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.

Editorial commentary in the bulletin is the responsibility of the editor.

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Vatican II: Are We There Yet?
Part I – Foundations
Dedication

This issue of the National Bulletin on Liturgy is dedicated to the memory of

Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli,

and of

Rev. Patrick Byrne,
Editor of the National Bulletin on Liturgy (1972 – 1987)

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About This Issue

One in a Series: Vatican II Are We There Yet?

This is the first in a series of four issues that will arrive on your doorstep between the 40th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council and the 40th anniversary of the promulgation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. This year (2003) offers us a golden opportunity to (re)acquaint ourselves with this document that has had such a profound and pervasive effect on Christian life and spirituality at the dawn of the 21st century.

The Bulletin will approach the Constitution on a section-by-section basis and will provide discussion questions to guide reflection on the pastoral reality in which readers find themselves in the light of the call of the Council Fathers. Begin now to schedule group sessions. Let us know how you use these issues and how else you are celebrating this special year. (See the list of “Helpful Resources” for further assistance.)

Bulletin #172 focuses on the foundational principles out of which the reform arose as expressed in articles 1-19 of the Constitution. Bulletin #173 will deal with the various norms that have guided and will continue to guide the shaping of the liturgy for the 21st century, as expressed in articles 21-46. Bulletin #174 will deal with the specific reforms called for in the celebration of the eucharist and the other sacraments (articles 47-82). And finally, Bulletin #175 will focus on the concerns of the final chapters of the Constitution: the divine office, the liturgical year, and sacred music, art and furnishings.

Part I - Foundations

As editor, I found it most significant to notice the call that echoes throughout the articles in this first issue in the series: the need for liturgical formation. Children, teens, adults, lay ministers, catechists, teachers, seminarians, deacons, priests, seminary staff, theology professors, religious communities, bishops: all must be formed in a context that takes seriously the Council’s call for liturgy-based education and formation (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 16). Here are just a few concrete examples of our failure in this regard:

Just a few years ago a Canadian liturgist surveyed the staff of the theology department of a local Catholic university, asking how often the phrase “paschal mystery” came up in the courses they taught. There was an uncanny consistency in their answers: “Never.” Given the central role of the paschal mystery in liturgical theology, this may be taken as a strong indicator that paragraph 16 is being largely ignored in this context.

Newly ordained priests across the country report that specific study of the liturgy does not play the pivotal role in their seminary formation prescribed by paragraph 16; most report they are not even asked to open a copy of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (and other ritual books) during their seminary years. Introduction to these crucial texts is often left to the staff of the first parishes in which they serve.

At a recent in-service for experienced Catholic teachers, the phrase “RCIA” kept recurring. When one of the participants asked what that stood for, the person beside her confidently chimed in, “Roman Catholic Information Agency.” No wonder the liturgically oriented “Born of the Spirit Series” is so under-appreciated!

I could go on but perhaps it will be more useful to let the discussion groups surface local concerns.
A Timely Challenge

The Second Vatican Council, in the opening paragraph of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, states that the Council had several aims in view and saw the reform and promotion of the liturgy as a primary means of addressing them.1 In the Apostolic Letter of his Holiness Pope John Paul II, Novo Millenio Inuente, we read: “I thought of its (Holy Year 2000) celebration as a providential opportunity during which the Church, 35 years after the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, would examine how far she had renewed herself, in order to be able to take up her evangelizing mission with fresh enthusiasm” (2).1 Using the Second Vatican Council as a benchmark, a point of comparison, the question to be asked now, 40 years later, would appear to be whether and how the liturgy has effected an ever-increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful.3

The Voice of the Council

It is well for us to call to mind some key aspects of the liturgy as presented in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.

To accomplish so great a work (“redeeming humanity and giving perfect glory to God” [5]), Christ is always present in his Church, especially in its liturgical celebrations.

Rightly then, the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy, by means of signs perceptible to the senses, human sanctification is signified and brought about in ways proper to each of these signs; in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is by the Head and his members. From this it follows that every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the Priest and of his Body which is the

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3 ICEL 4.
4 ICEL 6.

Gerald Wiesner, O.M.I. is the bishop of the Diocese of Prince George (BC). He is on the staff of the Summer School for Liturgical Studies, Newman Theological College, Edmonton AB.
The Second Vatican Council was a meeting of the World's Catholic bishops called together by Pope John XXIII in 1962 in order to encourage spiritual renewal, to promote peace and the unity of all people, and to bring the Church up to date. Pope Paul VI closed the Council in 1965.

Church, it is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its effectiveness by the title and to the same degree (7).5

... the liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all the Church's power flows (10).6

Several references in the Constitution underline the importance of the quality of the celebration. Without wanting to overload this article with quotations, there is a salient point that must be noted:

The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Peter 2.9; see 2.4–5) is their right and duty by reason of their baptism (italics by author).

In the reform and promotion of the liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else. For it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit ... (14).7

A further general principle that addresses this point is found in paragraph 49.

They (the sacraments) do indeed impart grace, but, in addition, the very act of celebrating them disposes the faithful most effectively to receive this grace in a fruitful manner, to worship God rightly and to practice charity.8

It is very clear that in the mind of the Church the liturgy is the "primary and indispensable source" for the imparting of an ever-increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful. Moreover, what is called for is full, conscious and active participation on the part of all of the faithful. This quality participation is called for by the very nature of the liturgy. One

5 ICEL 6.
6 ICEL 7.
7 ICEL 8.
8 ICEL 16.
could say the very nature of the liturgy demands it. The right and duty of this participation is incumbent on the faithful by reason of their baptism.

Three Questions
At this particular juncture in the discussion there are three pertinent questions that can be asked. First, has the quality of liturgical celebrations improved so as to reflect the true nature of liturgy? Second, has the quality of liturgical celebrations so improved that the very celebration itself disposes the faithful most effectively to receive the grace in a fruitful manner, worship God rightly and practice charity? Third, while the life of faith is a gift, it does require a response on the part of the person; if there is to be the imparting of an ever-increasing vigour to the Christian life, the Christian will have to be involved fully, consciously and actively. Is this happening?

Some Observations
Successes
Many positive things have happened and are happening in order that the desire of Vatican II be achieved. The celebration of the liturgy in the vernacular has furthered the goal of liturgy. The quality of celebration, enhanced by good music ministry, has played an important role in imparting vigour to the Christian life of the faithful.

On another front, it was Paul who asked the question: “But how are they to call on one in whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?” The strong teaching on the place of the word of God in the liturgy together with the restoration of and insistence on the homily in the liturgy have contributed greatly to the invigoration of the life of the faithful.

And a more general contributing factor addressing the desire of Vatican II is, in all likelihood, the effort that has been made in the area of adult faith education.

Challenges
This having been said, what is the challenge that remains? One way of responding to this is to use a quotation of Father Richard Fragomeni. “Once I went to Mass with my aunt. The liturgy was lifeless and boring. Lousy was the term my aunt used as I recall. Singing was largely absent, the homily grew worse by the minute, and it went on for many minutes. I sat fidgeting in the pew, growing angrier with each liturgical outrage, and finally, at the end of Mass, I asked my aunt, ‘You put up with this every week?’ Then she made me promise that if I ever had the opportunity to work with the liturgy of the Church I would help people to understand it in such a way that folks like her wouldn’t have to turn off their hearing aids.”

When we ask the questions “What are the barriers?” “What further work needs to be done?” Father Fragomeni’s story helps to set the stage. Faith education remains a great need. While much has been done, adult faith education needs an ever-increasing imparting of vigour. In a recent lay formation program one person observed: “I have been disillusioned. The Second Vatican Council happened 40 years ago and I am hearing of it only now.” How prevalent is this observation?

A recent informal survey indicated that liturgical renewal is still wanting in many parishes. One could question further whether existing parish liturgy committees have studied or are familiar with the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. Do most parishes have an active liturgy committee?

In the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation the Council Fathers state:

The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures as she vener-
ated the Body of the Lord, in so far as she never ceases, particularly in the sacred liturgy, to partake of the bread of life and to offer it to the faithful from the one table of the Word of God and the Body of Christ (21). The document goes on to say:

 Sometimes, alas, Christ’s ministers fail to make this presence of Christ visible in their conduct. Our failures contribute to Christ’s apparent absence (37).

When general surveys indicate that there are three elements that make or break a Sunday Eucharistic celebration, one of which is the homily, it certainly calls us to pause and ponder.

### How Conscious is Participation?

#### Sacraments of Initiation

In the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, Ecclesia in America, the Pope notes:

While dioceses in America have made undeniable progress in preparing people for the sacraments of Christian initiation, the Synod Fathers nonetheless expressed regret that “many receive them without adequate formation.” In the case of the baptism of children, efforts to catechize the parents and godparents should not be spared (34).

When one examines the nature, gravity, and consequence of baptism, it is not too difficult to see how preparation for

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12 ICEL 6.
13 Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), Jesus Christ, Centre of the Christian Life, (Ottawa: Concacan) 20.
14 CCCB 20.
baptism needs to be imparted with "an ever-increasing vigour."

**Eucharist**

Frequently the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy and other Council documents call for the faithful to

take part in the sacred service conscious of what they are doing, with devotion to full involvement ... by offering the immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn to offer themselves as well (48). 16

What is to be noted is that the baptized, in virtue of their priesthood, offer the immaculate Victim. A very valid and necessary question is: How many persons are conscious of this? Many of us were likely brought up with the understanding that "Father said Mass and the rest of us received communion." It is difficult to reconcile this with "offering the immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him." Is there not much more discussion around the issue of posture—Should we stand or should we kneel?—than there is around the central issue of what it is we are really doing in the celebration of the eucharist? Again in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy we are reminded that in the eucharist Christ entrusted "to his beloved Bride, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet 'in which Christ is eaten, the heart is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory given to us'" (47). 17 We have been entrusted with this awesome gift—a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity—and we are divided over standing and kneeling! In his dialogue with the Pharisees one of Jesus' major concerns was their preoccupation with externals and details rather than that which is of the essence of things.

**Christian Marriage**

To say that there exists a general malaise regarding the present status of marriage and family life would appear to be an self-evident statement. The need for a better preparation for the celebration of marriage clearly remains a challenge. This is reflected in the frightening numbers of marriages ending in separation of one form or other. Furthermore, often in the actual celebration of the marriage it would appear that much more attention is given to the ring-bearer and photographer than to the God-witnessed covenant being celebrated.

**Conclusion**

Now, 40 years after the Second Vatican Council, has the Council's desire that the liturgy "impart an ever-increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful" happened? Clearly, it has! Does the need remain for an ever greater imparting of an ever-increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful? The answer is left to the reader!

**Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

1. What difference has Vatican II made in your life?
2. What further changes would impart an ever-increasing vigour to your life?
3. What signs of ever-increasing vigour do you see in your life?
4. What signs of ever-increasing vigour do you see in the life of your parish?
5. What are the barriers to a more vigorous life in your own life and in that of your parish?
6. Is the liturgy helping or impeding growth? How? 18

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16 ICEL 14.
17 ICEL 14.

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In the opening paragraph of the foundational statement of the Second Vatican Council, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, a highlight of this liturgical landmark runs: “to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ.” After forty years of living under this mandate, what, if any, “sense of union” has derived from liturgical renewal, ecumenical sharing, and recent policy developments?

Conversation across Denominational Lines

Take two single women in their late seventies: one raised a “strict” Methodist, the other from a large Irish Roman Catholic family with deep faith roots. On Monday, checking in about their weekend, they discover, and refresh, their common experience of the bible readings for the weekend. These neighbours, formerly isolated in (even divided by) their religious worlds, extend their liturgical experience into their daily lives. The liturgical convergence sponsored by the acceptance and publication of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy has made it much more possible for those who believe in Christ to talk with one another.

It has become possible for juridical bodies to talk with one another. In my own United Church of Canada, we were able to join Roman Catholic and other leaders in affirming shared views of baptism in 1967. Presbyterian, Lutheran, United, Roman Catholic and Anglican communions agreed that the matter of baptism was water, and that the enunciation was visible use of water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This has fostered a renewed sense of unity in Christ. Each January brings about the world-wide Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, sponsored through the World Council of Churches. Design and distribution of resources on the theme selected is assigned in Canada to an ecumenical group that meets twice a year to coordinate resources for bible study, preaching, and liturgical celebrations. The ecumenical editorial group, chaired normally by a Roman Catholic, works enthusiastically and respectfully to accomplish the goal of helping neighbourhood churches pray, study and celebrate in a spirit of unity. One of the active principles emerging from the liturgical reform of 1962 was the approach to liturgies as communal, including use of the vernacular. These two precepts have supported immeasurably the preparation and realization of the ecumenical Week of Prayer.

In parish life, the resulting adjustments in worship habits have had a huge pastoral impact. In these forty years, interdenominational marriages, families flung across the globe, and individuals opting to

Dr. Fred Graham was Worship Officer of the United Church of Canada for 15 years, and is now professor of Church Music at Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto. He also serves as chair of the Consultation on Common Texts.

In consultation with Rev. Dr. Sandra Beardsall, Saskatoon; Rev. Dr. Paul Gibson, Toronto; Dr. Frank Henderson, Edmonton; Rev. Dr. David Holeton, Prague, Czech Republic.
worship in chosen rather than in traditional communities have become unexceptional; a revised sense of “the whole” of the Christian family has been at work through the aim of seeking unity provided by the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*.

**A Word about “the Word”**

Thanks to the reform of the lectionary and the insistence that Word must be a part of every liturgy (already a norm—even exaggerated in its proportions—in Reformed worship) there are further commonalities to be celebrated. The liturgical, theological, and pastoral platform of excellence supplied by the *Ordo Lectionum Missae* (1969) ignited a group of liturgical theologians in North America (Consultation on Common Texts) to prepare a variation of that schema in the *Common Lectionary* (1983) and the *Revised Common Lectionary* (1992). As the Consultation struggled with the design and contents of the refinements, the members were in constant dialogue with Roman Catholic liturgical scholars, who joined in reflecting on this offshoot of the original and who deepened respect for the important prime source.

Many church leaders have united in their praise for and use of readings as suggested in the *Ordo Lectionum* or one of the lectionaries. Whereas many Protestant preachers formerly selected a “thematic” text (often from a restricted and “favourite” list of Bible passages) the freshly broadened base of scriptures galvanized students of homiletics into action and deepened the attention given to the art of preaching. Such innovations have affected all partners in the ecumenical forum. Again, unexpected but beneficial conversations across denominational lines came into play, and researchers, preachers, and scholars became aware of common struggles in exegesis and sermon delivery beyond their own tradition.

**Praying with One Voice**

A worldwide forum initially called the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET) began to work on common English translations of the basic liturgical texts. The successor group is known as the English Language Liturgical Consultation. In light of the evolution of the English language, they took several years to agree on translations for use in the liturgy: the Gloria, Creed, and an ecumenical Lord’s Prayer (Our Father in heaven ...) amongst others. This body, though interdenominational in membership, received significant leadership and technical support for many years from ICEL, the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, based in Washington, as an agency of Roman Catholic liturgical text preparation.

**Year of Grace**

Once Roman Catholics had shared the shape of their finely-crafted lectionary with all Christian groups, and those groups had re-discovered the power of the Christian Year, long a fixture in the timing of faith-expressions of Roman Catholics, other benefits accrued. As congregations traced in sequence the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the gift of narrative theology began to take root even in “un-liturgical” groups of Christians. Within a few years, liturgical theology became a discipline and a practised art across denominational lines. Reference points were often highlighted in Catholic practices or documents such as the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. Such influences have resulted in shifts in liturgical and sacramental theology in denominations yearning for excellence and breadth in theology and liturgical practice.

**How Has the Liturgical Renewal Addressed the Goal of Unity?**

**In Music**

The community that sings together is prone to pray together. No longer the hallmark of only the Mass, musical liturgy has become a norm in many quarters. Across denominations, psalms are being sung where they were previously said or ignored; the Ordinary of the Eucharistic Rite is sung increasingly. Many such innovations could hardly be called new by Roman Catholics,
The Ongoing Dialogue

The United Church of Canada and the Roman Catholic Church have recently enjoyed a very fruitful conversation on the matter of Trinitarian language, a conversation which now overflows helpfully into discussion of the areas of ecclesial identity and sinfulness. The United Church representative in the Roman Catholic-United Church Dialogue found that her hearing of the Trinitarian formula was clarified. Whereas many Reformed-oriented persons interpret its use as simple "adherence to a traditional formula" it is heard elsewhere as connected to the "immanence" of the Holy Three. During the debates it was also realized that printed words bear historical and current freight, and everyone would like to retain the power of traditional theology while improving the level of understanding through use of accessible language. The fruits of the efforts of this interdenominational dialogue may be seen on the United Church website www.unitedchurch.ca/ucc/pdf/iwn.pdf entitled "In Whose Name?"

Most of the people I know—academics, clergy, lay worshippers, musicians—are excited about the outflow from Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and the ecumenical openness. Often, though, the Roman Catholics in the conversation, being a large dominant group, fail to grasp immediately that conversion of habit or attitude might also be required of them. This is particularly true in conversations with regional judicatories (such as my own United Church of Canada) that make decisions in a group process, often regionally. An atmosphere of doubt often invades a discussion as to who stands behind a theological statement when it comes from an ever-changing group, especially in ecclesial bodies where committee members receive a three-year appointment. The rotation of accountability in Protestant circles comes under scrutiny in light of the weightiness of a theological statement from a single source as historical as the magisterium of Rome. On the other hand, some
denominations, including the United Church, may feel increasingly isolated in ecumenical settings when discussions turn to honouring the history of liturgy or the application of liturgical norms developed over centuries, norms that are possibly taken for granted in ecclesial bodies such as the Roman Catholic Church.

**Where Are the Barriers?**

**Eucharist and Church**

As mentioned above, there is the perennial and difficult conversation on issues relating to authority. Those who have acted on their conviction that there is one body, one Lord have already dared to gather “in unity with brethren” at one table. Many have chosen to act out rather than speak their belief that matters of faith need not be defined by a specific or an historic authority. They have asked, in a manner of speaking, whether Church derives from the encounter with the Saviour at the Holy Table, or whether Church derives from parameters stated (often by Church authorities) prior to the gathering of the assembly.

The “promotion of unity” seems to have given permission for some to ask whether the Church is established for the holy communion and therefore the arbiter of who participates, or whether the eucharist precedes the Church, hence providing it with both the locus of its orders and the central moment for articulating faith.

**Loss of Momentum**

In addition, one finds a growing divergence of conservative and liberal theologians. This trend is visible within denominations as well as between denominations and is contrary to the spirit of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. Several observers have noted that the first fifteen years (a theoretical phase one) included the reintroduction of traditions of excellence from the past, and succeeding phases (probably occurring about now!) were likely to include many facets of inculturation, as well as engagement with feminist and other theologies. Recent statements from Rome, however, have been interpreted as indications that promoting unity through broadening and inclusivity does not seem to be a priority any longer.

**Liturgiam Authenticam**

In May, 2001, the document *Liturgiam Authenticam* published by Rome rejected many guidelines that were clearly enunciated or implied by the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. In place of flexibility and inculturation, the new document insists upon greater uniformity and a more traditional approach in liturgical texts, avoiding “wording or styles that the Catholic faithful would confuse with the manner of speech of non-Catholic ecclesial communities or of other religions . . . ” The universal response in ecumenical circles is that this approach flatly contradicts the helpful “search for unity” announced four decades earlier by the Constitution. Such pronouncements tend to undermine three decades of work by agencies such as the English Language Liturgical Consultation and their aim to share revised texts such as “Our Father in heaven” with all Christians. By summer, 2001, ICEL (see above) announced its withdrawal from all ecumenical cooperation. This has been felt as a severe loss to international liturgical inspiration and collegiality.

The appearance of this document presents a major barrier. In an interview for the *National Catholic Reporter* (Rome, March 2202), Rev. Dr. David Holeton, noted Canadian Anglican writer and professor of liturgics, termed it a “disabling blow”. “It felt as if a process I have been engaged in my entire adult life was coming to a halt.” He added that the importance and value placed on a common lectionary, resulting from Vatican II initiatives, cannot be overstated. In the arena of public worship, some traditions such as the Anglican have been able to make the journey from archaic to modern forms of worship much more easily because of the liturgical reforms modelled by the Roman Catholic Church.

Rev. Dr. Horace T. Allen, Jr., a committed American ecumenist, Presbyterian minister and professor of worship at Boston
University, felt *Liturgiam Authenticam* was a deliberate attempt to “repeal the Second Vatican Council’s decisions relating to the language of liturgy.” He cites its clear directive that no liturgical texts are to be created in “vernacular” languages. This suggests word-for-word translation from (superior) Latin originals, ignoring what is known in biblical and liturgical translation as “dynamic equivalence.” The matter of generic language also insinuates itself, since English makes no use of the neuter. The Roman document sets “classical language” as the standard—one that remains undefined: Elizabethan? Turn of the century? It seems ironic, in that Roman Catholic liturgical reforms since Vatican II have inspired a host of language renovations in partner churches. As a bible-quoting scholar, Professor Allen also expresses alarm at the suggestion of one “approved translation” of the bible. In an age of globalization, this seems “at least misguided, if not wrongheaded.”

Perhaps the highest barriers erected in May, 2001 were the dismissive references to “Protestant ecclesial communities” and their representatives. The Anglican observer noted his mild amusement at the worry about the document’s suggestion of “Protestantization” when in his own sphere, concerns are raised about “Romanization.” Dr. Holeton hopes that worst-case scenarios will not result, and that damage to the unity of the churches will be limited.

**Q: What further work is needed?**

**A: Address the setbacks**

Given these recent developments and the changes in guidelines, it is difficult to know whether encouraging “all that promotes” unity is a widely shared vision any longer. Whereas many Roman Catholics and most ecumenical observers thought that liturgical expressions were beginning to flow in a life-giving way between denominations, the newest documents advocate strongly for individual and restricted identity for Roman Catholics.

Whereas there has been a highly beneficial re-examination of the importance and meaning of Christian initiation for the entire Christian flock following the appearance of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, the Roman authorities recently offered the wisdom that only some traditions admit young, old, male, female to full membership privileges, including roles in the celebration of the divine liturgy. This retrenchment will need prayerful understanding and possible bridge-building.

With prayer and hymn composition at an all-time high in the English-speaking world—using phrases and vocabulary immediately accessible by the average person speaking that language—it is difficult to hear that some of those “vernacular” efforts stand to fall short of requirements set up by persons far removed from the evolving language practices in South Africa, Australia, the United States or Canada. Work will be needed to clarify that certain Latin phrases no longer carry meaning, even when translated, in the Inuit languages, to say nothing of English or French.

The aim to promote unity, stated four decades ago, has brought most of the Christian world closer to the prayer of Christ: That all may be one. It is devoutly to be hoped that deeper liturgical interaction, which happens already in many parish settings, and agreements to explore unity of intent will overcome whatever fears exist, so that original aims of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* will be increasingly realized.

May this be our prayer, as we strive to be Christ to one another, united by the Spirit in faith in the one Lord, Jesus Christ.

**Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

1. What has been your experience of ecumenical worship?

2. What has been your experience of other ecumenical endeavours? [ ]
In My Experience

San Juan de Miraflores, September 1972

My first day in the suburbs of Lima, Peru. Early morning mass. First contact with the Peruvian people after a brief ride on a city bus. The participation is vibrant; voices unite to praise God, to respond to ritual dialogues. A woman reads a passage from one of Paul’s letters; “alleluias” soar in this small chapel at the heart of an overpopulated area of the capital. Thus went my initial exposure to a liturgy in this land of adoption.

Seven days before touching ground at Callao airport in the middle of the previous night, I had left Quebec City and spent a few days with friends at La Plaine du Nord, in northwest Haiti. While there, I took part in a Sunday eucharist that lasted over two hours: vibrant procession to the altar; spontaneous dancing for joy; guitars and drums sounding; readings, songs, prayers in Creole. Every person in that remote church was celebrating! Except for the tourist that I was, every child and adult understood what was being said! As for myself, I was carried by this inculturated expression of faith.

Within a short week, I had experienced first-hand the openings made by Sacrosanctum Concilium (Latin title of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy). This transformation would prove to be deeper than what met the eye. Parish priests and missionaries alike all said that lives were being transformed; God was communicating with God’s own people in their mother tongue. Men and women were encouraged to express their faith in their own ways.

As days and weeks passed in my new Peruvian environment, I became increasingly aware that with the adaptation of Catholic liturgy into the vernacular came a new desire in “ordinary participants” to better know the word of God. Small groups of eager faithful clustered every week to reflect on Sunday readings. People got together in order to grow in their faith and to let gospel values transform them. They had encountered Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit was at work in hearts and lives. The urgent desire to be transformed by God’s power and gifts inhabited young and old alike. Volunteers to share in the preparation of liturgies were numerous. The desire to become personally part of parish life was on the rise.

After almost four years in the suburbs of Peru (Mariano Melgar and Comas), I returned to Canada where I was privileged to live in a Cree Native community, north of Edmonton. My stay there was from April 1976 to July 1980. Here again, locals were actively involved not only in the celebration of liturgies, but also in their preparation. The increased familiarity with the mass transformed the individual
and communal participation in other aspects of parish life. Church-related topics were no longer the concern of priests and sisters alone.

In both cultures—Peruvian and Cree—I witnessed and took part in the discovery of liturgy as a means of letting oneself be transformed by the sacraments of our common Catholic faith. Between 1972 and 1980, sincere efforts were indisputably made to reach people on their own linguistic and cultural territory. Adaptations and translations were not imposed "from above." They originated within the local practising baptized who had also received the Holy Spirit. All this newness occurred because the Fathers of the Council had proclaimed: "This Sacred Council ... desires to impart an ever-increasing vigour to the Christian lives of the faithful ... to strengthen whatever can help to call the whole of humanity into the household of the Church" (Constitution of the Liturgy, 1). People were drawn to the Church. New life was happening.

Fast forward ... September 1999

I had not travelled to Lima since my departure in February 1976, and my return to Comas was extremely pleasant. Although I only stayed for three days, I was able to reconnect with old acquaintances and attend mass at the parish church. I was stunned! People were singing the same hymns as when I left! Had there not been any changes over the years? Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to talk with the local priest, and therefore I cannot say if involvement in parish life and/or liturgy was modified over the last quarter of a century. I can only affirm that from an outside observer's point of view, it seemed that lay participation was not as lively as in former years. Many factors could explain this, and I can only state a perception: the initial energy was no longer apparent.

What Happened?

An Energetic Welcome

When asked to contribute to the present issue of National Bulletin on Liturgy, I was given an opportunity to reflect on this. In retrospect, I strongly believe the liturgical renewal brought about by the Second Vatican Council was welcomed within Catholic communities worldwide. Some would even say it was long overdue. The proclamation of the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy was made by bishops of every culture who had seen the need to adapt the expression of faith in their people's own ways. Guided by the Holy Spirit, bishops had declared that this orientation was a true expression of God's will for his Church on earth.

Through the guidance of their diocesan bishop, local pastors were strongly encouraged to involve lay faithful into the preparation and celebration of liturgy. Great efforts were made to train local leaders. The more people were engaged personally, the more they experienced the Church as being their own, and the more they witnessed in their daily lives the richness of their faith, the support of gospel values in their existence. It would be impossible to assess how many lives were changed because of one's personal relationship with Christ, frequent celebration of the eucharist, and assiduous reading of scripture.

Another recollection comes to mind. The call to leave Comas and return to Canada and eventually to settle in Saddle Lake, Alberta, came on a Friday. I was expected to be on the next Tuesday's flight back home. As you may guess, once I had purchased a plane ticket, the bidding of farewell to the many I lived and worked with had to be somewhat rushed. For a number of months I had been doing pastoral work in one area of the parish and during that time I had accompanied a weekly bible study group. I owed it to them to briefly explain what my new environment in western Canada would be. All were sad about this abrupt departure, but one participant, señora Victoria, spoke on behalf of all: "Adela, we would love to keep you with us; we still need you. But we
are happy to know that where you are going, brothers and sisters will have an opportunity to learn more about the word of God. Our prayer and affection are with you.” You can well imagine what effect this simple statement had on me. After twenty-seven years, I still hear those words . . . and taste the dozen oranges the group gave me as a parting gift.

Would these words and thoughts have been possible before the liturgical renewal? Of course, I cannot say. What I can say is that here was an illiterate woman who not only had a deep faith, but who also had a sense of sharing with Catholics in other parts of the world, a sense of a common, universal missionary vocation.

Cultural Adaptation

In the years following the long awaited liturgical renewal, the desire to adapt and to discover new forms of ritual expression was appreciable. The faithful were full of enthusiasm, since they were given the opportunity to take an active part in the visible life of the Church. Bishops and parish priests were fulfilling a new pastoral role: that of accompanying and overseeing local inspiration and adaptations. This was not an easy task, for one could not refer to previous experiences. They could rightfully put their trust in the Spirit at work, but not every new idea came directly from heaven!

As a rule, most pastors were courageous; it takes courage to move into the unknown. They monitored closely every suggestion made. They watched how local initiatives in adapting traditional rites were to be put into practice. Errors were abundant, but readily corrected. Opinions were shared; points of view were seriously debated. One person alone could not rightfully be the interpreter of a cultural tradition; members of communities entered into dialogue.

Pastors had to constantly have one eye set on age-old Church liturgical tradition and the other on efforts deployed to start new tradition, or to witness to a living tradition. The challenge envisaged was to ensure that essential elements of sacraments found their expression in contemporary ways. In a word, change was not sought for its own sake, but for the sake of better understanding. When one understands the symbols, the mystery can be glimpsed at. When rites are meaningless, people hardly feel the need for sacraments. Is it not the purpose of sacraments to bring one closer to God, to further one’s relationship with Christ?

Liturgical renewal required steadfastness on the part of pastors. In some instances, episcopal conferences approved of truly locally adapted rites. One may refer to the Rite zairois, where elements of the eucharistic celebration follow an ordo better attuned to the cultural patterns of African peoples. Other countries have also experienced local adaptations where venerable cultural traditions are included in rituals. However, I do not believe this profound work has been commonplace.

The years following publication of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy were dedicated to experimentation. Even with the best of intentions, some experiences were less productive than others. New ideas sometimes expressed more a mode du jour than a true reflection of the living faith of Catholics. Eventually, after a fair period of trials and errors, bishops decided collegially what was appropriate for their local Church.

Creative fidelity is never easy to practice. Ideally, the quest for liturgy to remain meaningful in the life of all the faithful should be continuous. In fact, it is less demanding to adopt a pattern, settle in, and not be attentive to evolution. Essentially, liturgical celebrations foster an ambiance where faithful encounter their God in beauty. Hymns, music, paintings, and liturgical gestures express an incarnate sense of dignity and spiritual comfort conducive to this personal contact with one’s Creator and Saviour. In my travels in different countries, I was given the invaluable privilege of experiencing liturgies celebrated in diverse environments and languages: India, Philippines, Bolivia,
Argentina, Papua New Guinea, both in city contexts and removed parishes. Each time, although everything was new to me, I was drawn into the prayerful celebration. Mass, especially, was the same as the one in Ottawa. But oh so different! It is always fascinating for me to discover how languages express universal beliefs. Who can say one way is better or superior to the next?

In 1997, I travelled to Asia. The seven days spent in Papua New Guinea were extremely enriching for me. There, I encountered people who were profoundly committed to the Church, to the faith. Most of my stay was in Kiunga (diocese of Daru-Kiunga), and for the weekend celebration I travelled over four hours with Bishop Gilles Côté, S.M.M. to a mining town, Tabubil. What a celebration! When we arrived in town, Bishop Côté told me that mass would be at 7:30 p.m. that Saturday evening, “but people like to gather at 6:00 p.m. They take the lead for that first part of their celebration.” After an early supper, I went to church. It was already filled with people and lay leaders were inviting the community to prayer. For almost one hour and a half, we prayed the fifteen decades of the Rosary; these were separated by short Scripture readings, hymns, and spontaneous prayer. It was obvious that the faithful were happy to be there, because the fair-sized church was filled. After that preparation, Bishop Côté came in and mass started. The spirited liturgy was genuinely a community event. I was left with the impression that this expression of spiritual life was normal for the community. I suspect that this particular sign of faith could hardly be reproduced in another cultural environment. On the other hand, other cultural ways would probably not touch the Papuan with the same intensity.

In November 2001, I attended a meeting in Guatemala City. The purpose of the meeting was to prepare a forthcoming continental mission congress (CAM 2). The three hundred delegates came mostly from Central America, but many came from North and South America. The session opened with eucharist, and from the chapel we went in procession with the blessed sacrament to the place where the sessions were to be held. This moving opening ceremony was presided over by a bishop; the manner of praying and the symbols used were those of local Amerindian cultures.

The reader has by now discovered that I am always impressed by different cultures. I am the more so when given the opportunity to find how Catholics express their faith. The multi-faceted expression of common beliefs remind us that God incarnate dwells among all his children. Our Creator took the risk of making individuals different, of making peoples different. There are hundreds of languages, thousands of local traditions, millions of communities. Who can say that one is better than the other? Numbers do play a role and traditions are not “born on a whim.” By definition, they reflect the experience of a people, of a natural community. They live and grow, but not necessarily on a daily basis, and most certainly not on one or a few people’s command.

In my experience, the Second Vatican Council opened doors wide, and gusts of the Spirit reached the confines of the Church. The invitation to listen to the Spirit’s inspiration stimulated and upraised all the faithful. Lay people who had never received the opportunity to experiment with rituals in a manner close to their own culture were permitted to express their faith in their own way. Energies were expended to express beautifully the sacraments of Christ. Numerous people perceived that they were fulfilling their baptismal commitment. Many engaged in the works of their Church. Celebrations were understood not solely by a few initiates. God reached each and every one of his children.

The Onset of Lethargy

After a number of years of intense adaptation in the vernacular, the old sin of sloth has shown its head. Courage to continue
this demanding task of adaptation diminished. Under the guise of “keeping tradition,” some are tempted to rest. This human reaction is quite normal, and some have fallen into temptation. Lack of courage may also play a role in lethargy.

It would be naive to impart responsibility to one single cause. It would also be absurd to see one particular reason for success. As in all of life, there are ups and downs. Inspiration is not always present on request. Talents are not equally shared among all. This is real life. But, there is a but …

All humans have in common the desire to surround themselves in beauty. All share the impetus of an inner life, of a spiritual life. When this life is the one of Jesus Christ spread in all baptized, the “impetus” is the life of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit present in God’s people guides God’s people. If “beauty is in the eye of the beholder,” I suspect that the Lord of all who looks lovingly on each of his children sees beauty when his own praise him.

The Work Ahead

What further work is needed today to continue the inspiration of Sacrosanctum Concilium? One might identify a few:

• courage to listen to the voice of the Spirit present in believers,
• resolution to discern what comes from the Spirit - even if it jostles securities,
• fortitude to encourage living liturgies. Men and women were created to be creators; creative fidelity is the best way to be faithful.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What are your personal recollections of the first changes in the liturgy during the 1960’s and 70’s?
2. How well do you think the liturgy has been adapted for the cultural milieu in which you worship?
3. What is your experience of liturgy in a culture other than your own?
4. What aspects of our liturgy are attracting unbaptized people to the Church?
5. What else is helping to call the whole of humanity into the household of the Church?
6. What is obscuring this call?
7. What aspects of our liturgy are problematic for people coming to us from various cultural traditions?
8. Do you see any symptoms of lethargy in the preparation and celebration of the liturgy in your community?

TO ACCOMPLISH SO GREAT A WORK ...

“Christ Was Sent by the Father”

Foundations

Paragraphs five and six of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy present the fundamental theological note that underlies the entire liturgical reform, namely that the liturgy is the celebration of the paschal mystery.

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of this teaching. It has been a long, long time since the paschal mystery of Christ has been put forward as the heart and centre of Christian life and celebration, but its “recovery” by the Council has opened the door to a fresh and
exciting way to understand who we are as Church.

The Paschal Mystery

The word "paschal" is derived from the noun "Pasch," which is an archaic name for "Passover." Thus the paschal mystery of Christ can be described as the passage of Jesus back to God—a passage that embraces Jesus' obedient death, resurrection, and ascension into glory at the right hand of the Father. This passage or passover of Jesus is called "mystery" because it has to do with a plan for our salvation, once hidden in the mind of God, but now revealed and achieved in time.

It is this passage that is the focal point of the whole of salvation history. In the fullness of time, God sent his only Son, born of a woman, to reconcile the world to himself. In his obedient death, resurrection and ascension, Jesus leads the whole of humankind back to God.

The Liturgy

Since the paschal mystery of Christ is the essential event that marks the reconciliation of the world with God, the question remains: How do we, the people of the world, become one with Christ in his passage to the Father?

It is at this point that the Council's principal statement in paragraphs five and six comes into play: the liturgy is precisely the celebration of the paschal mystery. The sacraments (and above all the eucharist) are those events that make the passover of Christ so present that we are drawn into that passage and make it our own. The sacraments are, therefore, events of salvation in the life of the world.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church makes the following observation:

Christian liturgy not only recalls the events that saved us but actualizes them, makes them present. The Paschal mystery of Christ is celebrated, not repeated. It is the celebrations that are repeated, and in each celebration there is an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit that makes the unique mystery present (1104).

The Council's teaching on the liturgy as the celebration of the paschal mystery came as a surprise to many theologians working in other categories of thought and to many Catholics at large. Yet the liturgy itself has always made this truth quite clear. For example, the eucharistic prayer proclaims, "Father, we celebrate the memory of Christ, your Son. We, your people and your ministers, recall his passion, his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension into glory" (EP I). And the preface of Lent I reads, "Each year you give us this joyful season when we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed."

Out of Focus

In the course of the Middle Ages, the Church lost its focus on the paschal mystery of Christ as the central event of its life and celebration. The liturgy did continue to profess a paschal faith, but when the style of celebration put meaningful participation out of reach, the people turned to popular devotions to nourish their spiritual lives.

These devotions emphasized the earthly life of Jesus, especially his suffering and death on the cross. This change in focus is readily traced in the artistic treatment of the cross. The traditional jewelled cross (with jewels marking the wounds) and later the cross bearing the image of Christ the King gave witness to the paschal mystery, which issued in the triumph and glory of the Lord. But from the eleventh century on, these crosses gradually gave way to the crucifix, with its unique focus on the painful death of Christ on the cross. Eventually, the crucifix made its way into the liturgical celebration itself.

When the liturgy is approached from the singular perspective of the passion and death of Christ the mood and tone of the celebration changes dramatically, and a
kind of sober silence takes over. In fact, however, if the liturgy is not suffused with paschal joy it can hardly be called a celebration at all. Even more to the point, if the participants fail to recognize the liturgy as the celebration of the paschal mystery they will likewise no longer see the liturgy as the celebration of their salvation.

Recovering Our Focus

There can be no doubt that the “new mass” has been received with genuine enthusiasm by the vast majority of Catholics in our country and beyond. The opportunity for a joyful liturgy and for full, conscious, and active participation has been embraced as a breath of fresh air blowing through the celebration.

At the same time, there is a growing and troubling sense of frustration over the actual quality of parish celebrations. There has been little effective teaching on the liturgy as the celebration of the paschal mystery, and communities are left struggling over whether they should bring a sober or joyful face to their Sunday liturgies.

In so many cases there has been little or no effort to encourage participation, even though the Constitution calls this participation “indispensable” and charges pastors to “zealously strive in all their pastoral work to achieve such participation by means of the necessary instruction” (14). (The reason that this participation is “indispensable” is quite simply that we must reach out to the invitation of the risen Lord and make the paschal mystery our own.)

The result is that far too many people continue to mutter prayers and responses or do not participate vocally at all. Too many choirs continue to perform as if for an audience and pay little attention to supporting the assembly in its song. Above all, however, many Catholics who are enthusiastic about the new liturgy are faced with celebrations that lack the joy of a paschal feast. They find themselves forced to travel to another parish, if there is one nearby, in search of a celebration that meets their new-found expectations and needs. Surely these parishioners have a right to a genuine celebration.

Embracing the Paschal Mystery

What is needed at this time is, above all, enthusiastic leadership on the part of parish priests. It is they who bear the first responsibility for instructing the community of faith. And if the Church’s teaching on the liturgy as the celebration of the paschal mystery—and on its implications for liturgical celebration—are not reaching the people, then we must first look here.

Of course, parish priests can only give what they have themselves received. And the theological education and liturgical inculturation of older priests no doubt bypassed the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. One can understand why many of them, at least without further study, would be less than enthusiastic about expressions of paschal joy or even the full and active participation of the whole assembly in what they had come to know as “their” celebration. This despite the fact that the Catechism of the Catholic Church is at pains to point out that “It is the whole community, the Body of Christ united with its Head, that celebrates” (1140; emphasis belongs to text).

What is more perplexing and worrisome is the anecdotal evidence indicating that even some newly-ordained priests are unenthusiastic about—the liturgical reform set forth by the Second Vatican Council. This even though the Constitution mandated a new regimen of liturgical studies in seminaries (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 16).

Part of the failure to introduce this new regimen in seminaries can be attributed to differences of opinion among the Roman congregations regarding the text of a follow-up document to paragraph sixteen of the Constitution. The whole matter is
detailed in The Reform of the Liturgy 1948-1975 (Bugnini, 1990, 859-869). In brief, successive drafts prepared by the Congregation for Seminaries and then by the Congregation for Catholic Education failed adequately to reflect the mind of the conciliar document. And when an instruction on liturgical formation in seminaries was finally issued by the Congregation for Catholic Education (June 3, 1969) it was viewed by the Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship as falling well short of the mark.

All of this being said, it remains true that the success of the liturgical renewal, rooted in the Council’s teaching that the liturgy is the celebration of the paschal mystery, can be assured only if the bishop and the parish priests of the local Church lay hold of this cause and make it their own. Nothing less will do.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion
1. Is there anything in this article that surprises or excites you?
2. What signs of joy do you see in your parish Sunday celebrations?
3. How does parish Sunday liturgy balance death and resurrection to proclaim the entire mystery of Christ?
4. Does music proclaim a Christ now risen and glorified or do the songs focus on moments in the earthly life of Christ?
5. How would you assess the general level of energy the assembly puts into participation in the liturgy?

TO ACCOMPLISH SO GREAT A WORK ...

“Christ is Always Present in His Church”

Martin Moser

Present How?

A key teaching of the Second Vatican Council concerns the various modes or forms of Christ’s personal presence in the liturgy. Articles 5–8 of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (1963) present a theology of liturgy from the viewpoint of salvation history.¹ In article 7, the Council speaks about the various ways in which Christ is present: in the presider of the eucharistic liturgy; especially in the form of the eucharistic bread and wine, the sacramental body and blood of Christ; in the sacraments; in the proclamation of the word; and in the assembled community, the Church.

Although this way of speaking sounded new at the time, Pope Pius XII had already

¹ There is a more detailed and better presentation of the theology of liturgy in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1076–1158.

Martin Moser, o.m.i., teaches liturgy and systematic theology at Newman Theological College in Edmonton, AB.
written about the presence of Christ in the liturgy in his encyclical on the liturgy in 1947.2 There he mentioned the presence of Christ in the minister of the eucharist, in the sacramental form of bread and wine, in the sacraments and in the gathered community. Vatican II added the presence of Christ in the word, which has been traditional since the patristic period and which was highlighted by the Protestant reformers.

This important teaching about the various modes of Christ's presence in the liturgy and in the Church has been repeated in different ways in subsequent Church documents. In his encyclical on the eucharist in 1965, Pope Paul VI mentions other ways in which Christ is present in the Church: in the gathered community at prayer, in works of mercy, in preaching the word of God, in the exercise of authority in the Church, in each member of the Church, in the celebration of the eucharist and other sacraments, and in the sacramental form of bread and wine in the eucharist.3 Christ's presence goes beyond the liturgy to include other ministries in the Church as well as the presence of Christ in each believer. In relation to the eucharist, the Pope says: "This presence is called the real presence not to exclude the other kinds as though they were not real, but because it is real par excellence, since it is substantial, in the sense that Christ whole and entire, God and man, becomes present."4

The Mystery of God's Grace

Before we consider the various modes of Christ's presence in the liturgy, it is useful to reflect briefly on the mystery of God's grace in the world and in people. The Trinity is the foundation of Christian life. God as Father is the source of all life and being. He sent his Son into the world to share in life with all people. The paschal mystery, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and gift of the Holy Spirit, is the centre of salvation that is celebrated and experienced in the liturgy.

When we speak of God's grace, we mean God's life and power and presence. Uncreated grace is the life of the Trinity in itself, revealed and communicated in history through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Created grace is the spiritual effect that God's presence has on people. We believe in the indwelling of the Trinity in the believer. Through God's grace we are justified; that is, we are transformed and healed by the power of the Holy Spirit in the believer. Paul writes in Romans 5.1–2, 5:

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ... God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Created grace is the life and power of God in the believer who responds to God's revelation, promise and love through faith, hope, love, and freedom, which are gifts of God's grace. The Holy Spirit empowers us to respond to God. (The best parallels in human experience are friendship and love.) There is a personal relationship between God and the believer. The circle of personal presence

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2 Encyclical Mediator Dei, 19.
3 Encyclical Mysterium Fidei, 35–39. See also Congregation of Rites, Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery, 1967, 9; Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1373–74.
4 Mysterium Fidei, 39.
and relationship is complete when the presence of the Lord and the Spirit is offered and is received by the believer and when the believer responds to God through faith, hope, and love.

**Grace and Presence**

The notion of personal presence always includes the reception of that presence by another person in space and time, and the active response of the other to the initiative of the first one. In our human experience we can see that the mutual presence of two people has degrees of intensity of presence according to the revelation and response, love and commitment between the two people. The same is true for the presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the experience of grace. Created grace, a divine gift, is experienced at the centre of the person as the grace of justification and conversion that results in new life and personal transformation. In the intellect and will, imagination and feelings, it is experienced in the response of faith, hope and love.

In our daily actions we are empowered by the Spirit to love others, to pray and to do our part in fulfilling our mission in the world. Paul reminds the Corinthians that each believer is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6.19) and that the local Church, Christians together, are a temple of the Holy Spirit. “Do you not know that you [plural] are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? ... For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.” (1 Corinthians 3.16–17). Paul had a powerful awareness of God’s presence in the believer. He wrote to the Galatians: “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2.20).

God is personally present in our lives through grace both within and apart from the liturgy. However, there is an intimate connection between life and liturgy, since Christian life begins with the sacraments of initiation—baptism, confirmation and eucharist—and our relationship with God is deepened and renewed through the eucharist and the other sacraments.

In article 7 of the Constitution we read that the liturgy is “an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ” which is performed by the Church as the body of Christ, together with Christ, the head of the body. Thus the liturgy is an action of the Church that surpasses all others.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is the only New Testament writing that speaks about the priesthood of Christ. Christ is the high priest, the perfect mediator between God and humanity. Since he is both human and divine, he is both a source of salvation and a compassionate priest (Hebrews 1.1–4; 2.5–8; 4.15–5.10). He experienced temptation and he shared in our human condition. Jesus’ passion and death was a unique, once for all, event that resulted in the transformation of death into a glorified heavenly existence (Hebrews 9.24–28). Christ’s priestly mediation in his glorified humanity continues until the parousia. He continually intercedes with the Father for the world and he gives life to the world through the continuous sending of the Spirit (Hebrews 7.25; 9.14–15, 24–28).

In the liturgy we worship, praise, thank, and pray to God through Christ; God’s life comes to us through Christ, the high priest, in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Most liturgical prayers, including the eucharistic prayer, are addressed to the Father, the source and goal of all life, through the mediation of Christ, and in the Holy Spirit.

**Presence and the Holy Spirit**

In speaking about the presence of Christ in the liturgy, we always include the Holy Spirit. Our glorified Lord and the Holy

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*Throughout the remainder of this article the phrase “the Constitution” refers to the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. 

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Spirit are together in the believer and in the liturgy. In 2 Corinthians 3.17 we read, “The Lord is the Spirit.” Even though they are distinct, whenever we experience the presence of the Holy Spirit, we also experience the presence of the glorified Lord. Existentially it is one experience.

Paul wrote that the Father and the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead (Romans 8.11) and in his glorified state Christ became a life-giving spirit (1 Corinthians 15.45). One of the weaknesses of Western theology has been the lack of balance between the role of Christ and the Holy Spirit together in salvation.

When we speak of the presence of Christ in the liturgy, we realize that there is only one personal presence of the glorified Lord that is always experienced together with the presence of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul reminds us in Romans 8.26–27 that the Holy Spirit, present in the believer, helps us to praise God in prayer. Without the Spirit in us, we cannot call Jesus our Lord (1 Corinthians 12.3). This one presence of Christ is then mediated through the assembly, the minister, the word of God, the sacraments, and the bread and wine of the eucharist. This one personal and active presence of Christ can be realized with varying degrees of intensity and effectiveness, reflecting the faith of the believers who are praying and celebrating the liturgy. In this way it is similar to our human experience of different degrees of presence of two people to each other, from just being there to a full form of personal presence in listening, attention, reception, and response.

**Christ’s Presence in the Liturgical Assembly**

Christ and the Holy Spirit are already present in believers through grace as they gather to celebrate the liturgy. As baptized disciples of Christ they experience the grace and presence of the Trinity in their daily lives.

The liturgical assembly is a more intense realization of believers as Church, as the gathered *ecclesia*, the body of Christ. People are present to one another and they pray and worship together as a gathered community that is a sign of Christ to the world. The Constitution underlines the importance of active participation based on baptism and the priesthood of all believers (14). They are encouraged to celebrate, listen, and participate as fully as possible through hymns, acclamations, and psalms as well as actions, gestures, and bodily attitudes.

As the community gathers, they are welcomed by ministers of hospitality. We greet each other as we prepare to celebrate the liturgy together.

The local Christian community that celebrates liturgy is a more intense actualization of the Church. This is true for any form of common prayer and worship especially the celebration of morning and evening prayer, liturgies of the word, and celebrations of the sacraments. It reaches its highest form in the celebration of the eucharist, the paschal mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

The local assembly celebrating liturgy is not just one part of the Church. The Church becomes “event” in word and sacrament, community and ministry in this time and place. The Council affirmed this in the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*:

> This Church of Christ is really present in all legitimately organized local groups of the faithful, which, in so far as they are united to their pastors, are appropriately called Churches in the New Testament. For these are in fact, in their own localities, the new people called by God in the power of the Holy Spirit, and as a result of full conviction (cf. 1 Thessalonians 1.5). In them the faithful are gathered together through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and the mystery of the Lord’s supper is celebrated... In these communities, though they
may often be small and poor, or existing in the diaspora, Christ is present through whose power and influence the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church is constituted (26).

**Christ’s Presence in the Word**

One of the major contributions of the Council was the importance given to the scriptures or the word of God. This had always been emphasized in the early Church. It was eclipsed at the end of the middle ages and during the reformation period, as the reformers championed the importance of the bible and of preaching in the liturgy. Through the biblical renewal in the Catholic Church in the twentieth century, the scriptures have again assumed a central place in liturgy, theology, and the lived spirituality of Christians.

The readings, the psalms, and the preaching in the liturgy express the presence of Christ and the Spirit in the word of God. One of the best New Testament references is 1 Thessalonians 2.13:

> We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God’s word, which is also at work in you believers.

Paul’s preaching of the gospel—the message of the death and resurrection of Christ, the call to conversion and the gift of the Spirit—was the word of God, which was present and active.

The same is true in the readings and preaching at liturgy. If the word is heard and received in faith, it contains the real and personal presence of Christ in the Spirit. It is an active word that gives life, deepens faith, forgives, heals, and challenges. It can also be experienced as a word of judgement. The word is the saving presence of Christ related to his action in sacramental celebrations. Of course, the word must be received by the hearers in a spirit of openness, faith and repentance. Here we can see the importance of effective reading and preaching. The word must be heard clearly so that people may respond. The preacher must be able to break open the word so effectively that it will be a life giving word that nourishes the faith of the hearers.

Vatican II underlined the importance of the ministry of preaching. Although the ordinary minister of preaching is a bishop, priest, or deacon, lay people may also preach (with permission) in certain liturgical celebrations, apart from the eucharistic liturgy; this is affirmed in the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

Lay preaching provides an opportunity for people to hear other Christians, men and women who are not part of the ordained ministry. Since this is such an important action, all preachers must be properly prepared and trained for this ministry in which the faith of the Church is handed on in preaching the word.

The liturgy of the word leads us to sacrament; the word is part of sacrament, as we can see in the eucharistic prayer. Here the presence of Christ and the Spirit is actualized in its highest form when, through the words of the eucharistic prayer, the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ.

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7 Quotes from the “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church” are from *Vatican Council II Austin Flannery ed.* (New York: Costello, 1975).

8 Canon 766.

Christ’s Presence in the Minister

Christ is also present in the minister who leads the assembly in worship. The presider is a sign of Christ’s presence to the assembly; he ministers to the assembly but does not take the place of Christ’s presence. The minister is an instrument, a servant for the effective and personal presence of Christ and the Spirit. The presider mediates God’s action in the liturgical celebrations of word and sacrament.

This is clearest in the role of the bishop or priest at eucharist. The presider acts both in the person of Christ, who is the source, and also in the name of the Church. The Constitution, in article 41, notes that the fullest expression of the local Church occurs when the bishop presides at eucharist, especially in the cathedral church. Furthermore, the presence of Christ in the liturgical minister is true for all liturgical celebrations, including those where lay people preside, and in the celebration of marriage, where, in the Latin rite, the couple are the ministers of the sacrament.

Christ’s Presence in the Eucharist

In speaking about the presence of Christ in the eucharist, the Church documents always speak about this presence being the highest form of the presence of Christ. The Constitution says that Christ is present “especially in the eucharistic species. For in this sacrament, Christ is present in a unique way, whole and entire, God and man, substantially and permanently” (7).

This is a personal, sacramental, and permanent presence of Christ. It remains as long as the forms of bread and wine remain. This presence comes about during the eucharistic prayer, especially in the epiclesis, the prayer of petition to the Holy Spirit, and in the words of institution, where bread and wine become the sacramental body and blood of Christ. The Holy Spirit is the agent of this change, as is clear in the epiclesis: “And so, Father, we bring you these gifts. We ask you to make them holy by the power of your Spirit, that they may become the body and blood of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ (EP II).”

The difference between this form of Christ’s presence and the other modes of presence in the liturgy is that this is a personal and substantial sacramental presence of Christ that remains as long as the forms of bread and wine remain. It is the gift of Christ himself as sacramental food and drink in communion. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 10.16–17:

The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

The presence of Christ in the eucharist is not an end in itself. It is there to be eaten and drunk and shared as sacramental food in communion. This sharing in communion brings about a deeper life in the Church, the body of Christ, and in each member of the eucharistic assembly. In the second epiclesis of the eucharistic prayer we pray: “Grant that we who are nourished by his body and blood, may be filled with his Holy Spirit, and become one body, one spirit in Christ.” That is why, the first reason for reserving the eucharist is so that it will be available as sacramental food for the sick and the dying.

The Presence of Christ in the Sacraments

Christ and the Holy Spirit are present in the celebration of all the sacraments. This is a real, active, and personal presence of Christ, effective when the sacrament is celebrated. It differs from Christ’s presence in the eucharist in that Christ’s presence in other sacraments does not remain after the celebration. The goal of this personal presence is to deepen and strengthen the
life of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the recipients. We are drawn into the body of Christ and are washed clean in baptism; energized by the Spirit in confirmation; forgiven in reconciliation; healed and strengthened in the anointing of the sick; graced in servant leadership in ordination; and bound together in love as a couple in marriage. The central prayers in the celebration of each sacrament express the meaning and the effect of each sacrament. Christ and the Holy Spirit are personally present and active in each sacramental action; the minister is the servant of Christ who leads the celebration.

We speak of the eucharist as being a sacramental sacrifice when the assembly joins with Christ as he offers his body and blood of Christ to the Father. This is the sacramental celebration of the paschal mystery, the unique death and resurrection of Christ whose saving power we experience in the celebration of the eucharist. We pray, together with the communion of saints, for ourselves, and for the living and the dead.

One Lord, One Spirit, One Presence

In the liturgy in general, and especially in the eucharist, Christ in the Holy Spirit is present in a variety of different ways. However, it is the one personal presence of the Lord and the Spirit whose presence become deeper, stronger and more intense in the community, in each member, and in the universal Church. It grows and expands from the presence of Christ at the beginning of the liturgy in the assembly and the presider, to the presence in the word of God, in the eucharist and in each sacramental action.

The Liturgy of Life

The liturgy is the source and summit of our Christian life. There is also a liturgy of life, our daily lives at home and at work, where we offer ourselves and all that we do to God in a silent prayer of praise and thanksgiving. The Spirit of Christ is present in people, often in a silent way, even if they are not fully aware of that powerful, life-giving presence in their lives. We join in the celebration of our world. Our bodies are broken as we give ourselves for others and as we suffer. We share food together and experience communion with other people and with God. We realize that life and the world are sacramental and that they show forth the glory of God.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship (Romans 12.1).

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. In your parish’s Sunday liturgy, what speaks to you of the presence of Christ?
2. How have you experienced grace outside the liturgy?
3. How is Christ’s presence in the gathered assembly honoured in your parish’s Sunday liturgy? How is it dishonoured?
4. How is Christ’s presence in the proclaimed word of God (readings and preaching) honoured in your parish’s Sunday liturgy? How is it dishonoured?
5. How is Christ’s presence in the presiding minister honoured in your parish’s Sunday liturgy? How is it dishonoured?
6. How is Christ’s presence in the eucharistic elements honoured in your parish’s Sunday liturgy? How is it dishonoured?
7. How is Christ’s presence in the other rites of the sacraments (adult initiation, infant baptism, confirmation, first communion, weddings, reconciliation, visiting and communion to the sick, anointing of the sick, wakes and vigils) honoured in your parish? How is it dishonoured?
8. How do you carry Christ’s presence to the world in daily life? How does your parish as a community do so?
Foundations
Paragraph eight of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy introduces one of the most important dimensions of Christian liturgy, namely that it is, even in this present time, a participation in the divine liturgy of the kingdom of God.

This teaching is likely to surprise and startle most Catholics, who are accustomed to think of the kingdom of God and a "heavenly liturgy" as strictly future events that are quite distant from what is going on in the world today. But this only makes the Council's statement more intriguing and worthy of careful investigation.

Kingdom Times
It may be common to think of the kingdom of God (or the reign of God) as something that will happen only at the end of time, but scripture tells a different story. One of the most telling passages from Luke's gospel reads as follows:

Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you" (17.20-21).

In other words, Jesus inaugurates the kingdom of God. He is the long-awaited Messiah, the one who was expected and who, it was foretold, would usher in the kingdom. In fact, he is the very embodiment of the kingdom of God. Jesus therefore opens out the end times, the final age of the world, the time of fulfilment, the time of the coming of the kingdom of God.

To carry our thoughts on kingdom time further, we need to remember that Jesus has already died and risen from the dead, that he has already ascended in glory to the right hand of the Father, and that, as Spirit-filled Lord, he has already sent the Holy Spirit to breathe new life into the world and to transform it into the shape of the kingdom of God. This is happening today. It is happening now.

Thus we read about Paul in the closing verses of the Acts of the Apostles:

He lived there [in Rome] two whole years at his own expense and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance (28.30-31; emphasis added).

The Liturgy of the Kingdom
Once we recognize that we live in kingdom times our life in the Church becomes much more exciting. We look around us for signs of the kingdom making its entrance, step by step, into the world. And then we see our sacramental celebrations in a new light, for they are the very events that signify, reveal and embody the coming kingdom of God.

The Sunday eucharist provides some excellent insights in this regard. We can begin with the great assembly, the central sign of the work of the risen Lord. We read in John's gospel, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself" (12.32). Even now we see this taking place, as people by the hundreds of millions and in every corner of the earth are coming together in a new assembly, setting divisions and hatreds aside and
gathering in unity, peace, harmony, and joy under the power of the Holy Spirit.

And then there is the sacred meal. The peoples of this world are assembling around the table of the Lord, the table of the feast of the kingdom of God. The prophecy of Isaiah may come to mind:

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear (25.6).

Or we may recall the parable of Jesus:

The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son.... Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to come to the wedding banquet. Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests (Matthew 22.1-10).

In the Sunday eucharist the world is assembling for a feast, the feast of the kingdom, where they share communion of life with the living God. What a wondrous thing to dine with the Lord in the kingdom of God!

Out of Focus

So much of the enthusiasm and dynamic spirit of liturgical celebration is lost when the participants no longer recognize the kingdom dimension of Christian liturgy. And that is precisely what happened in the course of time, at least in the Western part of the Church. Here are a few examples that illustrate the loss:

1. The preferred classical image for the back wall or the dome of the apse was the image (called the pantokrator) of Christ the Lord, seated on the throne of glory. What it told the assembly directly was that the liturgy that takes place there is a kingdom event. But we haven't seen this image for a long time. The crucifix took its place.

2. Throughout the time when the paschal mystery was alive and well in the minds and hearts of the faithful—the statues of the saints (and their stained-glass representation) that surrounded the walls of the celebration space embodied the truth that Christian liturgy joins heaven and earth, the saints above and the saints below, in a sacrifice of praise at the throne of God. In later times these statues became merely devotional points for the private prayers of the people.

3. The table is the principal sign of the feast of the kingdom of God. But as time went on it migrated to the back wall and then changed in shape. In its final disposition no one recognized it as a table at all.

4. Dining in the kingdom of God is all about eating and drinking at a feast of shared life and love. But the common practice for centuries before the Council was to "receive communion" only once a year, and then under the form of unleavened bread alone. The cup of the blessings—the cup of kingdom joy—had long been denied the people at large.

All of the above reflect a dulling of the Church's awareness of the liturgy as the celebration of the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ. As long as the world's passage in Christ to the kingdom of the Father was recognized as the very "stuff" of the celebration, the eucharist could be nothing other than the feast of the kingdom of God. Once the paschal mystery slipped out of sight, other possibilities came into view.

It needs to be said that the Eastern liturgies have never lost their kingdom strength. Indeed the very name they use for the eucharist—the Divine Liturgy—tells it all. In the West, however, one thing had become clear by the time of the Council: the liturgy would regain its inherent vitality and life only if kingdom consciousness bubbled to the surface once more.

Recovering Our Focus

It is most likely that the majority of participants in parish celebrations do not
yet have a clear sense of the liturgy as the feast of the kingdom of God. The use of the vernacular, however, is surely paying dividends, and participants hear, again and again, the concluding words (in one form or another) of the preface: "And so, with all the choirs of angels in heaven we proclaim your glory and join in their unending hymn of praise."

The current General Instruction of the Roman Missal (fourth edition, 1975) prescribes a “cross” on or near the altar (no. 270), leaving the way open for a jewelled cross, more reflective of the kingdom feast. Some parishes have moved in this direction. However, the most recent document (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 2002) calls once again for a crucifix, not simply a cross.

More importantly, the table has been brought forward from the back wall and now assumes a more traditional shape. In practically all parish churches, however, the people do not approach the table directly; the ministers of communion position themselves at the edge of the sanctuary, where the communion railing once stood.

The awareness of the Sunday gathering as an assembly gathered in unity and peace under the hand of God has surely grown, no doubt in part because of communal participation and the restoration of the sign of peace. But many Catholics leave the impression that they are still “going to mass” to fulfill an individual obligation, and the interior arrangement of the celebration space often still supports that idea.

Embracing Kingdom Time

Perhaps the most important requirement of the present time is genuine, effective homilies at the Sunday eucharist. This means homilies that begin with the good news proclaimed in the readings and that lead the assembly forward to see how that good news is fulfilled, even as we listen, in this celebration today. In other words, the homily should open our eyes to the wonder of the moment; it should make us stand in wonder and awe before the mighty works of God accomplished in our salvation today. It is homilies of this kind, proclaimed again and again from Sunday to Sunday that will reveal and unfold the kingdom character of the Sunday feast.

A greater effort needs to be made to shore up the Sunday gathering as the new assembly of God, gathered in unity, peace, and love. The large and welcoming vestibules of contemporary churches have to be used well, and the establishment of a gracious ministry of hospitality should be driven forward toward a similar ministry on the part of everyone who comes. Finally, the interior arrangement for the accommodation of the faithful should be given a careful, second look.

The location of the table should be re-examined. Whenever possible, the table should be placed within the outer limits of the general assembly, and the lines for communion should lead the faithful to areas that are visually connected to that table.

Sharing in communion needs to be a festive affair. The right music, sung by the assembly, will be of great help here. The ministers of communion need to be joyful servants of the Lord’s table, who never rush the faithful. Sharing the cup should be encouraged as the ancient norm, not presented as something that the faithful can do if they really want to.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Is there anything in this article that surprises or excites you?
2. What signs of the presence of the kingdom or reign of God do you see most clearly in your parish Sunday eucharist?
3. What is the general thrust of homilies in your experience: pointing out the presence of the kingdom or reign of God and the action of the Holy Spirit among us here and now in this celebration? Or is it moralistic or exegetical?
4. If the parish Sunday liturgy is “a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 8), does our experience there create a longing for its fulfillment?

5. What issues addressed in this article need attention from those who prepare liturgy in your parish?

TO ACCOMPLISH SO GREAT A WORK ...

"The Liturgy is the Summit, Fount and Source"

Bernadette Gasslein

"Enter Anew the Mystery and Draw the Practical Conclusions"

I confess: it was something of a loaded question. Time was short and I had been asked to cover a lot of liturgical territory and engage participants in discussion in a parish adult education session on liturgy. So I developed a true/false questionnaire covering a wide range of liturgical topics. The provocative question was this: “Liturgy is more important than acts of charity. True or false?” The discussion was terrific. One wise woman, Mary, looked me straight in the eye and said, “I always thought Liturgy was supposed to lead us to do acts of charity.”

Mary must have read and pondered article 10 of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (CSL):

[T]he liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all the Church’s power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made children of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord’s Supper.

The liturgy in its turn moves the faithful, filled with “the paschal sacraments,” to be “one in holiness”; it prays that “they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by their faith”; the renewal in the eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and his people draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire. From the liturgy, therefore, particularly the eucharist, grace is poured forth upon us as from a fountain; the liturgy is the source for achieving in the most

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effective way possible human sanctification and God's glorification, the end to which all the Church's other activities are directed.

This vision was not new. Pope Pius XII had already used the expression in his 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei*. Speaking of the fruits which the liturgical movement had produced until then, he writes: "With more widespread and more frequent reception of the sacraments, with the beauty of the liturgical prayers more fully savoured, the worship of the Eucharist came to be regarded for what it really is: the fountainhead of genuine Christian devotion." (5)

Josef Jungmann, theologian, member of the Sacred Congregation of Rites and peritus at Vatican II, was one of the chief proponents of that theology. His work is credited as lying at the heart of article 10 and its more expansive version in article 2. At the 1958 Assisi conference, in his address entitled, "The Pastoral Idea in the History of the Liturgy," Jungmann remarked: "At all times the purpose of the liturgy has been to bring the faithful together, so that they might stand before God as the Church, as the people of God. But the liturgy has also intended more than this: *it has aimed to lead the faithful to a conscious Christian faith*." In a slightly later article, published in German virtually on the eve of the Council, he wrote, "[the liturgy] must become the support of a joyful awareness of Faith and of a Christian life in the harsh, everyday world." 4

Why did theologians like Jungmann consider that the liturgy as it was celebrated on the eve of the Council could not support Christian life (that is, be the source of the Church's activity or its summit)? Over the centuries, the liturgy had become increasingly less a source of Christian vision, language, imagination, and ethics. The liturgy had become the privilege and preserve of the clergy; the language of the liturgy distanced it profoundly from the people, most of whom did not speak Latin and knew little of it.

In response to these difficulties, private devotions had taken the place of corporate prayer during the liturgy.

Common prayer in the vernacular had made its appearance during the liturgy. People said the Rosary and made the Stations of the Cross in church; they sang Christmas hymns and celebrated the Resurrection. ... but these had no connection with the liturgy: they were part of that peripheral sphere which was distinctly marked off from the esoteric sphere, from the temple-precincts and the liturgy.5

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4 Josef A. Jungmann, "The defeat of Teutonic Arianism and the revolution in religious culture in the early Middle Ages" (originally published as *Liturgisches Erbe und Pastoral Gegenwart* in the '50's by Tyrolia-Verlag, Innsbruck,) in *Pastoral Liturgy* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1962), 99.

5 Jungmann, "The defeat of Teutonic Arianism ... ", 91.
Such a situation stands in sharp contrast with what Jungmann calls "a living liturgy," for centuries "the most important form of pastoral care," for only the liturgy could
... daily build up those who are within into a holy temple of the Lord, into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ, at the same time [as] it marvelously strengthens their power to preach Christ and thus shows forth the Church to those who are outside as a sign lifted up among the nations ... ." 8

Initially the Council Fathers did not unanimously welcome the theology of article 10. Jungmann relates the disagreements: the salvation of souls and the glory of God was the summit of the Church's activity; the highest virtue was love; the liturgy was not an end, but a means. 9 Yet they voted overwhelmingly for the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. Mathijs Lamberiots comments, "The fathers had clearly opted for a different, more vital liturgy. The interventions themselves leave no doubt that genuine pastoral concern was the motive for their choice." 9

This theology of liturgy is woven into other conciliar documents. Lumen Gentium, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, takes it up: "Taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice, the source and summit of the Christian life, they offer the divine victim to God and themselves along with him" (11). 10 Christus Dominus, Vatican II's Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops points out that "parish priests should ensure that the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice is the centre and culmination of the entire life of the Christian community" (30.2). Clearly, what the CSL enunciates is not simply a liturgical vision, but an ecclesial vision as well as a vision of ministry. 11

Far from being set aside, this theology has recently been reiterated. Pope John Paul in two major documents, his 1998 apostolic letter Dies Domini (The Day of the Lord) and his January 6, 2001 apostolic letter, Novo Millennio Ineunte (At the Beginning of the New Millennium), puts it forth.

In Dies Domini, John Paul writes, "The eucharist is not only a particularly intense expression of the reality of the Church's life, but also in a sense its 'fountainhead.' The eucharist feeds and forms the Church" (32). In speaking of prayer in Novo Millennio Ineunte, he says, "It is therefore obvious that our principal attention must be given to the liturgy, the summit towards which the Church's action tends and at the same time the source from which comes all her strength" (35). John Paul sees the Sunday liturgy as "the privileged place where communion is ceaselessly proclaimed and nurtured" (36). This is the communion that lies at the heart of both CSL 2 and 10: "the Church, a sign ... under which the scattered children of God may be brought together" (CSL, 2); "the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made children of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God" (CSL, 10).

6 CSL, 2.
11 Joseph Jungmann notes in his commentary on the "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy": "From the very beginning the revival of the liturgy went hand in hand with the renewal of the concept of the church." Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, Volume I, 9.
In *Novo Millennio Ineunte* John Paul defines making the Church the home and the school of communion as the great challenge facing us if we wish to respond to God's plan and to the world's yearnings in our time (43). He clearly hopes that the liturgy will nourish a spirituality of communion [that] indicates above all the heart's contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling in us, and whose light we must also be able to see shining on the face of the brothers and sisters around us. A spirituality of communion also means an ability to think of our brothers and sisters in faith within the profound unity of the Mystical Body, and therefore as “those who are a part of me.” This makes us able to share their joys and sufferings, to sense their desires and attend to their needs, to offer them deep and genuine friendship. A spirituality of communion implies also the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God: not only as a gift for the brother or sister who has received it directly, but also as a “gift for me.” A spirituality of communion means, finally, to know how to ‘make room’ for our brothers and sisters, bearing “each other’s burdens” (Galatians 6.2) ...” (43).

### Key “Practical” Reforms

The great challenge with this theology is that it is very difficult to evaluate how well it has taken root in the Church's life. The more “practical” reforms mandated by the Council actually lay out how this theology can be realized in practice. We can see a lectionary or new liturgical books and experience revitalized ministries. What we may forget is that each of these reforms is part of the process of realizing and sustaining the theology of liturgy as the summit and source of the Church's life. We will now briefly examine some of these to see how they have helped develop and how we might further actualize, this vision of the liturgy as the source and summit of our life.

#### 1. Embraced by the Paschal Mystery

Although the paschal mystery stands at the heart of every liturgical celebration and every liturgy is a celebration of some aspect of the paschal mystery of Christ, the CSL spends surprisingly little space breaking open this mystery. In his commentary on Article 5 of the CSL, Cyprian Vagaggini remarks that the “paschal mystery, which recurs time and again in the constitution (Art. 6, 47, 61, 81, 102 to 111) ... unfortunately is explained only very synthetically in the words: ‘dying he destroyed our death and rising he restored our life.’” Yet it is by this term that the Constitution defines the mystery of Christ that is the source with which the liturgy brings us into intimate contact, “the act with which Christ redeemed us, and which is continued in the activity of the Church.”

Both Vagaggini and Jungmann insist that the many aspects of the mystery of Christ constitute the paschal mystery: they include his kenosis (humble self in the incarnation); his overcoming death in his resurrection; his ascension and his sharing of the Spirit with the world, and

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12 Bugnini, 40.
15 Jungmann, 12.
that he continues to make us share in this passage through the sacraments of initiation.

So he makes us like to himself and in a way makes the whole world like to himself dying and rising until the process be complete in the glorious resurrection of our body and in the restoration of a new heaven and a new earth.16

Thus, the paschal mystery constitutes the source and summit of the liturgy itself, for it is what is celebrated in the liturgy. Through the liturgy, the source and summit of ecclesial life, we encounter the source and summit of the life of faith, for the paschal mystery is not an intellectual construct, but a way of identifying how we enter into the hidden life of the Trinity, which we know through Christ himself. Annibale Bugnini notes: “Only by entering ever anew into this mystery … and drawing all the practical conclusions from this relationship will the world find salvation; only thus will Christian life be radically renewed.”17

While the CSL may have provided only a synthesis of the paschal mystery, treatments of it in ordinary parish life often might be labelled simplistic; generally nothing beyond Christ’s dying and rising is understood to be part of this mystery. Some people even dismiss the paschal mystery as the stuff of liturgists only. The paschal mystery, the mystery of Christ through which we discover and are drawn into the mystery of the Trinitarian communion, is shorthand for describing the pattern of God’s action in human history, past and contemporary. The paschal mystery refers to how God creates communion out of a broken world. Its primary focus is God’s action, what God has done for us. In this it accounts for the vocabulary of “celebration” by which our liturgical actions are so often designated. We glorify God for the salvation offered us in Christ and made present and operative in the Church.18

Thus the paschal mystery opens up particular understandings of God, of humanity, of creation. God is intimately and passionately implicated in human history. God continues to breathe new life on the world. “The Lord has done great things for us” (Luke 1.49). This is our great dignity, God’s action enables us to stand before God and give thanks and praise on our own behalf and on behalf of all creation. Created things are capable of revealing and incarnating God’s presence. We know what God has done for us. Our dying, our lingering at the tomb (sometimes for more than three days), our discovery of new life in and all around us, are all caught up in this mystery that is neither distant nor speculative, but alive in our midst today.19

Without this recognition, proclaimed and embodied in a thousand different ways in our liturgy, we will not be able to claim our identity as sharers in Christ’s paschal mystery, the heart of the entire liturgy.20

2. Full, Conscious and Active Participation in Liturgical Celebration

The CSL points out again in article 14 that the liturgy is “the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.” Their full, conscious and active participation is “their right and duty by reason of their baptism” (14). This necessitates that a solid theology and anthropology of the baptized be articulated.

16 Vagaggini, 65.
17 Bugnini, 40.
18 Bugnini, 40.
20 Bugnini, 40.
and honoured, year in and year out, by preaching, catechesis, and pastoral practice.

3. The Role of Scripture

"The treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that a richer share in God's word may be provided for the faithful" (CSL, 51). Perhaps nowhere else has the impact of the reformed liturgy on daily life been felt as in the renewed lectionary. In the early days of liturgical renewal, the Sunday readings often formed the basis of scripture study groups; often these were groups of lectors called to minister to the community by proclaiming the word. Some such study groups still exist today. Many people still pray and prepare with the Sunday readings before they come to Sunday worship; they make these readings a prayer focus for their week. Other people make praying with the scriptures of the weekday lectionary part of their prayer, even if they do not celebrate the eucharist daily. In this way, the Sunday table of the word continues to nourish many people for their daily living.

4a. The Role of the Pastor

After 40 years of post-conciliar experience, it is clear that the pastor's commitment to good liturgy makes or breaks the parish experience of liturgy. The simple reality is this: some pastors put liturgy at the top of, or close to the top of, their pastoral priorities. Others do not. Article 11 of the CSL says:

In order that the liturgy may possess its full effectiveness ... [p]astors must ... realize that when the liturgy is celebrated, more is required than the mere observance of the laws governing valid and lawful celebration; it is also their 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.

This injunction has been implemented variably in most situations. Some parishes enjoy the ministry of a liturgically conscientious pastor for several years, and then, when he is moved, find themselves in a kind of "liturgical desert," wherein the new pastor resists continuing the work of a predecessor, or even works vigorously to undo what has been done. Some pastors have interpreted the "more" that is "required" very loosely, and thus have created situations where the fundamental shape and norms of the liturgy are ignored. Some scarcely moved from the pre-conciliar rubricism, and now others are implementing a new rubricism that still indicates a lack of understanding of this "more" that is "required." Christus Dominus asked pastors to "ensure that the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice is the centre and culmination of the entire life of the Christian community" (30.2). This is hard work, demanding sustained commitment to preparation of celebrations and ongoing formation of assembly and ministers alike. Its fruitfulness is reflected in those studies that have indicated that good celebrations and good preaching are the two elements of parish life that keep people coming to a particular parish.

Without consistency between pastoral leaders about the priority of liturgical life, the liturgy will find its rightful place in the life of the faithful, and of a parish community, only with great difficulty. Without consistency, praxis will inevitably teach the people of God that while the Church may profess the centrality of liturgy as the "source and summit" of their Christian lives, this teaching will be honoured only according to the priest's personal preference. Where the pastor does not take the liturgy seriously as the "source and summit" of the Christian community's life, people will turn to other resources to nourish their daily faith and living. The building of the kind of communion described by John Paul II will be compromised.

4b. The Role of the People

Article 11 of the CSL also says:

In order that the liturgy may possess its full effectiveness, it is necessary that the faithful come to it with
proper dispositions, that their minds be attuned to their voices, and that they cooperate with divine grace, lest they receive it in vain.

Simply being a warm body in a pew is not enough. We must come intending to give God thanks and praise, open to the transforming power of the Spirit at work in the assembly and in the liturgy, and ready to live the words our tongues utter.

In the last forty years two tendencies have not always fostered these proper dispositions. In the early years of the reform, much energy was invested in developing liturgical ministries. This was necessary and laudable. But it was frequently accompanied by the sense that if you weren't exercising a ministry, you weren't really involved in the liturgy. Others believed that liturgical ministry was the pinnacle of all ministries. The contributions of those people who worked with the poor, ministered to the sick, or participated in other less visible parish ministries were often viewed as less noble than those of liturgical ministries. (Proximity to the altar determined the status of the ministry.) Because of this, the understanding of the assembly as joined to the risen Christ, exercising through, with and in him his priestly role, assisted by the various ministries, only began to emerge in the late 1980's. Fostering this understanding and building it into all future ministerial formation programs continue to be important factors in helping people tune their minds, hearts, words and lives together. All ministries must "ensure that, when present at this mystery of faith, Christian believers should not be there as strangers or silent spectators. On the contrary, having a good grasp of it through the rites and prayers, they should take part in the sacred action, actively, fully aware, and devoutly. ..." so that, "offering the immaculate victim, not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him, they should learn to offer themselves" (CSL, 48). For Christians, this self-offering is the climax of all life and the source of the communion which is our goal.

5. Liturgical Formation

Whether for pastors, various ministers, or the assembly of the baptized, liturgical formation is an essential component of a life in which liturgy is the source and summit of the Church's activity. This will mean that we must become adept as a people at the practice of mystagogy.

In her book Saying Amen: A Mystagogy of Sacrament, Kathleen Hughes describes the consistent characteristics of mystagogy: "In all cases, its function was to help its hearers enter the world of the liturgy, walk around inside it, explore their experience of its sights and sounds and smells, savor its memory, ponder the meaning of what was said and done, and live out of its vision."

"And live out of its vision." That may be the one element that liturgical formation as practiced in the last forty years has often neglected. When done, it has usually dealt with history, theology, or practicality. Rarely has formation forged the connection between liturgical words, actions, gestures, symbols, and life. Rarely has it asked the question, "What differences does this make tomorrow, Monday at the office, Wednesday at my meeting, or Saturday when I'm playing with my kids?" While the conciliar document is clear that liturgy is not the whole of life (CSL, 12, 13), it is equally clear that there is a relationship between liturgy and the whole of life (source and summit). The formative power of mystagogy, practiced regularly in the Christian assembly in the homily, practiced in all kinds of other contexts of ongoing formation, will reveal the words, actions, and symbols of the liturgy as meaningful beyond the immediate context of the liturgy. It will reveal the kinds of commitment we make in the words, symbols, actions, and gestures of the liturgy.

commitments that must outlive the duration of the liturgical act itself.

Becoming adept at the practice of mystagogy will necessitate ongoing formation for preachers, presiders, and catechists of all kinds. It demands more than knowing content and method; valuing experience, both religious and secular, and understanding our liturgical tradition as meaningful action will be fundamental components of a mystagogical practice.

Most often, this approach will find its place in the preaching at a Sunday celebration of eucharist or a Sunday celebration of the word or hours. This approach will take full advantage of the possibility of exploring not only the scriptural texts, but liturgical texts, actions and seasons as set out in the Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass (24).

6. The Role of the Homily

The restoration of the homily to the renewed liturgy was an important gain (52). The CSL describes its function in these ways: "Preaching should draw its content mainly from scriptural and liturgical sources, being a proclamation of God's wonderful works in the history of salvation, the mystery of Christ, ever present and active within us, especially in the celebration of the liturgy" (35.2), and later, "By means of the homily the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of the Christian life are expounded from the sacred text during the course of the liturgical year" (52). The Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass notes, "Whether the homily explains the biblical word of God proclaimed in the readings or some other texts of the liturgy, it must always lead the community of the faithful to celebrate the eucharist wholeheartedly ... " (24). Proclaiming, expounding and explaining are three different acts of communication. In many instances, homilists do an adequate job of explaining the historical-critical analysis of the appointed scriptures. In others, homilists reduce the scripture passage to "what we should do" in response to God's word. But for the homily to play its role in enabling the liturgy to become the source and summit of our lives, a different approach is necessary. The American bishops' document Fulfilled in Your Hearing explains that the homily draws on the scriptures to interpret peoples' lives. It clarifies the role of the homily: "Such would be to show how and where the mystery of our faith, focused upon that day's scripture readings, is occurring in our lives. This would bring the hearers to a more explicit and deepened faith, to an expression of that faith in the liturgical celebration and, following the celebration, in their life and work" (73).

Note that the American bishops suggest that this style of preaching enables the liturgy to become a source of faith. Enabled to recognize that what God is doing in the biblical stories is still happening in our world today, people have reason to lift up their hearts and give God thanks and praise. Moreover, they can return to their 24/7 lives more able to live their faith in that context, more able to recognize God's presence and action there. A steady diet of such preaching forms people to live from the communion they experience in the liturgy and to cultivate communion in their daily lives.

7. Fostering Liturgical Spirituality

Spirituality can be called a core set of beliefs, which gives our lives meaning and purpose, and which enables us to act and interact with the rest of the world. Mark Parent, in Spiritscapes, quotes Naisbitt and Aburdene writing in Megatrends 2000: "Spirituality, yes, Organized religion, no." Other researchers such as Don Posterski and Michael Adams, along with Tom Beaudoin, author of Virtual Faith: The Irreverent Spiritual Quest of Generation X and Jeremy Langford, author of God-Talk:...

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Why Faith Matters to a New Generation\(^{23}\), all contend that today people are looking for a spirituality, a core sense of meaning out of which they can live their lives with some sense of purpose.

What the CSL does in calling the liturgy the source and summit of the Church's life is establish the liturgy as that core of meaningful activity from which the rest of the believer's life flows. In an age when spirituality is clearly of significance to many people, reviving the liturgy as the spiritual centre of our lives can offer new resources for living to every person who chooses to participate. This spirituality is available to all; it is not limited to those who would go on retreat or participate in a weekend movement.

This entails a shift in our understanding of liturgical activity. If it is treated only as obligatory attendance at Sunday liturgy, it cannot function as a spirituality. If, however, it is treated as a source of meaning for everyday living, it can resource spirituality.

How might this work? Take, for example, an example from \textit{Dies Domini}. John Paul insists on Sunday as a day of solidarity and a day of rest. How do we live this in a 24/7 society, in which at least one generation, if not two, no longer has a memory of Sundays without stores open? When we begin to explore this issue, all kinds of other realities surface: questions of our relationship to money and to each other, the amount of work and money-related stress in peoples' lives, the busy-ness and over-commitment that so many people endure. Sunday is often just more of the same-old, same-old. At this juncture, the "Sunday obligation" (which, as Pope John Paul points out, comes from our profound identity as the baptized, not simply from an external law) begins to have a ripple effect in our whole lives. It raises questions that any functioning, life-giving spirituality must raise: how we relate to ourselves, to the world around us, to work and money—as well as to God. We have to make some decisions about how we will live. The theology of the Lord's Day is a tightly woven whole; but shall it remain simply that? How do we embrace and live this meaning?

A similar approach can be applied to each of the prayers, gestures, symbols and actions of the liturgy. Not only does such an approach rescue liturgy from rubricism, ritualism, or reduction to a series of "how-to's"; it also makes it fresh and real.

And what about the summit?

Assessing how well the liturgy has become the source and summit of our ecclesial lives is a daunting and even dangerous task, because it means assessing not just the liturgy, but the life of the Church as a whole. That is far too broad for this article. The question here is not so much whether we have implemented all the conciliar reforms, or how well we have implemented them, but what kind of effect that implementation has had on our lives. Has the liturgy become a source for our Christian living, an impetus to the kind of communion Pope John Paul describes?

In 1997, Canadian researchers Don Posterski and Gary Nelson's study \textit{Future Faith Churches: Reconnecting with the Power of the Gospel for the 21st Century} \(^{24}\) was published. The only one of its kind in Canada, this study examined fourteen Canadian churches considered by their peers to be thriving and vital churches that valued both personal faith in Jesus Christ and social concern ministries. They noted that worship is the focal point from which

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congregational life flows, stimulating congregations to encounter God and affecting people personally. This sounds remarkably like the Council’s “liturgy is the font from which all the Church’s power flows.” The authors continue:

When worship is right, it touches the heart, but it also stimulates more than just emotional feelings. Worship motivates people into action. It prompts people in the pews to practice in their daily lives the truth they encounter in their worship services. ... In a Catholic focus group the question was asked: “If you were to move and have to leave this church, what would you miss?” the response from a middle aged man was profound: “I would miss the quality of the liturgy. It inspires me to love and forgive.”

Later, Posterski and Nelson remark:

Energized hearts and awakened minds cannot be contained. Indifference to neighbors in need is not an option when God is rooted in the inner spirits of transformed people and the truth of the gospel is embedded in the minds of the followers of Jesus. Compassion is translated into action; visions for mercy ministry emerge. The theology of the gospel is authenticated in the lives of God’s people reaching out and caring for others.

These comments give us reason to pause and reflect. If we were to ask our parishioners the same question, how would they respond? Would the quality of the liturgy figure at the top of the list? Would they, like Mary in my class, know that liturgy should lead to acts of charity? And would they experience liturgy that enabled them to live the demanding law of Christian love? Perhaps we need to consider how we might do our own research on this topic in our communities.

So far this article has focused on liturgy as the source of the Church’s strength. But what about the liturgy as the summit towards which everything else tends?

In Dies Domini, John Paul writes:

The rhythm of the week prompts us to gather up in grateful memory the events of the days which have just passed, to review them in the light of God and to thank him for his countless gifts, glorifying him ‘through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.’ The Christian community thus comes to a renewed awareness of the fact that all things were created through Christ (cf. Colossians 1.16; John 1.3), and that in Christ ... all things have been restored (cf. Ephesians 1.10). ... Then, giving assent to the Eucharistic doxology with their ‘Amen,’ the People of God look in faith and hope towards the eschatological end, when Christ “will deliver the kingdom to God the Father ... so that God may be everything to everyone” (1 Corinthians 15.24, 28). This ‘ascending’ movement is inherent in every Eucharistic celebration and makes it a joyous event, overflowing with gratitude and hope ... The truth that the whole community shares in Christ’s sacrifice is especially evident in the Sunday gathering, which makes it possible to bring to the altar the week that has passed, with all its human burdens” (42–43).

Still, tangible evidence of the liturgy as the summit of our lives is difficult to see. We must not presume that correct rubrics, beautiful singing, and warm feelings at and after Sunday eucharist are incontrovertible evidence that the liturgy is the summit of a...
community's life. The actions that John Paul describes presume a people who have cultivated gratitude daily, who live out of their baptismal priesthood, who eye horizons of hope that stretch forward to the day of the Lord and outward to the needs of the poorest and most oppressed. Most surely, they presume people who, conscious of their communion with the risen Lord, hand themselves and their lives over to God, trusting that what God did for Jesus, God will do for them. Paradoxically, this assurance will be most clearly manifested each day in their paschal love for the poorest and littlest. The summit is revealed in what the source engenders.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What in this article surprises or excites you?

2. Which of the seven key “practical” reforms has been most effective in your experience? Why?

3. Which of the seven key “practical” reforms has been least effective in your experience? Why?

4. How would you assess the other five (i.e., those not mentioned in questions 2 and 3)?

5. If liturgy is the summit of the Church’s activity, what does the experience of Sunday liturgy in your parish say about the life of the Church?

6. What in your parish liturgy is most life-giving? How is it source and fount for your daily life?

7. Discuss some of the questions posed within the article.

THE CHURCH EARNESTLY DESIRES ...

“Full, Conscious, and Active Participation”

James Hayes

“The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people’ (1 Peter 2.9; see 2.4–5) is their right and duty by reason of their baptism. In the reform and promotion of the liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else. For it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy [CSL], 14).

Archbishop Emeritus James M. Hayes was ordained a presbyter of the Archdiocese of Halifax in 1947, became auxiliary bishop in 1965, and served as archbishop of Halifax from 1967 to 1990. He was present at the first session of Vatican II and returned as a Council father for the final session in 1965.

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The Aim to Be Considered Before All Else

When I read this paragraph of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, almost 40 years after it was proclaimed by Vatican II, I am still intrigued by its penultimate sentence: “In the reform and promotion of the liturgy this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else.” This ambitious goal received generally broad support. Not grasped immediately were the implications that active, personal participation in liturgy would have on our understanding and appreciation of the Church itself. The fact that the bishops of the Council turned from liturgy to discuss the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (LG) and came to the task with a renewed sense of the Church as a worshipping community, surely had a bearing on the Council’s presentation of the Church as a sacrament of Christ and as the people of God (LG 1, 9.2; CSL 5; Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 775, 776).

We read the documents of Vatican II differently now than we did in 1963–1965. Then, they were new instructions, teachings, and directives on how the Church might be able to accomplish the saving work of Christ in the world. They came to many of us as guidelines or directions to follow, and we were to await results. On December 8, 1965, we had the idea that the Council ended and we should just get to the work of implementing it. But forty years later, we realize that the Council has not ended. It has moved into a different phase, but it is still alive and calling us to hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.

Vatican II was not called to treat some particular problem or settle some difficult situation. It was convoked by Blessed John XXIII to give the whole Church an opportunity to look at the signs of the times and update the Church’s pastoral activity to meet the needs of people living in vastly different situations in a rapidly changing world.

The purpose of the Council was not to provide a library of fine documents or offer some encouragement. Its aim was to change minds and make people aware of who they are as God’s people. Documents, directives and teachings are helps in this regard but, in the end, it is a matter of changing attitudes and values to bring them in line with what God is asking of us. This constant, slow, and at times, even difficult process is referred to as the “reception” of the Council. It is clear that a council, no matter how beautiful in itself, will not achieve its purpose unless it is received and put into practice by the members of the Church. Among the many efforts to promote acceptance of the Council, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, is very helpful.1 In 1985, Pope John Paul II convoked a special Synod of Bishops to mark the twentieth anniversary of the close of Vatican II. The Synod renewed the Church’s commitment to continue the path of renewal begun by the Council. It also asked for a compendium of Church teachings to help priests and lay

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1 Throughout the remainder of this article the phrase “the Catechism” refers to the Catechism of the Catholic Church.
faithful understand, appreciate and put
into effect the program of renewal
demanded by the Council. The result was
the publication of the Catechism on
October 11, 1992, the thirtieth anniver-
sary of the opening of Vatican II.

Embracing the Vision

We read the Council documents today,
not to say: "We tried that and it hasn't had
the hoped for results, so let's forget about it
and go back where we were." Rather we
have to hear a sentence like the one about
the "aim before all else" and say, "Well,
we're still working on that one." Perhaps
people realized the purpose of our efforts
and programs, they would be more
interested and involved. When we are
trying to encourage and promote some-
thing, we have to look ahead and try to see
the vision. What would it be like if we
really achieved the goal? The vision may
be clouded or obscure, but it can still be
glorious. Imagine if all the people partici-
pated actively in the celebration of the
liturgy, the worship of the Church. What
would it mean? What would our parishes
and communities of faith be like?

Everyone would have a great regard and
appreciation of the grace of baptism, their
dignity as a Christian. They would, in the
words of the Constitution, be aware of
their share in the priesthood of Christ and
of their right, duty and privilege to join in
the renewal of his sacrifice in the mass and
of the unique gift of his sacramental
presence in the eucharist. Christ is present
in the eucharist to be present to us in
another way, transforming us into mem-
bers of his body, the Church. That mar-
vellous, mystical transformation means
that what happens to us in the eucharist is
not left behind when we leave the
Church, but we actually carry it into the
world with us. All this is concentrated in
the few lines of paragraph fourteen in the
Constitution.

The eucharist, the central act of the
Christian worship, makes the Church, and
the Church makes the eucharist. What we
do at eucharist is re-live, renew, and make
present again Jesus Christ and his saving
work. Christ became human to be a priest
to offer a sacrifice on behalf of all
humanity. He lived, he suffered, and he
died like every other human. But in the
saving event we call his paschal mystery,
he rose again and began a new life, a new
creation. He calls us to share that life.
When we say we share in the priesthood of
the Christ, it means that we are given a
share, an active share, in that sacrifice, in
that work of salvation. That's what the
first part of the paragraph declares to us in
its reference to 1 Peter: "Like living stones,
let yourselves be built into a spiritual
house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer
spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God
through Jesus Christ. ... You are a chosen
race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's own people."

Liturgy, Priesthood and
Ordained Ministry

In Chapter II of the Dogmatic Constitution
on the Church, the Council deals with the
priesthood of the baptized as it relates to
the priesthood of the ordained. There we
find the often-quoted statement:

Though they differ essentially and
not only in degree, the common
priesthood of the faithful and the
ministerial or hierarchical priest-
hood, are nonetheless ordered to
one another; each in its own way
shares in the one priesthood of
Christ (LG 10).2

The same Council document affirms the
foundational unity of all who share the
priesthood of the baptized:

The distinction which the Lord has
made between the sacred ministers
and the rest of the people of God
involves a unifying purpose, for the

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2 All quotes from Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (LG) are from Austin Flannery, ed., Vatican Council
pastors and the other faithful are joined together by a mutual need (communi necessitudine) (LG 32).

In other words, neither can simply stand alone; they need one another for the Church to be truly the Church of Christ, which comes to us from the gospel. In the ongoing work of Church renewal through the liturgy, these formulations of the Church’s teaching still invite further study, reflection and clarification.

Moving in this direction, the noted Dominican ecclesiologist, Jean-Marie Tillard points to 1 Peter 5.1–3. There, the writer of the letter speaks in his own words: “As an elder (presbyter) myself … I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God. … Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock.” This is how the Church is built up, with the network of mutual relationships based on baptism and ordination. Sharers in the one priesthood of Christ discover and respond to the mutual need they have for one another. Together they make the community: not a collection of individuals seeking their own sanctification, but the unique and indivisible “royal priesthood,” the priestly community of the King, the “spiritual house of God.” The priest who offers sacrifice has an office, a role, that continues; we are familiar with that reality in the case of the ordained priests. But, by our baptismal priesthood, all of us share in the everlasting sacrifice of Jesus.

The paschal mystery of our salvation is eternal. We celebrate it over and over, but we do not repeat it. We repeat the celebrations by which it becomes present to us and draws us into its “mysterious” power and fills us with its grace and strength (CCC 1104).

The necessity for ministry is not based on an arbitrary structure or on laws and directives to regulate the life of the community. The ministry is necessary because of the sacramental nature of the Church. The ordained minister has a responsibility that is much broader than the individual. He is to be a reminder to the Church of this radical dependency. The ordained minister is an icon, a symbol of the head of the Mystical Body, which is the Church.

Ordained ministry is a function marked by high nobility and deep poverty. The tragedy is that too often the nobility is exalted and the poverty is obscured. As a result, people tend to define the Church by its ministry, whereas the ministry should be defined by its place in the Church. When the Church is identified with ministry, the Church is understood as a society formed by obedience to the hierarchy, rather than a communion in the “once for all” of the Lord’s sacrifice.

The Heart of Participation

The opening words of paragraph fourteen, “The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy,” encapsulate the goal of renewal in the Church. The challenge is passed on to us in no uncertain terms, telling us that participation is “the aim to be considered before all else.”

Full, active participation in the liturgy is not simply a matter of following directions about how one should act, when to respond, what postures to take, what words to say or sing, etc. The goal of renewed liturgy is to evoke a deep, personal involvement in what is happening. The real purpose is to change people—in other words to bring about conversion, to solicit a renewed commitment to join the community of faith in worship. It is all about deep spiritual realities valued by persons of faith, often accompanied by

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4 Tillard, 142.
feelings of consolation, and always appreciated as God's gift to us and our way of giving thanks and praise for salvation in Jesus Christ.

When the Constitution uses words like "full, active, conscious" to describe liturgical participation, it calls for the involvement of mind, body, heart and senses. Before we can enter such an all-encompassing exercise, we must know not only what we are to do but also why we are to do it. First of all, the liturgy calls us to participate in the saving work of Jesus Christ. He is still the first active agent in what we are about. The events of his paschal mystery—real events in history—have passed into the divine eternity and are still present to us and for us when we celebrate the mysteries (sacraments) of faith. Christ, the eternal high priest, offered to God the perfect sacrifice of praise once and for all. It cannot, it need not, be repeated. Yet, it is continually made present for us when we celebrate the liturgy (CCC 1085).

By Reason of Our Baptism

In quoting the text from 1 Peter (2.9, 4-5), the Council reminds us that all the baptized share in the priesthood of Christ. This share in the priesthood is our right and duty, "by reason of our baptism." It is interesting to note that the reference to baptism was the only amendment to the original draft of this paragraph, and passed by a vote of 2,109 to ten.5

When Vatican II published the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy forty years ago, the bishops were aware that liturgy, especially eucharist, had become a very specialized activity. The celebration of mass was done by "the celebrant," the priest. He was the "active agent"; the assembly were mainly passive "hearers."

Full, conscious, active participation demands that the faithful be not merely called a priestly people, but they carry out the functions of this priesthood. It is in the liturgy that the ordained and the baptized, each in their own proper way, make the Church present and reveal its true nature and activity. By their participation in the celebrations, they exercise their priesthood and deepen their incorporation in Christ. For large numbers of people who are accustomed to think of the priest as the celebrant, or active agent of the liturgy, and the people as the recipients of his ministry, calling everybody priests will likely create more unease than confidence. But the catechism, in drawing out some of the theological implications of paragraph fourteen in the Constitution, makes it very clear that "it is the whole community, the body of Christ that celebrates" and "the celebrating assembly is the community of the baptized" (CCC 1141, 1142). Speaking specifically of Christ's faithful at the eucharist, paragraph forty-eight of the Constitution states: "They should give thanks to God by offering the immaculate victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him." In many other places where sacramental celebrations are mentioned, the Catechism is careful to include references to the community as the active celebrant of the rites.

The call to full, active, conscious participation is not new. The most detailed account we have of the eucharist in apostolic times is given to us by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians (1 Corinthians 10.16-17; 11.23-29). He was trying to help the Church in the community to understand the meaning of what they were doing and to recognize "the body of the Lord in the bread broken and the cup shared and in the gathered community." Writing around the year 400, St. John Chrysostom reminds the people of their part in the eucharistic prayer. That prayer, he says, "is a common prayer, for the priest does not give thanks alone but the people with him; he does not begin it until the faithful have signified their assent by: 'It is right to give him

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thanks and praise.' 6 At the same time, St. Augustine tells his community that their "Amen" to "the Body of Christ" at communion is to declare what they are receiving and who they are (CCC 1396). Here the two forms of sharing in Christ's priesthood meet. Here is the "unifying purpose" and "mutual need" (LG 32). And it is all the action of Christ.

**Participation of the Whole Person**

That phrase, "full, conscious and active participation," tells us that the kind of worship the Church earnestly desires is all encompassing. It must involve the mind, our understanding. We must know why we are expected to act, move, speak etc. What are we trying to express to God, to our neighbour, to ourselves?

The celebration itself is directly about words, gestures, postures, etc., but these are all means to establish, deepen, heal and sustain relationships. The relationships are with God, the members of the worshipping community and the Church. The words are what we are expected to hear, listen to and receive. The words of worship may be read for our instruction or devotion, or they may be the responses we make to participate in the rite. They may be psalms, songs, or hymns that gather the community to proclaim its praise, petitions, or penitence with one voice. They are all important. Full, active, participation means we can't leave it to someone else. We have to be involved personally.

In his closing address at the end of the first session of the Council, the only one over which he presided, Pope John XXIII said: "It was not by chance that the first schema to be completed was on the Sacred Liturgy which defines the relationship between humans and God. Since it is the highest form of relationship, it must be based on solid foundations ... to proceed with broadness of vision, free from the superficiality and haste which sometimes characterize relations between humans.' 7

**The Church Led by the Spirit**

The enormous efforts made throughout the whole Church to adapt, reform, promote and sustain the full, conscious and active participation called for by the Constitution were undertaken with resolute vigour and generally with considerable haste. The theological, personal, and cultural foundations and implications—the broader vision—in Pope John's statement, is still in the process of being formed. This is not a cause for discouragement, much less a reason for halting or reversing our achievements in liturgical renewal since 1965.

In the brief excerpt of the Constitution under consideration, here, the worshipping community in its broader vision sees itself as the Church and recognizes its members as the Mystical Body of Christ the priest, in whom and with whom they share actively in offering the sacrifice of praise. By starting with the liturgy as its first major Constitution, and choosing the Church as its second, the Council points to the path on which the Spirit leads the Church.

Pope John XXIII opened the Council with the words: "Gaudet Mater Ecclesia" (Mother Church rejoices). The bishops undertook the liturgy as a practical matter. It was one in which everyone had personal experience and in which many felt they were experts. It was central to their pastoral activity. Many would have considered it an internal matter, a sort of family affair between themselves and "their" people. But as the discussions and debate on the Church began, the community, which now came to be called more properly a "communion," emerged as a

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6 Homily on 2 Corinthians 8.16, (18) n.3.
much broader entity, "the people of God," with all their relationships with God, with one another, and with the world in which they live.

The three issues that sparked most debate on the liturgy were the introduction of the vernacular, communion under both species, and concelebration by priests. Participation was widely supported from the beginning, but some bishops expressed a fear that it might interfere with the devotion of the faithful and one eminent father of the Council went so far as to say: "Participation by the people is nothing but a distraction." Among the strong supporters of the liturgy constitution were Cardinal Montini of Milan (later Pope Paul VI) who spoke in favour of it on the very first day, and Cardinal Léger of Montreal, who offered strong positive reasons to accept the three most contested issues.8

It was during the first session of the Council that Cardinal Montini said that the Church was nothing by itself. It was not so much a society founded by Christ, but rather Christ, himself, using us as his instruments to bring salvation to all humankind.9

The debate on the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church started with a presentation of the Church as a mystery (a sacrament), rather than an institution. Membership in the Mystical Body, participation in the triple roles of Christ as priest, prophet and king became essential elements of the debate. This discussion, which began at the first session of the Council in 1962, was carried over to the next session in September 1963. In June of that year, Pope John XXIII died and Cardinal Montini was elected to succeed him as Pope Paul VI. In his opening address at the second session, Pope Paul made a commitment to follow the direction set by Pope John. However, in the address he took as a theme a line from the Prayer of the Church for Wednesday morning: "Te Christe solum novimus." (Thee alone, O Christ we know.) It is clear from the vision set by Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy that the primary purpose of the Council was not the domestic concerns of Mater Ecclesia, but the Church as the presence of Christ in the world—the sacrament of salvation.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion
1. In general, on a scale of 0 (non-existent) – 10 (full, conscious and active), how would you rate participation of the whole assembly at parish Sunday eucharist in your experience?
2. What aspects of participation are best honoured?
3. What aspects of participation need more work?
4. What barriers to participation do you see? How could these be removed?
5. What image of Church seems to dominate your parish liturgy? Give examples.

8 Xavier Rynne, Vatican Council II (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999) 61, 70, 72. [Editor's note: Xavier Rynne is the pseudonym used by Francis Xavier Murphy, a Redemptorist priest of Bronx, NY in his reports from behind the scenes at the Council.]
9 Rynne, 117.
THE CHURCH EARNESTLY DESIRES...
“That the Faithful Be Led”

James Ravenscroft

The 1994 Mississauga Statement and “The New Evangelization”

In recent documents, especially Ecclesia in America and Novo Millenio Ineunte, Pope John Paul II encourages a “new evangelization,” that is evangelization with new ardour, new methods and new expression (Ecclesia in America, 6). Amongst other things, the call to a new evangelization includes formation in the liturgy and sacraments. Perhaps it was providence or a little bit of kismet, but in 1994, the various directors of offices of liturgy and the chairs of diocesan liturgical commissions from across Canada gathered in Mississauga to reflect on the history of the liturgical renewal in Canada and to evaluate its progress. After much sharing and dialogue, the participants in the meeting came to the conclusion that what we need is a greater effort towards liturgical formation. Compiling their recommendations in a document known as The 1994 Mississauga Statement, the participants affirmed that much has occurred in the liturgical renewal in terms of the externals of worship but that “a second phase now must begin, that is, a renewal at a deeper level of spirituality, lived ecclesiology, and liturgical theology” (1).

Canada Echoing the Voices of the Past

The Council

This is not a new impulse. In the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the Council fathers suggest that it is “necessary that the faithful come to it [the liturgy] with proper dispositions, that their minds be attuned to their voices, and that they cooperate with divine grace, lest they receive it in vain” (11). Furthermore, “it is ... their [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” (11).

Paul VI

This thought is reiterated by Paul VI (Evangelii Nuntiandi) in his call for a relaunching of evangelization. He suggests that evangelization is most fully operative when the word of God and the sacraments are brought together. Liturgical formation is an undercurrent in his thought: “the role of evangelization is precisely to educate people in faith in such a way as to lead each individual Christian to live the sacraments as true sacraments of faith—and not to receive them passively or reluctantly” (47).

1 The text of The 1994 Mississauga Statement can be found in National Bulletin on Liturgy #154 Vol. 31 Fall 1998 “Environment for Worship,” p. 185–190 or contact the National Liturgy Office for a copy.

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John Paul II

In Redemptoris Missio John Paul II picks up Paul VI’s suggestion and speaks not just about the initial mission ad gentes but also “the new evangelization of those peoples who have already heard Christ proclaimed” (30). He speaks of Christian conversion as the aim of evangelization, leading not only to baptism but also to the formation of local churches who listen to the word of God, focus their prayer in eucharist, live in communion of heart and soul and share according to the needs of their members (cf. 46 and 51).

Pope John Paul II is giving this call for a new evangelization increased impetus as we begin a new millennium. In Ecclesia in America he stresses that an encounter with the Risen Lord is the foundation of evangelization. This encounter is not simply an individual experience but rather is a communal one. There is a liturgical dynamic to this encounter as he asserts in article 12: “a second place of encounter with Jesus is in the sacred liturgy.” It is when the faith community gathers to recall the saving mystery of God, Sunday after Sunday, that the risen Lord is encountered. Every Christian is invited to grow in the spiritual life through personal and liturgical prayer, especially through the sacraments because they are “the root and endless source of God’s grace” (29). This is especially true of the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and eucharist. The pope stresses the importance of preparation for the sacraments as a vehicle for evangelization: “these sacraments are an excellent opportunity for an effective evangelization and catechesis, when preparation for them is entrusted to people of faith and competence” (34). Eucharist is highlighted as “the outstanding moment of encounter with the living Christ” (35), especially on Sunday. Liturgical formation is a necessary part of this hoped-for encounter with the risen Lord, both in dioceses—as a particular church, the diocese is charged with initiating and deepening the encounter of all members of God’s people with Jesus Christ” (36)—and in parishes—“parishes are called to be welcoming and fraternal places of Christian initiation, of education in and celebration of the faith”(41). Liturgical formation is a significant part of the new evangelization.

In Novo Millenio Ineunte he asserts that education in prayer, including liturgical prayer, is essential, and that the liturgy should be given principal attention (34, 35). It is apparent that liturgical formation is a significant part of the new evangelization.

Equipping the Church for the Third Millenium

The importance of formation proposed in these recent papal documents is echoed in The 1994 Mississauga Statement. As asserted by the participants, “formation in every facet of the life of the church is necessary to forge a liturgical spirituality that will unite the Church amidst diversity as it faces the challenge of the third millennium” (2). The 1994
Mississauga Statement provides recommendations for on-going liturgical formation in seminaries, for new bishops and in parishes, and as such presents practical suggestions for the Catholic Church in Canada. Concretely applied in regions, dioceses and parishes, their implementation will be an important step in ensuring that the liturgical renewal begun nearly forty years ago continues in the spirit intended by the Council fathers. Beyond that it will be to take to heart the new evangelization that will launch us into the third millennium and beyond.

**Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

1. Have you ever read The 1994 Mississauga Statement?
2. How has it influenced your ministry or work in the Church?
3. What evidence do you see of its influence in your parish? In your diocese?
4. How would you rate the liturgical formation offered in your parish? In your diocese? In the local university? In high school? In elementary school? Give evidence.
5. In light of article 16 of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, how would you rate liturgical formation in the seminaries? In religious houses of study? Give evidence.
6. What is needed in your parish’s program of liturgical formation? In the schools? In the diocese? In the university? In the seminary?

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**Helpful Resources**

- **On Video**
  A set of five videos with valuable study guide for groups. Rather American in perspective. Excellent on-screen comments by people who were there.

- **On CD-Rom**
  Access people, places, texts (documents, speeches, daybooks, reports), themes and timeline of the Council.

- **In Print**

- **Back Issues of the Bulletin**
FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE
Additions to the Liturgical Calendar

The revised edition of the Roman Missal has included certain new commemorations. Some of these are already noted in the Liturgical Calendar and their texts published in A Supplement to the Sacramentary. Those indicated here will be included in the next edition of the Calendar. Texts will be published when available; in the meantime the appropriate Commons are used at eucharist and in the liturgy of the hours. The celebrations (except where noted) have the status of optional memorial.

- January 3: 
  Holy Name of Jesus
  The 1969 Norms lessened the number of "devotional feasts" in the Calendar. Some of these celebrations were suppressed; others were included in the section of Votive Masses or left to local calendars. The feast of the Holy Name, formerly celebrated on or about January 2, is restored to this date.

- February 8: 
  Josephine Bakhita, virgin
  A Sudanese girl, sold into slavery and brought to Italy, she was baptized and joined the Canosian Daughters of Charity in 1896.

- May 13: Our Lady of Fatima 
  Commemorates Mary under the title of the 1917 apparitions.

- May 21: 
  Christopher Magallanes, priest and martyr, and companions, martyrs
  Members of the Cristeros movement, they worked against the anti-Catholic Mexican government of the 1920's.

- May 22: 
  Rita of Cascia, religious
  Born in Umbria (1381), she refused to allow a vendetta after the violent murder of her husband.

- July 9: Augustine Zhao Rong, priest and martyr, and companions, martyrs
  A Chinese diocesan priest and his 119 companions were martyred in 1815.

- July 20: 
  Apollinarus, bishop and martyr
  Tradition has it that he was commissioned by St. Peter and sent as missionary bishop to Ravenna.

- July 24: 
  Sharbel Makhluf, priest
  A Lebanese monk and hermit. Ordained in 1858, he had particular devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

- August 9: Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, virgin and martyr
  Edith Stein, a convert from Judaism, was a major force in German intellectual life. She died in Auschwitz in 1942.

- September 12: 
  Holy Name of Mary
  Restored to this date.

- September 23: 
  Pio of Pietreclina, priest — memorial
  Born in 1887, "Padre Pio" was a spiritual advisor whose life was devoted to the eucharist and prayer. (This memorial was added after publication of the new edition of the Roman Missal.)

- November 25: Catherine of Alexandria, virgin and martyr
  A fourth century woman of learning, she preached the gospel in Alexandria, Egypt.
Forty years ago, the Second Vatican Council called for a revision of the calendar. Lest the feasts of the saints take precedence over the feasts commemorating the very mysteries of salvation, many of them should be left to be celebrated by a particular Church or nation or religious family; those only should be extended to the universal Church that commemorate saints of truly universal significance (Constitution on the Liturgy [CSL], 111).

The result, continuing the work of Pope John XXIII's 1960 revision, was a new "General Calendar" published in 1969.

The Martyrology and the Calendar

The new calendar transferred some celebrations, combined or deleted others, and gave still others the status of votive masses. Lent and the last days of Advent were to be kept clear of feasts of the saints. There were some interesting consequences. St. Christopher (July 25) was removed from the general calendar; letters to liturgy offices inquired if St. Christopher medals still "worked" and what to do about parishes bearing his name (including one reply that the letterhead could always read "Mr. Christopher"). At the heart of this question, current again, is the relationship between the Martyrology (the list of saints) and the Calendar (the feasts commemorated in the universal or particular Church).

Pope John Paul II has raised an unprecedented number of men and women "to the altar," often to great acclaim. But publicity is not the same as significance. Some new saints are included in the universal calendar, while the majority is left to local Churches. This distinction often leads to confusion, especially when a region or group has a devotion to a particular saint not included in the calendar.

To return to Christopher, the commentary on the 1969 Calendar reads:

The memorial of Christopher, which entered the Roman Calendar in 1550, is not a part of the ancient Roman tradition. It is now left to particular calendars. Although the Acta of the life of Christopher are legendary, the existence of his cult is very old.

At the same time, a reply to the question of his place as titular of a parish indicates:

Every church retains its title and celebrates the corresponding feast even if the General Calendar no longer carries the title (Notitiae 5 [1969] 404, no. 18).

Not every saint is celebrated with a universal feast day.

Particular Calendars

The liturgical year is governed by the general calendar of the Roman Rite, issued in 1969 and revised occasionally, notably in the new edition of the Roman Missal. In practice, this calendar is a reference document. Each local Church (and religious community) publishes its own "particular calendar" after receiving approval of the Holy See. The Canadian (particular) calendar was approved in 1999 and is published for each year as the Liturgical Calendar.

Kenneth Pearce is a priest of the Archdiocese of Toronto and currently edits the Liturgical Calendar for the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.
This calendar contains the specific celebrations for the dioceses of Canada. It notes that contrary to the general calendar, "Canadian Martyrs" is celebrated on September 26 rather than October 19. It includes saints proper to Canada (e.g. Marguerite Bourgeoys and Bishop Laval) and celebrations of the blessed (e.g. Brother André and Kateri Tekakwitha). It indicates feasts for particular dioceses such as Elizabeth Seton, in Halifax. Just as these feasts would not be found in the calendars of other countries, so feasts that might be important elsewhere (which might even include St. Patrick), will not find a mention here—except as "optional memorials" or as celebrations to be organized by individual parishes or communities. That "except" is important.

Each particular calendar is approved for a country or region, for a diocese, or for a religious institute (Instruction on the Revision of Particular Calendars (1970), 13). The local area does not simply decide what is to be celebrated; the approval of the Holy See or the local bishop is involved. The calendar itself (in the Table of Liturgical Days) provides that each diocese will celebrate its patron(s) and those saints and blesseds with special connection; each parish will celebrate the anniversary of its dedication, its titular feast and those memorials proper to it. National patrons are to be included if not already in the calendar.

What about Saints Not in the General Calendar?
The General Instruction provides that on weekdays of Ordinary Time (and on certain other days) "the priest can celebrate either the Mass of the weekday or that of any Saint inscribed that day in the Roman Martyrology" (Notification on Proper Calendars (1997) no. 33). This is not an invitation to invent a personal calendar; in fact the priest is enjoined to consider the larger good of the faithful and not impose his own personal preference (GIRM, no. 316). But there is a framework for local celebrations where there is particular need or devotion and when the general calendar permits. The same instruction notes:

[O]ften it will be better to create a celebration limited to whichever locality is more closely tied to the Blessed or Saint (28).

Thus, while a priest or parish cannot simply replace the liturgy of the day, local devotion or need might warrant a particular celebration. Also, like-minded communities are invited to join for one celebration rather than multiplying the number of individual events. Religious communities, for example, have their own proper calendars; people are free to celebrate with them in their churches, so that "it is in no way necessary that such celebrations ... be also added to diocesan calendars" (35).

Parishes or groups may wish to celebrate a particular saint by virtue of a geographical, historical or devotional connection. The Martyrology provides the appropriate date, even if it is not in the general Calendar. If the season permits and if no other feast is mandated, the celebration may take place, using the texts from the "commons" of the missal (and even of the lectionary). Thus, a celebration honouring Our Lady of Good Counsel (April 26), patron of the Catholic Women's League (CWL), could be the occasion of an important regional gathering. The feast itself remains an optional memorial; CWL members would celebrate it locally, with appropriate solemnity as the calendar permits.

The Primacy of the General Calendar
Consideration should always be given to those who do not share a certain devotion; particular celebrations must not habitually replace the parish liturgy. The primacy of the general (particular) calendar is always respected; the community has a right to authenticity and to a noble simplicity in worship (CSL, 43). This includes the sense of the season and the flow of the continuous readings of ordinary time.

The liturgical year is central to the life of God's people for through it the Church "unfolds the whole mystery of Christ" so that "all may be filled with saving grace" (CSL, 102).
MUSIC FOR THE SUNDAY ASSEMBLY:
Year B: Trinity Sunday to the
21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
(June 15–August 24, 2003)

The following pages provide hymn suggestions from the Catholic Book of Worship III for the summer months in Year B. As David Jafelice pointed out in Bulletin #168, "The summer is a time when many people have holidays. Some travel for weeks at a time enjoying the warm summer weather. Others take weekend excursions or simply spend time at the cottage. Life in the parish slows down. Many parish groups stop meeting in the summer. The priest takes his vacation, the attendance at mass is down (or maybe swollen with visitors) and sometimes it's hard to find enough liturgical ministers to help at the weekend liturgies. Parish music resources can be thin as well.

You want to encourage good singing but it's harder when there are less people in the pews (or when the pews are filled with visitors), so …

• Keep it simple.
• Learn little, or no new music; wait to teach new repertoire when all the parishioners are back from summer vacations.
• Use widely familiar repertoire; it is helpful to repeat hymns over a few Sundays.
• Make it hospitable for visitors by avoiding pieces that are unique to your parish.
• Repeat new music that was learned earlier in the year if appropriate."

The Character of These Sundays

In addition to the solemnities Trinity Sunday (June 15) and the Body and Blood of Christ (June 22), the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul (June 29) is celebrated during this period.

A special aspect of this portion of Year B—the year of Mark—is the five-week period (17th-21st Sundays) given to the "bread of life discourse" from chapter 6 of the Gospel of John. It requires some careful attention in music planning, which will be spelled out in more detail below.

The intervening Sundays (14th-16th Sundays) deal with chapter 6 of the Gospel of Mark.

Hymn Suggestions

Though hymns are specifically suggested for Entrance, Preparation and Recessional, many (if not most of them) are interchangeable; for Entrance and Recessional try to choose a hymn of praise that is appropriate for a procession.

If your community does not know any of the suggested hymns for a particular Sunday, you can never go wrong by choosing a familiar hymn of praise to God or the Trinity; and that goes for every Sunday in the Church year.

One alternative to singing an unfamiliar hymn is to change the tune to one your assembly knows well. Just be careful when choosing a different tune, and sing through the whole text to make sure there are no strange results. See the hymnal’s metrical index found in both, pew and choir editions of the hymnal (700).
The Communion Procession for All Summer Sundays
During the procession to communion, always sing a communion hymn. See the list below. The hymn begins "when the priest takes communion" (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 56i).

Suggested Processionals for Summer Sundays

Entrance

542 Canticle of the Sun  
562 O Bless the Lord  
564 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty  
577 Come, Rejoice Before Your Maker  
578 All People That on Earth Do Dwell  
580 Rejoice in God  
591 God is Alive!  
593 O Praise the Lord, Sing Unto God

Preparation of Altar and Gifts

422 Sing We Praises to the Father  
482 Eye Has Not Seen  
511 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You  
531 For the Beauty of the Earth  
543 All Creatures of Our God and King  
544 O Sing to God a Joyful Song  
555 Holy God, We Praise Your Name  
557 Let Heaven Rejoice  
563 Sing a New Song  
565 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven  
571 Praise the Lord with the Sound of Trumpet  
613 A Living Hope

Communion

602 Eat This Bread  
603 Gift of Finest Wheat  
610 Taste and See  
611 Take and Eat

Recessional

345 City of God  
508 Go to the World!  
514 Forth in the Peace of Christ We Go  
691 Lord, You Give the Great Commission  
521 Now Let Us from This Table Rise  
533 Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Trinity Sunday

Processionals

These hymns are also appropriate, but they must be sung through to the end.

361 Great God of Mercy  
421 O God, Almighty Father  
422 Sing We Praises to the Father  
466 Father, Lord of Earth and Heaven

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Responsorial Psalm
If the assigned psalm setting (#221) is too difficult for the summer assembly, try using the refrain of #99 with the verses of the day.

Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)

Processionals
These hymns are also appropriate.
67 Ubi Caritas
376 Where True Love and Charity Are Found/ Ubi Caritas
424 I Come with Joy

Responsorial Psalm
If the assigned psalm setting (#221) is too difficult for the summer assembly, try using the refrain of #66, which should be familiar from the Mass of the Lord’s Supper.

Sequence
The sequence (#693) is sung before the gospel acclamation. The lectionary also provides a shorter version—the last two verses. It is omitted if not sung by all. This text can be sung to any 87 87 87 metered tune. See the “Metrical Index” (#700).

Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul

Entrance and Preparation of gifts and Altar
450 Around the Throne a Glorious Band
455 By All Your Saints Still Striving

Recessional
508 Go to the World!

Responsorial Psalm
If the assigned psalm setting (#221) is too difficult for the summer assembly, try using the refrain of #118 or #130 with the verses of the day.

14th–16th Sundays

Responsorial Psalm
If the assigned psalm settings for the 14th and 15th Sundays (#152 and #155) are too difficult for the summer assembly, try using the refrain of #118 or #130 with the verses of the day, especially if one of these was used for the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul. For the 16th Sunday use any familiar responsorial setting of Ps. 23.

17th–21st Sundays

Responsorial Psalm
For the 17th–18th Sundays, if the assigned psalms are too difficult for the summer assembly, use the refrain from the setting of Ps. 34 that you have chosen for the 19th–21st Sundays with the verses of the day. For the 19th–21st Sundays, the Church has assigned Ps. 34. The hymnal offers a different musical setting for each week (#167, 170, 173), but it is probably pastorally wiser to choose one and use it for all three weeks. The refrain of #55 will also fit. You may use the refrain of #610 but you will have to compose a chant tone for the verses of the day. Whatever setting you choose for the refrain, it is important to sing the verses assigned to the particular day, because they reflect the deepening theology expressed in the gospel text.
We are told that it takes one hundred years for the vision of an ecumenical council to be fully received in the Church. 2002 marks 40 years since the beginning of Vatican II. We're not quite halfway towards full reception, but 40 years is a wonderful biblical number inviting us to take stock, regroup, and forge ahead.

It would seem to me that it is in the area of liturgical reform that most progress has been made in the post-conciliar Church. Celebration, participation, proclamation, music, symbol, gesture have all taken on new life, and, for this we need to be most grateful. We've come a long way from "Kumbayah"!

The Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy states that the liturgy is the summit and source of the entire life of the Church. Both summit and source are relational: summit of something, source of something, and it is here, I believe, that we face the present challenge.

Much has happened in our cultures since the end of the Council. Great attempts are made to define us as consumers, isolated from one another, accountable only to ourselves. God is more and more marginalized in our society and this really affects the way we see ourselves. How do we find practical, effective ways to define ourselves by the power of the mysteries we celebrate? Liturgy must flow into gratitude, prayer, contemplation, proclaiming our identity as Christ in the world. Liturgy is, after all, a source.

Liturgy is also the summit of our Christian lives. Baptism, giving all of us a share in the one priesthood of Jesus, calls us to offer our lives as spiritual sacrifices to God. All our struggles toward conversion, fidelity in relationships, responsibility towards one another and to the earth, all of these are gathered together and offered to God in the eucharist, which is truly a summit. The more intentional we are in allowing God's Spirit to transform our daily lives, the more our lives are characterized by generous self-giving, the more truly we participate in the paschal mystery.

A significant challenge for the next 40 years: to help one another deepen our identity as disciples and to see the daily reality of discipleship as the gift we offer in and through Jesus in the eucharist. The sacred liturgy truly is the summit and source of our life in Christ.

James Weisgerber is archbishop of Winnipeg, MN and a member of the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy.
Networking

The following have been offered in response to our call for the sharing of resources produced by dioceses.

Canada
Available from: the Diocese of London, Ontario
• Litturgical Celebrations on Weekdays: The Mass, The "Communion Service," The Liturgy of the Hours – catechesis, rationale and guidelines
• The Liturgy of the Hours – catechesis, rationale and guidelines
• Morning Prayer – leader's and assembly editions
• Evening Prayer – leader's and assembly editions
Contact:
Christina Ronzio
Liturgy Office, Diocese of London
Box 2400, 155 Bruce St.
London, ON N6A 4G3

International
Available from: the Archdiocese of Melbourne, Australia
• The Summit – a magazine from the Office for Worship, containing articles on liturgy and the catechumenate, as well as weekly resources for breaking open the word
• Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: Forming Your Parish Team – a resource for the ongoing formation of the parish team
• The Christian Initiation of the Young – a lectionary-based resource in preparing the young for Christian initiation
Contact:
Elio Capra
SOB RCIA Coordinator,
Archdiocese of Melbourne
383 Alber Street
East Melbourne, Victoria 3002
Australia
Phone: (03) 9926 5677
Fax: (03) 9926 5767
Email: worship@melbourne.catholic.org.au

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  William Marrevee

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  Bernadette Gasslein

• The Ministry of Reconciliation:
  Word, Celebration, Pastoral Practice
  David Power

• Advent Christmas Epiphany:
  Celebrating the Whole Season
  Corbin Eddy

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  Patty Fowler & Miriam Martin

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