of Lazarus. Here is a presence that is truly extraordinary and truly new!

Jesus, therefore, opens out a whole new world of intimacy between humankind and God. The disciples walked with him, talked with him, ate with him, shared their life with him. They learned to reverence God in a new way: by leaving all things to follow the Lord, by going with him wherever he went, by clinging to his word, by telling others about him. As we can see, a very different protocol was falling into place.

The Last Supper

The new relationship with God that we find in Jesus demands a new kind of
ritual action – one that closes the distance, one that brings communion. Jesus gave us that ritual action in the Last Supper. Imagine the warmth of the occasion, the ease of conversation. Jesus himself says, “I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends” (Jn 15.15). Here is an intimate gathering of fellow travellers. Here is the new way of meeting our God.

It is important for us to notice the ritual transactions of the Last Supper. Jesus gathers his disciples around him for a sacred meal, a feast of love. His intention is to share his very life with them, and to do this in the deepest and most profound way: “Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body, which is given for you’ .... And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood’” (Lk 22:19-20).

For their part the disciples showed their respect by cherishing the moment, by returning love for love, by bonding themselves to the Lord.

The Lord’s Supper
We know, of course, that the Lord’s Supper was not only for those who gathered with the Lord long ago, for during the course of the meal Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of me” (Lk 22.19; 1 Cor 11.23-26). Thus, down through the ages the Church has made the Eucharist – the Lord’s Supper – the centre of its life.

What this means is something of the greatest significance for our Christian lives. It means that the Lord’s Supper lives on! It means that today we dine with the Lord. It means that today the risen Lord of glory gathers us at table with him. He is the host, and now he invites us to share his life with him. What a marvellous event this is! By joining him in this sacred meal, we become the living body of Christ, the new temple of the Holy Spirit. Leo the Great put it well when he said, “For the effect of partaking of the body and blood of Christ is nothing other than that we are changed into what we receive” (Sermon 63, 7).

Reverence at the Eucharist
What we have seen so far is that the presence of the Lord has dramatically altered the way that we relate to God. The ritual that the Lord has given us – the Eucharist or Lord’s Supper – is designed to draw us close to him, indeed to unite us with him in a communion of shared life. The boundaries of the ancient temple have been broken down, and the distance has been closed. This new kind of meeting requires a new set of skills for showing our reverence for the Lord. We need the skills of the first disciples, who met with him in the same way centuries ago.

We reverence the Lord when we respond to his invitation with joy, when we are eager to gather at table with him, when we want to run to the feast.

We reverence the Lord when we greet the brothers and sisters with love. To greet them is to greet Christ, for they are the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit. To neglect them would be to dishonour the Lord.

We reverence the Lord when we cling to his word. As the Constitution on the
Sacred Liturgy reminds us, Christ “is present in his word, since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in Church” (no. 7). For this reason we proclaim the word with living faith, and we receive it as the living word of God.

We reverence the Lord when we make his table blessing our own, when our great “Amen” is a fervent “yes” that comes from the depths of the heart.

We reverence the Lord when we respond with love in holy communion, when we give our lives to the Lord even as he gives his life to us, when we commit ourselves to be his presence in the world.

We reverence the Lord when we leave the Lord’s Supper determined to maintain the bond of love and to be a living witness to the kingdom of God.

We reverence the Lord when we prize the book of the gospels and the precious cup of salvation, and when we prepare the Lord’s table as for a feast.

**Dealing with Change**

There is no doubt that this way of showing reverence for the Lord stands in contrast with the recent past, and a bit of history is in order.

During the course of the Middle Ages the overall shape of the Eucharist changed; the original liturgical space became stretched or lengthened. As a result, casual observers may be forgiven if they made too close a connection between the church building and the ancient temple. The community gathered in the nave, but the altar table had made its way to the far end of the sanctuary, in an area that was reserved for the priest and his attendants. Distance seemed to have returned as a way of showing reverence for the Lord. We began to kneel, to receive the body of Christ on the tongue, and to abandon the cup.

We grew accustomed to celebrating the Lord’s Supper in this way. But then, in our own day, everything changed. Following the Second Vatican Council the liturgy began to return to its original form. And when, once again, we gather freely as companions of the Lord, when we stand for prayer, when we receive the consecrated bread in the hand, and when we share the cup, the learned patterns of reverence break down. It is perfectly understandable that some people would feel that the sense of the sacred has been lost.

This is why liturgy committees and all pastoral leaders need to be conscious of the change that has taken place. Transitions are never easy; reverence is an important part of our lives, and the community has a right to a solid catechesis on the proper way to gather with the Lord.

Our best source of catechesis is the Last Supper itself. The disciples were reverent, to be sure. But they didn’t fall silent, they didn’t distance themselves from the table, they didn’t kneel, they didn’t receive on the tongue, and they didn’t forsake the cup. They didn’t put on a sombre face; rather, they sang hymns of joy (Mt 26.30). Their reverence rested in their hearts. It was a reverence of love.

Some ritual actions are easy to explain. With regard to communion in the hand, the Lord himself told us to take and eat; and regarding the cup he said, “Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant” (Mt 26.27).
The same mandate is repeated at every Eucharist.

Although standing for prayer is the tradition of the Church, it does require some explanation. Standing is first of all the posture of a resurrection people. The Apostolic Constitutions, an ancient Church document, reminds us of this:

"Whoever has been raised up (i.e., baptized) must stand for prayer, since when one is risen, one stands upright. Whoever has died and been raised up with Christ will therefore stand upright" (VII, 45, 1-2).

There is more. Standing identifies us as a people who are travelling with the Lord, a people who are making our way to the fullness of the kingdom of God. It is the posture that engages us actively in a covenant of love with God. It reveals the freedom of the children of God, who know that they are friends and companions of the Lord. But it is also the basic posture of respect. We always stand when someone we wish to honour enters the room.

Reverence for the Reserved Sacrament

Following the recommendation of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (no. 276), newer church buildings will probably have a separate chapel of reservation. In the opening and closing processions, the bishop or presbyter and the accompanying ministers reverence the altar with a profound bow (GIRM, nos. 84, 125, 234). The altar is the focus of the paschal sacrifice and eucharistic feast (GIRM, no. 259); it is therefore a sign of Christ himself (Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery, no. 24). The bow is not made to the cross, which is secondary in relation to the altar: "There is also to be a cross, clearly visible to the congregation, either on the altar or near it" (GIRM, no. 270). For obvious reasons, ministers who are carrying liturgical objects, such as the cross, candles, incense pot or the book of the gospels, do not bow. Since the bow is an initial and a final sign of respect, there is no need for servers, readers or ministers of communion to make a further bow when they approach the altar or pass across it during the course of the celebration.

If the chapel of reservation is not enclosed and the tabernacle can be seen, the members of the community would normally genuflect to the blessed sacrament as they enter and leave the celebration space. Otherwise, it seems appropriate that they would bow to the altar. The same protocol would apply in mission churches and chapels where the blessed sacrament is not reserved.

In church buildings where there is no separate chapel of reservation, the tabernacle is sometimes placed on a pedestal where one of the side altars used to be located. The Ceremonial of Bishops prescribes that "those who pass before the blessed sacrament genuflect except when they are walking in procession" (no. 71). It follows, then, that members of the community who pass by the blessed sacrament on entering or leaving the celebration space should likewise genuflect.

The same gesture would seem appropriate even when entering or leaving by another door, provided, perhaps, that the tabernacle can be seen.

A bit of a problem arises when the tabernacle has been placed closer to
the altar. Do the ministers bow to the altar or genuflect to the blessed sacrament? There is no provision for both! Following the Ceremonial of Bishops quoted above, they should bow to the altar, since in any event they are walking in procession.

Reverence in the Whole of Life

Reverence for God flows outward from the liturgy to the whole of life in a myriad of ways.

We reverence God when we give thanks for the whole of creation. Everything that exists belongs to God; it does not belong to us. It is ours to care for and to share. Those who revere God will cherish the earth and all that is in it.

We reverence God when we love our brothers and sisters from the heart: “Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour” (1 Cor 12.9-10).

We reverence God when we carry the Lord’s presence to the whole of the world: “Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, extend hospitality to strangers” (1 Cor 12.11-13).

Perhaps the best way to sum up our continued and constant reverence for God is to turn to the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians:

We urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit (5.14-19).
Introducing Silent Prayer in the Eucharist

John G. Hibbard

How often have you heard the complaint that the liturgy has lost its sense of mystery since Vatican II? For some this refers to what they perceive as a loss of a sense of the transcendence of God. For others it may have more to do with the absence of a prayerful spirit.

This absence of a prayerful spirit is often due to the lack of silent prayer and reflection that characterizes many of our liturgies, making them seem rushed. In our day, life in general moves at too rapid a pace; however, our liturgies do not need to imitate that fast pace. Not infrequently we leave the church with a breathless feeling because the liturgy was celebrated in a hurry. Like a conversation, liturgy needs a pace that includes a time to talk, a time to listen, a time to ponder: in short, an ebb and flow. The rhythm of the liturgy does not mean that everything is done at the same slow speed; some things are approached expeditiously, while others need time to be pondered or savoured.

An observance of the times of silence listed in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) is one way to help the Christian community exercise its ministry of worship in a prayerful atmosphere. A prayerful liturgy is not just a pleasant experience; it is the essence of the liturgy and a part of the way the assembly carries out its role. As Vatican II’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy reminds us, the first principle of liturgy is the “full, active and conscious participation of the faithful” in the worship of the Church. This translates into an awareness on the part of the assembly that the Church's sacramental worship is the activity of the whole congregation.

The task of implementing times of silent prayer and reflection is not as easy as it might seem. I have done this now in three parishes, and the experience was different each time. There was a common thread: It took time and effort to plan, educate, and especially to make the assembly comfortable with it. I am convinced that silent prayer in the liturgy helps to keep a balance between communal and personal prayer and to provide a sense of what God does and what we do. It is my experience that in many parishes it is one of the last reforms of the GIRM, no. 23, and the Introduction to the Lectionary (IL), no. 28, to be implemented. It is a change that cannot be brought about without some thought and planning. Therefore, I suggest three steps: planning and preparation, education, and implementation.

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Planning and Preparation
This stage must begin with all who preside at the parish liturgies, with the appropriate parish committees, whether the liturgy committee or the parish pastoral council, and the ministers of the parish who will be involved, especially the musicians and lectors. The planning sessions must also include an examination of the most effective means for educating the ministers and the assembly, whether it will be through homilies, workshops, bulletin notices and/or written materials. The process of planning must involve the parish ministers before involving the assembly. The ministers must see clearly their role of assisting the assembly to exercise its ministry of worship. Unless the ministers are convinced of this, the assembly will not be able to exercise its full, active role of celebrating the liturgy.

In addition, the implementation of the times of silence will be the responsibility of the ministers. By providing the time of silence after each reading and by encouraging it by their attitude of prayer and respect, the ministers can reinforce the prayer of the assembly. If a reader leaves the ambo immediately after the reading, the prayerfulness of the time of silence may be disturbed; if the cantor or musician begins the psalm or gospel acclamation immediately after the reading, the time of silence will not take place. If a presiding priest does not allow the assembly time to pray after inviting them to do so, nothing will happen. All the ministers must know why and when the times of silence occur. And they must not engage in any activity that jeopardizes the silence and prayerful atmosphere that is necessary.

The parish liturgy and pastoral committees and ministers must begin by reading over the appropriate sections of the GIRM and the IL, followed by discussion in order to come to an understanding of how important an element of silence is in the liturgy. Preparation involves setting up the procedure to be followed by the lectors and musicians as well as by the priests who preside at the Eucharist, how long a time of silence will be observed at the various points of the celebration, and how the parish will be educated and guided through the procedure. Without planning by the presiders, musicians and lectors, nothing effective will happen.

There are some practical questions that must be answered, for example: Who will determine the length of reflection after the readings, the lectors or the musicians? In some parishes the lector remains at the ambo until the first notes of the psalm or gospel acclamation are sounded. In this case the musicians have decided the length of the silence.

In other places this decision is made by the lector, so that the psalm or acclamation begins only after the lector has left the ambo. In those places where the musicians decide the length of the silence, there is a tendency for the lector to leave before the time of silence is completed. In some cases there are two times of silence; one after the reading before the lector leaves the ambo and another after the lector leaves. In my opinion this is a less effective method. Even if the lector sits fairly close to the ambo, movement, whether immediately after the reading or after a short period of silence, can be disruptive and sends a signal to the assembly that the reading
Introducing Silent Prayer in the Eucharist • John G. Hibbard

with its time of reflection is completed. A good general principle is that there be no movement during prayer, silent or vocal. Therefore, it seems preferable that the lector remain in place at the ambo for the entire period of silent reflection. After the lector has moved from the ambo, it is hard to reestablish or continue in a reflective silence.

How long should the silence last? When one is involved in ministry, time seems to move slowly, and a second seems like a minute. Some practice will be needed to determine the proper length of reflection. Of course, silence will have to be introduced gradually. To begin, shorter periods of time may be appropriate; after the assembly has adjusted to the prayerful nature of silence, they can be slightly extended. In addition, silence after the readings and homily may be longer than the silence during the opening rite and at the “Let us pray.” Suitable feedback from some designated members of the assembly or the liturgy committee will help the ministers to know if the silence was too long or too short.

Education
The largest task involves the formation of the assembly. Bulletin announcements, homilies, adult education, and small-group formation are all important. In addition, seeing or experiencing what should happen is as important as telling the assembly what should happen. Video tapes for small-group education can help show how silence functions and how it can play a vital role in the prayerful celebration of the liturgy.

Although I dislike using the homily primarily for educational purposes, the homily can, according to GIRM, no. 41, flow from the liturgy itself as well as from the readings. In many parishes the homily is the only time for reaching the majority of the people who assemble for worship. In my experience at least three homilies are necessary: the first to talk about the importance of silence, a second one to emphasize the active role of the assembly in praying and reflecting in silence, and a third one to mention the four principal times that the GIRM calls for silence in the celebration of the Eucharist. The past experience of the assembly will also determine what approach and examples will be most helpful to assist them in comprehending and embracing their role.

In conjunction with the homily and short announcements in the parish bulletin, a brochure outlining the reason and times for silence in the liturgy is a helpful instrument of information. Because each time of silent prayer is unique and calls for a different response on the part of the assembly, it is important to communicate this information and allow the assembly time to integrate this information into their worship patterns so that it may become a prayerful experience.

Implementation
The time for implementation comes after the preparation and education. I can remember very well my first experience. The lectors and musicians were prepared, and I thought I was prepared. The first reading was finished, and there was silence—dead silence. I can recall how awkward it was and how lacking in a sense that the community was praying. My first thought was: “What have I done?” I was not prepared for the time it would take for the assembly to grow into a prayerful silence. But I can also remember very
vividly a specific Sunday a number of months later when the silence was prayerful and fruitful. It was worth the time and effort.

To celebrate the Eucharist truly as the body of Christ, we must appreciate the role of song, word, gesture, and silence as component parts of the community's prayer life. Silence helps us to appreciate our role in the liturgy and to recognize the presence in our midst of the transcendent God who sent Jesus in human form. When too much emphasis is placed on our activity, there is a danger that liturgy will be only a human activity. Liturgy is also the activity of God, who speaks and transforms us into a holy people. When a balance between activity and silence is present, liturgy truly has the possibility of being an encounter between the assembly and God by the power of the Holy Spirit. Silence also makes the communal prayer of the liturgy a personal experience of prayer. It allows each person to encounter God, inviting the Spirit to speak in a unique way to each person even though all hear the same words. For liturgy is mystery, and mystery needs time and space to be understood.

There are two kinds of silence in the liturgy. The first is simply a lack of activity in order to prepare for something, a pause, such as the break before the liturgy of the word begins (IL, no. 28). It allows the assembly to change posture and to be ready to listen before the reading begins. A similar pause also separates the eucharistic prayer and the communion rite.

A second type of silence is more than a lack of activity; it is a time of recollection, prayer and reflection, a time of active silent prayer required at certain times by GIRM, no. 23, and the IL, no. 28.

**Times of Silent Prayer**

The GIRM speaks of four times when the people of God should pray in silence during the celebration of the Eucharist: the penitential or opening rite, the opening prayer after the invitation to prayer, after the readings and the homily, and after communion.

In order to implement silence in the liturgy we must appreciate what the assembly is called to do at each of these moments of silent prayer, each with a different focus and purpose. These occasions of silence, except for the time after the readings and homily, are part of a pattern of liturgical prayer, involving the presider and assembly in a unique dialogue not only among themselves but also between God and the community.

- The opening rite begins with an invitation to reflect on the mystery of God's mercy and love that has called us together. This is not the time for a personal or communal examination of conscience followed by a confession of personal sin but an opportunity to recall the saving love of God that is given to us in Christ despite our unworthiness. It is an opportunity for the assembly to remember that God first loved us and called us together as a people anointed by the Spirit of Jesus. This is a time to prepare our hearts to praise God's mercy and love.

- In the opening prayer the words "Let us pray" introduce a time of silence for prayer (see GIRM no. 32). What should we pray for? The prayers themselves suggest that we ask to be transformed into the image of Christ, or that we will be faithful to God's call-
Introducing Silent Prayer in the Eucharist • John G. Hibbard

ing, or that we will come to the kingdom of eternal glory. For those who use missalettes to prepare, this may be an opportunity to read the prayer ahead of time and reflect on it during the silence, so that when it is proclaimed by the presiding priest, we can listen to it and make it a prayer from our heart. The ancient name of this prayer, the "collect," reminds us that the presiding priest collects all our prayers and unites them in one prayer to God.

- After each reading and the homily the assembly sits in silence to reflect on what it has heard in the reading or homily. The word of God remains only a set of words unless we give ourselves time to reflect on and digest its meaning. After each reading we can ask what impressed or challenged us and reflect on it. The reading should inspire us to pray for some aspect of our Christian life and growth or to give thanks for God's activity.

- In the silence after communion we are able to reflect on the great gift that God has given us. Many were probably taught to pray in thanksgiving for the gift of Christ in holy communion; however, we have already given thanks in the eucharistic prayer. This is rather a time to pray for the effectiveness of what we have celebrated. Thus, in communion, the saving presence of Jesus continues the process of our salvation. The new life which we received in baptism is renewed and strengthened in communion by our encounter with the risen Lord. In other words, the presence and action of Christ in the Eucharist is to transform us more and more into his image. For this reason the prayer after communion rarely gives thanks to God for the gift of communion, but it prays that what we have received may be effective in our lives. What we have done in praising God and what we have received for our transformation into Christ is given not just for us alone but for the transformation of the whole world.

In the general intercessions, when we exercise our baptismal priesthood and mission of praying (interceding) for the needs of the Church and the world, I would also suggest that silence is also important. The universal scope of the intentions invites us out of our own world to pray for the good of others and the salvation of the whole world. Yet, there are personal concerns that are always dear to us. Time is needed during the intercessions to pray for those things close to home. This time of silent prayer may also be linked to the collection, providing the time to remember that we have come to offer ourselves voluntarily to God as a sacrifice of praise.

It is in the liturgy that God's people exercise their baptismal priesthood of praising God and interceding for the world. Each invitation to prayer to the assembly by the presider and each time of reflection after the readings holds the potential for an encounter between God and the assembly. However, if the members of the worshipping community do not know what their vocation as the body of Christ is or what to do when they gather for worship, silence can be a problem. Silence then can be deadly, and planning and catechesis are essential if silence is to be prayerful and integral to the worship of the community.
To ask on behalf of someone else, to plead or to beg for the well being of other people – especially people who, for whatever reason, are unable to ask or plead or beg for themselves – is a noble act. When we do so in prayer, it’s called “making intercession,” and intercessory prayer is an important Christian responsibility. In fact, intercessory prayer is so important that it has a prominent role in the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours....

The scripture readings in the liturgy proclaim and present the reign of God. So at Mass we hear that, with the coming of God, the blind will be able to watch the lame dance, the mute will sing and the deaf will hear the song, children will be safe from all harm, no one will be without life’s necessities and joys, the earth will be tended with care, and creation itself will live in harmony. Then we stand before God and admit in concrete terms that this is not happening everywhere and for everyone – a consequence not of God’s will but of human choices and of sin, both social and individual.

We begin to see the world with Christ’s eyes and hear it with Christ’s ears. We cannot ignore the pain that we see and the anguish that we hear; we may even begin to feel it in our hearts. So we speak up. We speak up for those whose pain is so great, whose struggle is so all-consuming that they might not even be able to speak up for themselves....

God knows what we need before we even say it. But by saying it, we begin to act like Christ, who suffered with those who suffered and who lifted up the poor and needy as he himself was lifted up on the cross, begging forgiveness for the whole world, even his executioners, and pleading the case for all sinners, including us. When we make intercession for others, empathy and compassion are generated and magnified.... And we stand ready, ready to become part of God’s answer to our prayers.

Our job is to focus our minds and hearts at that moment to include in that general intercession all those that we know or that we have heard about, to hold them up to God in this prayer. And not just family members and friends either. We must strive to include people that we don’t know but about whom we’ve heard from others, from the radio or television. Our intercessions must reach far and wide, so our compassion and love will, too.

Excerpt from “Let Us Pray to the Lord.” Saving Signs, Wondrous Words, by David Philippart, Copyright © 1997, Archdiocese of Chicago. All rights reserved. Used with permission.
We are a people of the Word. The language of the liturgy expresses our faith. I use the word "language" because all these words together create a common idiom, a collection of words that help describe a world of meaning to us as Christians. Our liturgical celebrations of the Word and the Eucharist cultivate our awareness of the Word that dwells among us. Our song, at its best, will be a sung response to the presence of God in our life; our music, at its best, will increase our comprehension of a living language of faith. Musical settings for psalms, gospel acclamations, and eucharistic acclamations especially must be written in such a way that the musical message is compatible with the words they support.

Unmetered Psalmody
Musical settings for responsorial psalms will always be governed first by the requirements of the text. This is important for the response, but it is absolutely mandatory for the verses. We have seen how metered rhythms can distort and diminish the meaning of words. The great freedom in using psalm tones for the responsorial psalm is that the music yields to the rhythm of the words, rather than the other way around. As the "Guidelines for Music in the Mass" (CBW II, no. 85) state: "Official documents on the liturgy do not endorse the use of non-biblical texts, psalm paraphrases, metrical psalms (emphasis added), or other hymns as alternatives to the appointed responsorial psalm." Metrical psalms will often set a full text of a psalm, but the beats within the bar lines still hold final sway over where the accent and stress of a line will fall. However lovely metrical and paraphrased versions of psalms may be, they do not belong in the context of the liturgy of the word. They function solely as any other hymn does.

Tempo
Tempo for a given piece of music may be prescribed by an editor or composer, but practically speaking, tempo is set by instrumentalists or song leaders at the time of performance. We all know instinctively what various tempos in music communicate. If a piece of music moves quickly, it may communicate excitement, joy, festivity, anxiety, energy, or humour; music that moves slow-
ly may communicate serenity, sadness, consolation, solemnity – or boredom; all of these effects are distinguished from each other by other elements in a musical setting, such as text, mode, melody, rhythm and contour. We depend on these other elements to help us make judgements about tempo. A proper tempo will make good music better. A hymn that is meant to communicate joy will lose its message if it moves at a laboured pace. A piece of music that is meant to communicate grandeur and majesty becomes glib if it moves too fast.

We are invited at the beginning of the eucharistic prayer to lift up our hearts and give thanks. The presider reminds us that we do well always and everywhere to give thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the call to prayer of the Christian faith. In response to this call, we unite our voices with all the angels and saints to proclaim the glory of God. And we unite with our Jewish brothers and sisters in singing a text adapted from the great Hebrew prophet, Isaiah: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory” (6.3). Then, in union with the throngs that welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem in joyous anticipation of his reign, we sing “hosanna” to the one who comes in the name of the Lord. The Hebrew blessing for all pilgrims who entered the temple, “blessed be he who enters in the name of the Lord,” becomes our recognition of the one whose pilgrimage blessed all of life.

The “Holy” is the most solemn hymn of the Eucharist. It expresses our awe at standing in the presence of the Lord of all creation, and with it, we bless the Lord. If we consider the meaning of this sung acclamation, the best music we can muster is inadequate. But what settings we do have of the “Holy” should be evaluated based on how well they communicate the majesty of God and our response to God’s presence among us. This hymn, a direct response to the preface of the eucharistic prayer, should follow it immediately and unequivocally. This is not the place for elaborate or confusing musical introductions. Because it occurs in the context of a spoken or chanted dialogue, it should not, because of its rhythms, disrupt the rhythm of the speech/chant nor the quality of prayer that precedes and follows it.

Sung text is almost always delivered more slowly than the spoken word. If a text is to communicate praise and awe, a stately or majestic tempo does it best. If we really believe we are in the presence of the Holy One, the “Holy” we sing should have about it a reverence that transcends current fashions in rhythm and harmony. That is not to say that our music will not reflect our cultural context, only that whatever musical style is present will be subordinate to the grandeur of our expression. A well-known setting by Bob Dufford and Dan Schutte (CBW III, no. 278A) indicates in the top left corner of the first page a metronome setting of 84 for the quarter note. I have never heard this setting given that spacious a tempo at any liturgy. We like things to move along; we think a lively tempo adds interest, but does it allow us to enter fully into what we profess to experience?

The metronome setting for Marty Haugen’s “Mass of Creation” (CBW III, no. 279A) should read 46-52 beats to the dotted half note, not to the
Choosing “Good” Music  •  Della Goa

quarter note. I prefer the slower tempo. Even so, this “Holy” moves along more quickly than the setting by Dufford and Schutte. However, because the Haugen setting uses a straight-forward rhythm, it has the effect of expanding the quality of speech which, when the preface is sung to the same setting, creates an integrated and prayerful eucharistic celebration.

Contour

As music rises and falls, moves forward or sustains its resonance, we try to make sense of what it is doing. From time to time composers and theorists of the Western world from the medieval period on have tried in various ways either to write music to express objective reality or particular emotions, or to describe how music does this. This kind of study may be of limited value in determining exactly what shape a musical phrase should take, but the fact that people have been asking these questions for as long as they have been writing about music suggests that we do well to ask whether our music is sensitive to these issues.

Stephen Somerville’s “Holy” (CBW III, no. 283A) is a good example for a discussion about the contour of the melody and duration of the notes. This simple acclamation makes a few gestures in its contour that enhance our appreciation of the text. The line “heaven and earth are full of your glory” begins with “heaven” on a repeated “G#,” then falls to “earth” a perfect fifth below. “Glory” fills up three-fourths of a measure with a half note followed by a quarter. Our “hosannas” are on “B,” the highest note of the setting except for the “Lord” on “C#,” a whole tone above. We may not be conscious of the effect the relative placement of pitches have, but if we sing “Hosanna in the highest” at the top notes of the hymn, we do what we say we do. It makes the sense of the text more immediate; we experience the highest notes of our acclamation as we sing our “hosannas.”

Both Haugen and Richard Proulx (CBW III, nos. 279A and 282A respectively) make good use of contour in their settings of the “Holy.” The “Mass of the Divine Word” by Howard Hughes (CBW III, no. 284A) is very sensitively written in terms of contour, but I have not heard it sung in the context of a liturgy. My impression is

3 The Haugen acclamation does something no other “Holy” in CBW III does. The awkward phrase, “God of power and might” (which, to me, is a poor substitute for “God of hosts” – God of people and angels) is rhythmically almost impossible to set well because of the shift in stress:

\[
\text{God of power and might which usually becomes: God of power and might}
\]

The “New Plainsong Mass” by David Hurd (CBW III, no. 281A) is the only setting that uses both syllables of the word “power,” and this is, of course, because without the constraints of meter, the words can dictate the rhythm. Haugen gets around this difficulty of this line in a metered context by using “God of power, God of might.” The result is a setting that creates a more balanced phrase structure and does not bury the word “power” with a contraction.

4 I am always bothered by the melody line of “Every Valley” (CBW III, no. 308) where the word “exalted” falls to the lowest note of the song, and “low” is placed at the upper end of the range of the piece. I do not think that every “high” and “low” in a text must be placed on high and low notes respectively, but it is equally important that the music not contradict what the text expresses, especially when the point of the text is to speak of the disparity between the two being reconciled. In such a situation the disparity should be palpable so the reconciliation can be heard to be necessary.
that the verse/refrain arrangement may create a sense of musical interlude in the midst of the eucharistic prayer, adding to the struggle in many of our parishes to integrate sung responses into the rest of the liturgy. It is important that excellence in one aspect of musical setting not be the only determining factor in choosing music.

**Conclusion**

None of the above considerations by itself ensures that a musical setting will be worthwhile, and often, if some aspects are given appropriate attention, more modest achievements in other areas may be acceptable. These are the first considerations in choosing "good" music for the liturgy; they are not the only ones. The criteria I have set out simply ensure that the music will be comfortable to sing, that the meaning and quality of the text will be enhanced by the setting, and that the music will serve the liturgy, not detract from it. None of the positive qualities described above will make up for a poor text.

Of course, choosing music appropriate to the day, the feast, or the season is of primary importance. But appropriate music must first be good music. Much of our music is identified with a particular feast or season and adds layers of meaning to our celebration. It is important to develop continuity both in the acclamations we use throughout a given season and in the way we integrate modern music with the best that our tradition and the traditions of English hymnody can offer. If we focus on one composer or style of music, in fifteen years we may find ourselves rebuilding our parish repertoire from the ground up. The best way to build a solid foundation for a singing assembly is to choose carefully and well from a wide variety of composers, traditions, centuries, and styles such as those represented in the new Catholic Book of Worship III.

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**Prayer for a Liturgy Committee**

Lord, may everything we do begin with your inspiration, continue with your help, and reach perfection under your guidance.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

*Opening prayer for Thursday after Ash Wednesday.*
Regional Liturgy Conferences Hold Meetings

Atlantic Liturgy Conference
Representatives from nine dioceses of the Atlantic region participated in the annual meeting of the Atlantic Conference, held May 5-7, 1997, at Mount St. Vincent Motherhouse, Halifax. Chairperson Marilyn J. Sweet of Halifax began the meeting with a discussion on the commission’s struggle with financing.

In a report to the conference from the National Liturgy Office of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, director Donna Kelly, CND, noted the following:

- the Catholic Book of Worship III taping project is continuing, with four tapes presently on the market and a fifth one, consisting of service music, to be available at the end of May
- work on the lectionary in light of the guidelines prepared by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith is continuing
- the revised sacramentary is (at the time of this meeting) in the hands of the bishops for voting
- regarding the calendar of saints for Canada, the celebration of St. Anne and the Canadian Martyrs are now to be observed as feasts
- two publications on preparing for the Jubilee Year 2000 from the CCCB Publications Service, one a booklet of prayers and the other the Spring 1997 issue of the National Bulletin on Liturgy, are now available
- a supplement to the Order of Christian Funerals, consisting of the liturgical rites that can be used when cremation is involved, is being prepared
- a proposal for a new ritual for marriage has been completed by the ad hoc committee set up to work on it
- work on the sacramentary is continuing, focusing next on the weekday volume and then on the ritual volume
- the next triennial national meeting of directors of liturgy is scheduled for November 10-13 at the Grey Nuns’ Centre, Edmonton.

Archbishop emeritus James Hayes, member of the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy and liaison with the Atlantic Episcopal Assembly, reported on the procedure of voting on the revised sacramentary. If the sacramentary is accepted, it goes back to ICEL with recommendations for changes, and only then is it sent to Rome for approval.

A report on the National Council for Liturgy was presented by Marilyn Sweet, who by virtue of her position as chair of the ALC is also appointed as a member of this council. She noted that Saint Paul University in Ottawa would not be able to take its Summer Institute for Pastoral Liturgy to the Atlantic region, and therefore it would be in order for the region to go ahead with its own program.

Other topics discussed during the course of the conference include:

- Paper on posture: The paper on posture, begun several years ago as an educational project, was re-visited.
• Atlantic Liturgy Congress: Plans are being made by Grand Falls diocese to host it in October 1998, possibly at Gander. A possible speaker is Kenan Osborne, and the event will be connected to preparation for the Jubilee Year 2000.

• AST summer school in liturgy: The Atlantic School of Theology has announced that it is introducing a certificate program in lay liturgical leadership, consisting of a two-week session in July 1997 and a second two-week session in July 1998. It is intended for lay persons in the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and United Churches who lead or prepare liturgical worship or who are involved in a specific ministry. It is an introductory-level program focused on the history, theology, and practice of Christian worship and will offer denominationally appropriate leadership skills.

• RCIA: The conference sees a need to have a team of resource people available for workshops on RCIA. It was proposed that the conference prepare a statement of what a regional permanent body of resource people might look like.

Diocesan Reports

Charlottetown: The members of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission are spending a part of their meeting time on study of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The commission is preparing guidelines for renovating and building of churches. Materials to help in the selection of liturgical music at weddings and funerals has been made available. The commission is considering whether it can offer guidance to funeral directors, particularly in regard to vigil services.

Labrador-Schefferville: The diocese has no liturgical commission, and there is little information available. There are problems in the diocese that make it difficult to provide training: many parishes without a priest, great distances to travel, and the difficulty of translating the ritual books into the various dialects. Some parishes need Catholic Book of Worship II. There is hope that the people will carry on, even when faced with spiritual starvation without the Eucharist.

St. John’s, Newfoundland: The 13-member archdiocesan Liturgical Commission has four subcommittees: art and architecture, music, RCIA, and workshop planning. The commission was involved in preparing opening and closing liturgies for the 1997 CWL national convention, and it is looking at ways to use the diocesan web site for liturgical information.

Grand Falls: Rev. Wayne Cummings has visited all the parishes in the diocese in order to meet with liturgy committees and others interested or involved in the liturgy. The purpose of the meetings was to assess the level of liturgical activity and to list difficulties and needs with a view to addressing these needs and improving the quality of parish worship. He is looking at the possibility of establishing regional committees. Among the workshops presented in the diocese was a workshop in about eight parishes in developing or enhancing the bereavement team.

St. George’s, Corner Brook: A workshop in the diocese on Catholic Book of Worship III received a positive response. Posture during the liturgy was discussed at different levels. (The policy in the diocese is to stand during
the eucharistic prayer.) The liturgical commission is rebuilding, but a problem in the diocese is that there are not many people with an educational background in liturgy.

Moncton: The archdiocesan Liturgical Commission is struggling to have representation of all the English-speaking parishes. The ordination of Archbishop Ernest Léger in January marked the first time the French and English liturgy commissions were called together to prepare the liturgy. The commission hosted a CBW III workshop, which 85-90 people attended, and is presently planning a workshop with Rev. Richard Vosko in October.

Halifax: The Liturgical Commission as well as all other commissions of the archdiocese came to an end in June 1996 in order to make way for a new structure. There will not be a liturgical committee among the new committees to be formed. It is not clear how the need for a liturgy advisory group will be addressed. The diocese saw the fruits of many years of liturgical formation of youth in the work of two young people who planned the liturgies for the diocesan youth fest.

Antigonish: The Liturgical Commission was re-established in October 1996, and a liturgical resource office was established at the pastoral centre. The 13-member commission includes subcommittees for music, art and architecture, RCIA, and publications and communication. The commission published two newsletters, evaluated the organ lesson program (which is considered quite successful), prepared guidelines for lay presiders for the bishop's approval, and made available a directory of resources and resource people.

Yarmouth: The diocese has again organized the RCIA at the diocesan level so that parishes do not go their separate ways.

The conference included a study day for the community at large on the proposed revisions of the sacramentary. This session was a follow-up to a similar study day held at the 1996 ALC. The topics in this year's session were the introductory rites and the concluding rites. The animators for this year's session were Archbishop Hayes and Donna Kelly, CND.

Ontario Liturgical Conference
The Ontario Liturgical Conference held a meeting and workshop April 21-24 at St. Joseph's Centre Morrow Park, Willowdale. This was a working conference for diocesan directors of liturgy, members of liturgical commissions, bishops, directors of catechumenes, and pastoral staffs. The topic was “Liturgical Spirituality, Part II: Pastoral Perspectives.” The aim of the conference was to identify specific characteristics of liturgical spirituality and apply them to the liturgical celebrations, catechetical undertakings, and devotional life of the parish community. Members of the conference facilitated the sessions.

In the first session the participants began their study of a foundational liturgical spirituality by exploring the topic: Dining with the Lord. When the Word became flesh, a whole new presence was initiated, a presence which required a new ritual action. The Last Supper initiated a ritual entirely new and different from the temple ritual. The meal is a sign of shared life, and the Lord is the host of this meal. The disciples did not hang back from this table; they did not
receive on the tongue, they did not kneel, nor speak a special language.

Meeting at the table of the Lord is the focus of Christians' spiritual lives, the spirituality of the whole Church. The transaction of the Lord's supper is the Lord doing something for us, an act of divine hospitality. The Christians' work is to respond. A mere performance of the ritual does nothing for salvation. There must be a personal meeting over food and drink – presence meets presence, love meets love. All true devotion begins and ends here: dining with the Lord.

When considering the announcing of the end times, one must see the "inbreaking of the kingdom." The Lord's supper is the Lord gathering his people today. God's kingdom is breaking now into our midst. One must look for the signs of that kingdom. The Lord's supper is the feast of that kingdom. The folly of devotion is to make people excited about the second coming of the Lord – in the year 2000. Emphasis on the crucifixion and forgetting about the resurrection and ascension has changed the Lord's supper from a feast of joy to sombre fare, with kneeling, hanging back from God, beating breasts. If the Lord's supper does not come alive as a feast, if there is no joy, nothing else happens.

In joy Christians reach out to the world to invite others in. In the assembly a new world is being built.

Regarding the topic, building a new temple, the question was posed: Is the Mass intended to make Christ present in the host, to be carried to the tabernacle, or does the Lord call us together to become one with him, to be the body of Christ, the real presence of Christ in the world? If the assembly is the body of Christ, ignoring this presence means ignoring Christ. Neglecting brothers and sisters means neglecting Christ. Sacred space is where the people gather; holy ground is where the people tread.

Living in covenant love is a foundational element of Christian liturgical spirituality. This covenant theme is awkward to present in catechesis for children, but it must have a place in catechesis and in church life. There is more involved than just saying prayers, receiving communion, hearing Mass; it means being Christ in the world, living like Christ. This changes the whole of our lives, and there is no room for self-righteousness. When the Christian life is rooted in the covenant experience of the Lord's supper, all theological disciplines can be related to the liturgy.
Notes from the Annual General Meeting of the National Council for Liturgy and the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy

The Episcopal Commission for Liturgy (ECL) and the National Council for Liturgy (NCL) held their annual meeting November 14-17, 1996, at Corner Brook, Nfld. Present were the four members of the ECL, Bishop John Knight of Toronto (chair), Archbishop emeritus James Hayes of Halifax, Bishop Blaise Morand of Prince Albert, and Abbot Peter Novecosky, OSB, of Muenster, Sask. The seven members of the council were Rev. Murray Kroetsch of Oakville (chair), Kim Aldi of Edmonton (representative of the Western Conference for Liturgy), Margaret Bick of Toronto, Rev. Bill Corcoran of Calgary, Rev. Ed Gale of Stephenville, Nfld., Sr. Loretta Manzara of London (representative of the Ontario Liturgical Conference), and Marilyn Sweet of Halifax (representative of the Atlantic Liturgical Conference). Also present were guests Bishop Raymond Lahey and Bernice Maddock of Corner Brook and three members of the National Liturgy Office.

Following the reports from the regional conferences¹ and from the National Liturgy Office, the NCL/ECL discussed the following issues:

• Chrism Mass
This topic had been discussed at last year’s NCL/ECL meeting, and the members had been asked to look into several aspects of it. However, many of this year’s new members brought further questions, and it was suggested that this be an ongoing topic to be discussed at next year’s meeting. Meanwhile the members were asked to:
- do further research on the different ways of celebrating the Mass of Chrism: for example, how the celebration is carried out in the French dioceses
- look at the possibility of recommending an alternative date for priestly renewal.

• Sunday Mass on Saturday evening
A concern was expressed about what message is given to people when high-profile groups choose to celebrate their Sunday Eucharist on Saturday evening when it is not necessary to do so.

• Generic devotions versus bizarre devotions
This issue had first been raised by the previous director of the National Liturgy Office, Rev. John Hibbard. The concern was that many devotions have been developing, and some are not based on good liturgical principles. It was agreed that good models need to be presented as guides. The following

¹ Reports from these regional conferences have been included in the National Bulletin on Liturgy, some elsewhere in this issue and some in the Spring 1997 issue.
projects are intended to provide that kind of assistance:
- the Ontario Liturgical Conference is to look at this topic at its April 1997 meeting²
- the jubilee booklet prepared by the National Liturgy Office (NLO) includes some resource material.

This topic will again be on the agenda for discussion at next year’s meeting.

• **Liturgies for those with special needs**
The director of the NLO, Donna Kelly, CND, reported that the American bishops have voted on the use of American sign language as a liturgical language and have sent their request to Rome for approval. If approved by Rome, such approval will likely be given for Canada, if the bishops so wish. Upon further discussion on the topic, the members decided that they need to contact people who have special needs and seek their help in discerning how NCL/ECL might help them. Members were asked to identify people who would be willing to do the research and bring this information to next year’s meeting. Several members volunteered to contact people who were involved with l’Arche communities.

• **Posture**
During a lengthy discussion it came to light that the practice of standing for some or all of the eucharistic prayer during the Eucharist varies in the dioceses across Canada. The chair, Rev. Murray Kroetsch, pointed out that it is most important to have uniformity in the diocese. Marilyn Sweet noted that the paper that the Atlantic Liturgical Conference had been working on had been turned over to a member for revision and editing; it will be presented to the members of the ALC in 1997. Rev. Kroetsch concluded that for the moment there was nothing further that could be done.

• **Eulogies**
Discussion on the topic, which was on the agenda last year, indicated that the practice is widespread across the country. Members concluded that this problem could be corrected only by education. This education needs to take place prior to funerals, since the time of death leaves families in too emotional a state for catechesis.

• **Letter to Canadian bishops regarding the draping of the flag over the coffin**
Some background information regarding the letter was presented. Members indicated that problems are arising in dioceses as a result of the letter. A lengthy discussion concluded with a decision that more education on the use of the pall was needed. The members were asked to inquire what other denominations did at the funeral of a veteran. They are to report their findings to the National Liturgy Office.

• **Cremation**
Donna Kelly, CND, reported that work had begun on a supplement to the Order of Christian Funerals, a project which was to be discussed later by the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy. This supplement will address the issues which are a surfacing because of the more frequent occurrence of cremation.

• **Canadian Liturgical Society**
Loretta Manzara, CSJ, reported that in June 1998 a symposium will be held in Toronto on the topic “Worship Education: Church, College, Congregation,

² See page 184 for a brief summary of this conference.
World." It is her hope that as this becomes more defined there would be Roman Catholic representation at the conference. She said the language in the various churches may differ slightly, but the concerns are much the same.

- **Canadian Studies in Liturgy**
  Two proposals for topics were presented by Dr. J. Frank Henderson:
  - Jewish Liturgy: An Introduction for Christians
  - Liturgy, Music and Culture in Early Canada.
  It was the consensus of the group to proceed with the first topic, with the suggestion that a number of writers might contribute to the issue. The members expressed some concern whether there was a market for the publication on the second topic. It was suggested that perhaps other organizations would be willing to share the cost of production, such as the Canadian Catholic Historical Society, the Hymn Society, the bishops of the North. Some investigation is to be done on this.

- **Summer Institute in Pastoral Liturgy (SIPL)**
  The members, upon studying SIPL's proposal for 1997, commented that perhaps by offering evening classes SIPL might draw more people from the Ottawa area. They noted that among the subjects proposed, topics not mentioned were reconciliation, marriage, presiding and liturgy of the hours.

- **National Bulletin on Liturgy**
  The members offered comments and suggestions on the new design.

- **Televised Masses**
  The issue was raised because of an example of a televised Mass in which the presentation had been pre-recorded and was not a good example for such a program. Donna Kelly, CND, reported that in the diocese of Antigonish there is a television program entitled "Mass for Shut-ins," which is well received. The producer, Rev. Paul Abbas, had provided a written report, and a video was available for viewing. A proposal was made that someone be found to set up some guidelines, which would then be available to diocesan offices and to the media, on the production of televised Masses.

- **Honour guards**
  Members of the council expressed concern over the use of honour guards made up of members of the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Women's League. Their concern was interference with liturgical protocol and whether any guidelines were available. It was stated that canon law forbids the bearing of arms in the church, and this should be made known to the KCs. Guidelines on the topic have been issued by the Ontario branch of the KCs; copies were distributed to those present.

- **National meeting of diocesan directors and chairperson of liturgy commissions**
  The next national meeting is scheduled for November 10-13, 1997, at the Grey Nuns' Regional Centre, Edmonton. The meeting will be divided into four parts:
  - Part I: history line, follow-up to the 1991 meeting (Monday – where we have been)
  - Part II: sacramentary (Tuesday – where we are at)
  - Part III: process day (Wednesday – where we are going)
  - Part IV: business meetings.
  A draft of the statement prepared after the 1991 conference was reviewed. Once the statement has been reviewed
again by regional conferences and by the committee that prepared the original draft, it will be mailed to bishops and seminaries.

- **Youth at worship**
  A number of changes were proposed to the draft document prepared by Marilyn Sweet. The document will then be sent to the council and the commission for consultation. She was commended for the excellent work done.

- **Order of Christian Initiation of Children**
  Reporting on the work being done by ICEL, Bishop Raymond Lahey said that ICEL’s hope is that all resources for initiation of children will be included in one volume. The outline that ICEL proposes is:
  - Part I: Christian Initiation of Young Children
    - Order of Baptism of Children
    - Confirmation and Admission to Eucharistic Communion
  - Part II: Christian Initiation of Older Children
  - Part III: Period after Christian Initiation
  - Part IV: Rites for Particular Circumstances.
  A set of new resources is being prepared by several Canadian authors as well as other world writers. There is no time set for completion.

- **Book of the Gospels**
  A number of parishes are now using a Book of the Gospels, and this is often not done well. Reference was made to an article by Rev. John Hibbard in the National Bulletin on Liturgy on the use of the Book of Gospels. He will be asked to condense this article into a leaflet, which could be forwarded to diocesan directors and chairpersons of liturgy commissions, with permission to reprint, together with a caution that the information is being prepared to help them until the Book of the Gospels is published.

- **Concelebration**
  This practice was welcomed and endorsed when it was introduced by Vatican II, since it appeared to solve many problems, said Bishop Lahey, who raised the issue. It has become common practice, but there is lacking a theology on the practice. What the principles are, what is inherent to the practice, and what is it that we are doing are some questions that need answers, he said. The topic will be on next year’s agenda.
Brief Book Reviews


Linda Osborn’s nine-year experience as a liturgist in a small parish of fewer than a hundred families prompted her to share her reflections on how liturgy can be celebrated well even if all the resources normally available in a larger parish are not there in a small parish.

Her experience brought home to her that because the parish family is small there already exists a faith community in which the members know each other and share each other’s joys and sorrows, the kind of community that larger parishes strive for within their structures. Using the General Instruction for the Roman Missal and the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy as a basis, she offers ideas on adapting rites and rituals, making suggestions on “downsizing without compromising” as far as liturgical principles are concerned. At the same time she claims that what she offers is not new or revolutionary.

The ten chapters include theological reflections on the centrality of the liturgy as the “font from which all flows,” how to get the community involved and using the gifts to be found there, the specific ministries in a small parish (with special emphasis on the role of lay presiders), music, the liturgical year, special occasions, and above all, education.

This book is addressed not so much to the small parish community itself but to those who work in these small parishes, to those who have some training in liturgy but have been offered models which are based in larger parish communities.


The editors point out in the preface to the book that the word “extraordinary” has a double meaning here. Since according to canon law the ordinary preacher is a presbyter or a deacon, a lay person being authorized to preach is designated as “extraordinary.” But, the editors say, extraordinary also refers to the quality of the preaching of the nineteen women whose reflections are included here. The editors claim two other distinctions: that all the homilies in this collection were delivered by Roman Catholic women and all of them from one diocese.

Many, but not all, of the subjects of these homilies are gospel stories about women: for example, the Samaritan woman, the Canaanite woman, the woman caught in adultery, the unnamed women in the gospel of Mark, Martha – and Mary, the mother of God. Others reflect on the relationship between preaching and giving witness, and still others reflect on the story of a particular situation, such as the memorial of a woman who was murdered on the streets.

These homilies, presented in a variety of styles from academic to storytelling, offer a woman’s perspective on the
subject, and they challenge both men and women to reflect with faith and freedom on the scripture readings concerned. An index of the scripture references is included in the book.


Donald Deffner, a homiletics professor, offers a collection of illustrations that are meant to help the preacher apply scriptural truth to the everyday life of the listeners, to communicate at a level different from exegesis or presenting a study on the text, to help bridge the sacred with the secular. Perhaps the most useful section of the book is the section in the preface in which the author gives his "Criteria for the Use of Illustrations," in which he warns against using stories simply for the sake of using them. He also gives a brief introduction to the liturgical season to "set the stage" at the beginning of each section.

For those who are looking for resources to assist them in preparing homilies, this book will be a useful addition.

One at the Table: The Reception of Baptized Christians, by Ronald A. Oakham (Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue, Chicago, IL 60622-1101, 1995). Paperback, 159 pp., $11 US.

The majority of those who present themselves to Catholic parishes in Canada and the United States to be accepted into that community are already baptized, usually in another denomination. Yet the process of formation used tends to treat all as if they are catechumens, since the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults focuses on the unbaptized.

This book addresses that problem. Part I includes five articles on the theological foundations of the formation of adults preparing for initiation. In the first of these, Kathy Brown explores the possibility of expanding the limits of initiation and draws to the reader's attention the fact that there is a third category of individuals who present themselves: the baptized candidate who is not uncatechised, who has been present at Sunday Eucharist and who has participated in parish life with a Catholic spouse for many years, and who may need a much shorter time of preparation for reception into full communion. The second article, by Rita Ferrone, presents a brief history of ecumenism and thus gives a context to the present approach towards the baptism of Christians other than Catholic – an approach which not only recognizes that baptism but appreciates it for what it has given the person. Joseph Favazza develops the connection between reconciliation and initiation. Mark Searle writes on the effects of baptism, including an explanation of the sacramental "character" of baptism. Finally, the author writes on the normative dimensions of initiation as presented in the RCIA.

In the second part of the book the author discusses the pastoral implementation of the kind of adaptations required by the pastoral notes in the ritual itself. Using the experiences of a number of parishes (including two Canadian parishes), he reflects on their experiences under five headings: the formation of uncatechised Christians, the final preparation of these Christians, the formation of catechized Christians, celebrating their reception, and the mystagogical aspect of the journey. He proposes in these
reflections what will seem to some a rather challenging pastoral plan for making appropriate adaptations. In the many references the author makes to both the pastoral notes and the rites themselves, he consistently includes these from both the U.S. and the Canadian ritual books.

This book will be helpful to anyone involved in parish catechumenate programs. It will not only give invaluable background information on the process of bringing baptized Christians into the full communion of the Catholic Church, but will also assist catechetical teams in evaluating what they are doing and developing further their vision of what is to be done.

**Meeting House Essays: Designing Future Worship Spaces**, by Richard S. Vosko, no. 8 in a series (Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue, Chicago, IL 60622-1800). 63 pp., $6 US.

Richard Vosko, a designer and consultant for worship environments, poses two questions that he says should be asked about the design of a worship space: To what extent should a church intended for the communal celebration of the Eucharist be designed to accommodate private devotions? Can a worship space for public ritual also satisfy the needs of individuals' personal piety? To arrive at some kind of answer one must look at the factors influencing the life of the Church, Vosko says. He looks at five areas: discoveries in space, societal transitions, cultural diversities, religious attitudes, and changing perception of space and time. He then goes on to discuss some characteristics of the worship environment as places of beauty, justice, memory and imagination. He goes on to give examples of how a church can be a place of imagination, how a Catholic church building can embody the Catholic belief system.

There may be dissatisfaction with some of the newer church buildings, but going back to styles of previous ages is not the answer, he says. Churches must honour the stories, struggles and achievements of the local church, and then it will be an expression and embodiment of the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.

This little book is generously illustrated, and although it is addressed to the American church in particular, it should prove to be thought provoking also for Canadians involved in designing a community's worship space, from architects to building committees.


Since winter in the northern hemisphere coincides roughly with the Advent/Christmas season and the few weeks of Ordinary Time prior to the beginning of Lent, this book is almost entirely about keeping a less hectic Advent and Christmas season, culminating in the feast of Epiphany. The final page is devoted to celebrating the time of carnival before the fast of Lent. There are stories about the traditions of Advent and Christmas and ideas on keeping these traditions alive in a home, even suggestions about choosing the right evergreen as a Christmas tree. There are also suggestions for a wholesome lifestyle, including gift ideas that help the less fortunate. The book is full of colourful drawings, and the ideas, including a few recipes, are presented in an easy, conversational manner.
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by Bede Hubbard
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by Bishop Henri Goudreau
Pastoral Letter of the Jubilee Year 2000

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