national bulletin on "Liturgy"

Reconsidering Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and Parish Liturgy Committees and Living Nostrae Aetate
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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The primary focus of Bulletin 177 is the revitalization of diocesan liturgical commissions. We are grateful to Sister Sheila Finnerty for sharing her native and acquired wisdom with regard to this topic. Flowing from the work of diocesan commissions are parish liturgy committees; Bulletin 177 also offers a strategy for forming a new committee or re-energizing an existing one.

“Canadian Realities,” makes an appearance in this issue. This semi-regular feature deals with thought-provoking events and practices across Canada. In this issue the story of the Abraham Festival (Peterborough, 2003) is told from the perspective of three participants.

A new feature to look for is “Et Cetera” which will address selected FAQ’s received at the National Liturgy Office. A second new feature follows the “The Last Word”: “Documents: Abbreviations, Titles, and Sources” will assist readers who want to dig deeper into Church documents referred to in our articles.

Among our regular segments readers will find:

• new guidelines from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith regarding the use of low-gluten hosts and mustum,
• music suggestions for the Sunday eucharist,
• book reviews from two guest reviewers,
• “Your Turn,” once again offered to encourage your feedback, and
• a message from Albert LeGatt, bishop of the Diocese of Saskatoon.

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RECONSIDERING DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSIONS AND PARISH LITURGY COMMITTEES

Part One: What Do the Documents Say?

What Did the Council Say?

From the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy:

41. The bishop is to be looked on as the high priest of his flock, the faithful's life in Christ in some way deriving from and depending on him. Therefore all should hold in great esteem the liturgical life of the diocese centred around the bishop, especially in the cathedral church; they must be convinced that the preeminent manifestation of the Church is present in the full, active participation of all God's holy people in these liturgical celebrations, especially in the same eucharist, in a single prayer, at one altar at which the bishop presides, surrounded by his college of priests and by his ministers.

42. But because it is impossible for the bishop always and everywhere to preside over the whole flock in his Church, he cannot do otherwise than establish lesser groupings of the faithful. Among these the parishes, set up locally under a pastor taking the place of the bishop, are the most important: in some manner they represent the visible Church established throughout the world.

And therefore both in attitude and in practice the liturgical life of the parish and its relationship to the bishop must be fostered among the faithful and clergy; efforts must be made toward a lively sense of community within the parish, above all in the shared celebration of the Sunday Mass.

43. Zeal for the promotion and restoration of the liturgy is rightly held to be a sign of the providential dispositions of God in our time, a movement of the Holy Spirit in his Church. Today it is a distinguishing mark of the church's life, indeed of the whole tenor of contemporary religious thought and action.

So that this pastoral-liturgical action may become even more vigorous in the Church, the council decrees what follows.

44. It is advisable that the competent, territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in article 22, §2 set up a liturgical commission, to be assisted by experts in liturgical science, music, art, and pastoral practice. As far as possible the commission should be aided by some kind of institute for pastoral liturgy, consisting of persons eminent in these matters and including the laity as circumstances suggest. Under the direction of the aforementioned territorial ecclesiastical authority, the commission is to regulate pastoral-liturgical action throughout the territory and to promote studies and necessary experiments whenever there is a question of adaptations to be proposed to the Apostolic See.

45. For the same reason every diocese is to have a commission on the liturgy, under the direction of the
Reconsidering Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and Parish Liturgy Committees

bishop, for promoting the liturgical apostolate.

Sometimes it may be advisable for several dioceses to form among themselves one single commission, in order to promote the liturgy by means of shared consultation.

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

These three commissions must work in closest collaboration; indeed it will often be best to fuse the three of them into one single commission.

Unpacking the Council's Mandate

Article 41
It's always interesting to notice where the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy uses the word "therefore" and its synonyms, e.g. "accordingly" and "hence." The links made between stated assumptions and the actions called for by them are sometimes astounding and consistently challenging. Article 41 begins by asserting the role of the bishop as high priest of his flock and acknowledging his personal impact on the spiritual well-being of the faithful in his diocese. Then comes the great "therefore." With this word the council fathers say that if we believe the bishop's role and impact to be as stated then the liturgical life of the diocese must be a high priority.

Article 42
Article 42 offers a picture of the parish as somewhat of an echo or microcosm of the diocese, in fact, more accurately, of the whole Church; it also has a great "therefore." If we believe this picture to be true, the council fathers say, then three things must be fostered at the parish level: the liturgical life of the parish, the relationship with the bishop, and a lively sense of community. This sense of community is to be evident "above all" at Sunday mass.

Article 43
Article 43 begins a new section of the constitution. Whereas articles 41 and 42 addressed the "promotion of liturgical life in the diocese and parish," articles 43-45 address the "promotion of pastoral-liturgical action." It opens with a strong claim that zealous work to promote and restore the liturgy is:

- a sign of God's providence in our time,
- a movement of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and
- a distinguishing mark of the Church's life.

It closes by stating that if this claim is true, then certain actions are called for. The actions are spelled out in article 44.

Article 44
Article 44 advises that national conferences of bishops set up a liturgical commission to:

- regulate pastoral-liturgical action,
- promote studies, and
- promote necessary experiments adaptation of the liturgy.

This national commission is to be assisted by experts in various disciplines that impact the liturgy and by an "institute" for pastoral liturgy made up of such experts both lay and ordained. (In Canada this national commission is called the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy; in the United States, the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy.)

Article 45
Article 45 is related to article 44 in the same way as 42 is to 41. It mandates a liturgical commission in every diocese, using strong "is to have" language. It even offers a solution to those dioceses where,
for whatever reason, it is not possible to form a commission: enter into a relationship with other dioceses to form a joint commission.

Summary

From the very outset of their work, the bishops of the Second Vatican Council realized that the liturgy would play a foundational role in the renewal of the Church (CSL, 1). In the above articles of the Constitution on the Liturgy, they mandate structures at the national, diocesan, and parish levels that will ensure the promotion and renewal of the liturgy. They see these highly focussed structures as so essential that communities that cannot form them should join with other communities for shared consultation.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What does the manner of celebrating diocesan liturgies (e.g., the Chrism Mass, the Rite of Election) say about character and life of the diocesan Church?
2. What evidence can you find that liturgy is a high priority in your diocese?
3. What evidence can you find that liturgy, community, and the relationship to the bishop are being fostered in your parish?
4. How strong is the "zeal for the promotion and restoration of the liturgy" in your parish? In your diocese?
5. How aware have you been of the work of your national liturgical commission? How have you shown your support?
6. Does your diocese have a liturgical commission? How have you shown your support for its work?
7. If the diocese has no commission, why not? What is being done to fulfil the council's mandate for the pastoral care of the liturgy in the diocese?
8. Does your parish have a liturgy committee? How have you shown your support for its work?
9. If the parish has no committee, why not? What is being done to fulfil the council's mandate for the pastoral care of the liturgy in the parish?

What Did the Implementation Commission Say?

Inter Oecumenici, the September 1964 instruction of the Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (the Concilium) further delineates the work of the liturgical commission.

On the Liturgical Commission of the Assembly of Bishops

45. The territorial authority may properly entrust the following to the commission:
   a. to carry out studies and experiments in keeping with the norms of the Constitution article 40, §§ 1 and 2;
   b. to further practical initiatives for the whole region that will foster liturgical life and the application of the Constitution on the Liturgy;
   c. to prepare studies and the resources required as a result of decrees of the plenary assembly of bishops;
   d. to control pastoral liturgy in the whole nation, to see to the application of decrees of the plenary assembly, and to report in the matters to the assembly;
   e. to further frequent consultation and promote collaboration with
regional associations involved with scripture, catechetics, pastoral care, music and art, as well as with every kind of lay religious association.

On the Diocesan Liturgical Commission

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

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

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

c. to suggest and promote practical programs of every kind that may contribute to the advancement of liturgical life, especially in the interest of aiding priests labouring in the Lord’s vineyard;

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

e. to see to it that programs in the diocese designed to promote liturgy go forward with the cooperation and mutual help of other groups along the lines mentioned above (45, §e) regarding the liturgical commission of the assembly of bishops.

Unpacking the Mandate of Inter Oecumenici

*Inter Oecumenici, 45*

In article 45 of *Inter Oecumenici*, the implementation commission gives to the national episcopal commissions for liturgy the work of conducting studies and experiments for the local adaptation of the liturgy. It further authorizes them to undertake practical initiatives and issue decrees that promote the liturgical life in a context of broadly based consultation.

*Inter Oecumenici, 47*

Article 47 gives a very clear picture of what is expected of the diocesan liturgical commission. Their work must be carried on in light of their familiarity with the state of liturgy in the diocese and of current studies and developments elsewhere. They are to implement the bishop’s directives with regard to furthering the liturgical renewal and design step-by-step programs for the growth of parishes in the liturgical life.

**Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

1. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has a strong history of piloting new rites and other liturgical documents across the country before publishing a final edition. Responses from the pilot group are considered in the refining of the visual impact and other aspects of the book. In your experience how well do the Canadian books meet pastoral needs? How user-friendly are they?

2. In your experience how successful has the Catholic Church in Canada been at balancing national consistency with local adaptation?

3. How would you characterize the rapport between your parish and the diocesan commission?

4. To what extent does your parish participate in programs offered by the diocesan liturgical commission?

5. Has your parish ever requested the services and/or resources of the liturgical commission?
The State of the Question
Each year, in each region across Canada, the diocesan directors of liturgy and the chairs of liturgical commissions meet, along with their expert consultants, to discuss regional needs. In listening to reports of liturgical activity in the dioceses there is always a sadness to hear of the closing of a liturgy office or the death of a liturgical commission. Sometimes the sadness is mitigated when it is announced that these bodies have been subsumed into a more generalized umbrella entity—the “spiritual life” committee or the “adult faith” office—but it is still undeniable that the liturgy, and the people who celebrate it, suffer from these reductions and cutbacks.

On the other hand, many of the surviving directors and chairs of commissions experience frustration and fatigue brought on by the difficulties met in attempting to have an impact on the quality of parish liturgy. Since 1997 the Church in Canada has lived through a series of special years: the years of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the Father, in preparation for the Great Jubilee Year 2000; and on the heels of all that there came World Youth Day in Toronto in 2002. In many places, already thinly stretched diocesan personnel were commandeered for the work required for these special years. These people may find themselves in 2004 with a faded vision of “ordinary times.” It is also possible that personnel turnover has been such that the living memory of the ordinary times of a diocesan liturgy commission has grown dim. There is now a call for a fresh vision for the liturgy commission.

In this issue of the Bulletin we challenge everyone involved in the liturgical life of the Church to reconsider the liturgical commission. It is our hope to re-energize faltering commissions, to fuel the watchfires of those awaiting the revival of a defunct commission, and to encourage the establishment of commissions where none has ever existed. In a conversation with Margaret Bick, editor of the National Bulletin on Liturgy, Sister Sheila Finnerty, gsc, former director of liturgy for the diocese of Ottawa, shared the vision that guided her work.

The Director of Liturgy
Sister Finnerty began our conversation with the story of her experience of the birth of the Ottawa liturgical commission. Her position as director of liturgy was initially a part-time one, which soon became full-time. From the beginning she saw the position as one of focussing and coordinating the work of liturgical renewal in the parishes. Sister Finnerty’s recommendations for choosing a director of liturgy are clear and demanding. The director needs lots of pastoral experience and must be:

- a person of faith,
- a visionary,
- knowledgeable about the liturgy to the extent of understanding the theological and pastoral reasoning underlying the statements in the documents,
- able to take a leadership role in the ongoing formation of commission members, and
- available for parish formation work on weekends and evenings.

Sister Finnerty began her work as director of liturgy by visiting parishes throughout the diocese for Sunday worship, in order to meet parish staff, assemble a picture of the state of the liturgy, and to discern parish (or diocesan) needs.” She recommends that new directors draw up a “get
acquainted” visitation schedule. Follow-up visits can be used to inform parish staff of services offered by the office and the commission and also to keep in touch with changing needs.

During her tenure as director Sister Finnerty made a point of getting to know workshop participants, especially those who came out consistently. She kept in touch with those who were bringing the fruits of the workshops back to their parishes and were asserting some leadership there.

Armed with this initial picture of the state of liturgy, as well as with some idea of where the gifts lie, she approached the bishop with a proposal for the formation of a commission to assist in the promotion and renewal of the liturgy in the diocese. From among the clergy and laypeople she met in her work, Sister Finnerty nominated a group whom the bishop confirmed.

The Crew: Finding the Right People

Commission members have a two-fold mandate: to bring forward the needs of parishes and to serve the parishes by assisting someway in liturgical formation throughout the diocese. Sister Finnerty saw the commission members as people who were present and at work in the parishes, and able and willing to reach out and get to know their parish and other parishes better.

Commission members may be sent into their own parishes first to “stir the pot,” to be the advance guard with regard to new liturgical initiatives. They can make suggestions and, with the support of the pastor, draw on the resources of the commission to implement initiatives locally before taking them to the diocese-at-large. The nature of the commission’s work requires that members be available on some weekends and evenings.

Sister Finnerty stressed the importance of openness and flexibility in the personalities of the commission members. Humility to acknowledge that there is much to learn about the liturgy and a willingness to put the time and effort into study of the liturgy are also basic requirements. All members of the commission are expected to engage in professional development. It is essential that either the director or someone on the commission take responsibility for the ongoing formation of the commission members.

The commission should be large enough so that the work is not burdensome on individuals, but small enough so as not to be unwieldy—the Ottawa commission had about ten members. Sister Finnerty asked for a three- to five-year commitment from her first members. Together, the infant commission decided that after the initial period, two members would be replaced each year by others nominated by the director in consultation with other commission members and approved by the bishop. This would ensure freshness and guard against burnout. The final addition to the commission should be the diocesan director of religious education or whoever has responsibility for initiation in the diocese.

The Archdiocese of Ottawa has just over one hundred parishes. I asked Sister Finnerty how she would adapt the structure of the commission in significantly larger dioceses, say of 150 or 200 or more parishes. Her first response, which is supported by several pastoral-liturgical resources, was that the larger the diocese, the greater the need for a director. Assuming that the parishes were already grouped in some way for administrative purposes, she suggested having a separate commission and (sub)director or liturgy coordinator for each group or region, with the diocesan director coordinating their efforts. Together they would function as a board. Only in this way can the intimacy and rapport that is essential to the task be maintained. But even in this adapted situation, the regional directors must have the educational and pastoral background required to make pastoral-liturgical decisions, a strong sense of working for the
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good of the Church, and enjoy a relationship of trust with the bishop and one another.

The Basic Mission:
To Enable and Nourish Parish Liturgy Committees

Guided by the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Sister Finnerty saw the development of parish liturgy committees as the first and fundamental priority of the commission. With an educated and empowered liturgy committee in place, each parish would eventually be able to:

• make sound decisions for establishing local adaptations and customs, and
• train liturgical ministers.

In order to form potential parish liturgy committee members, broad-based liturgical education was necessary throughout the diocese. (The commission itself experienced every workshop (led by the director) before they offered it to the parishes.) Workshops were offered as often as needed to draw representatives from each parish. This meant both careful record keeping and attentiveness to those who participated. Sister Finnerty saw it as her responsibility as director to get to know the people who attended.

The parish liturgy committee cannot make decisions on the basis of personal likes, dislikes, and whims, nor on what someone saw done in the parish they visited during their last vacation. Sister Finnerty made it clear to those in attendance that the knowledge offered in the workshops would be essential if they were to serve their parish communities effectively.

The initial content of the workshops was oriented to the Sunday eucharist and the liturgical year, not to ministry formation. Sister Finnerty considered it essential to learn to live the liturgical year: “If it’s not lived, it does not exist.” The parish liturgy committee needs to understand both the Sunday liturgy and the way it plays itself out throughout the year before ministry-specific action is taken. The wisdom of this decision has since seen support from the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults:

A suitable catechesis is provided by priests or deacons, or by catechists and others of the faithful, planned to be gradual and complete in its coverage, accommodated to the liturgical year, and solidly supported by celebrations of the word (RCIA, 75, §1),

and indirectly from the General Directory for Catechesis, which presents the baptismal catechumenate as “the inspiration of catechesis in the Church” (90-91).

The Anchor:
The Liturgical Documents

“Stick with the documents” was Sister Finnerty’s motto. This reinforced the spirit of trust both between the director and the bishop and between the commission and the parishes. The commission must remember that it serves the spirit of the documents as well as the people. If complaints came to the bishop about what was being presented in the workshops, his question to Sister Finnerty was: “What do the documents say?”

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and the General Instruction of the Roman Missal together, then as now, served as the anchor for the renewal of the liturgy and the formation of the people of God. The commission spent time at each meeting studying the documents and opening up their intent and implications. Sister Finnerty’s response to parishes experiencing conflict over the renewal or over parish practice was to offer workshops that examined the documents as they addressed the problem areas. Her policy regarding conflict situations was: “Never do nothing. What is possible? Let us move step-by-step.”

Subsequent documents may refine the principles of the constitution or add detailing to what it calls us to, but the relevance of the constitution does not decrease as time goes on and experience
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uncovers new needs. The goal of the diocesan liturgical commission is to keep alive the vision of the constitution by providing ongoing formation for all the sacraments.

Workshops
The “Sunday Eucharist” workshops began with a plenary presentation on: Sunday as the Day of the Lord; the paschal mystery as the heart of the celebration; the joyous character of the eucharist; the primacy of the gathered assembly; and the importance of participation, etc. Following a break in which questions and points of interest were pursued and relationships forged, breakout sessions were held focussing on topics such as the liturgy of the word, proclaiming the word, the liturgy of the eucharist, music, engaging the assembly, etc.

The “Sunday Eucharist” workshops continued over a whole year and were repeated as necessary in the following years. Workshops were repeated often enough that some commission members were able to become presenters. Not everyone on the commission needs to be able to give workshops, but they must bring the needs of the parishes to the attention of the diocese and the resources of the diocese back to the parishes in some way.

Some Early Priorities
The “Sunday Eucharist” workshops dealt with everything within the liturgy; however, excellence in proclamation¹, communion from the table (rather than from the tabernacle)² and communion under both kinds³ were early priorities. These principles were presented in the workshops as the ideal; then the commission worked with parishes to help implement them. Implementation also called for ministry workshops.

Excellent proclamation requires training in personal and technical preparation and good vocal skills. Maintenance of high quality proclamation requires parish structures within which readers may rehearse and hone their skills, much as choirs do. Communion from the table simply requires better, more intentional planning.

The introduction of communion from the cup, since it involves a change in behaviour on the part of the whole assembly, requires careful preparation, not only of the liturgical ministers, but also intentional formation for parishioners. Sister Finnerty found that introducing the practice at weekday masses gained the support of that core of people and gave the parish staff an opportunity to gradually become comfortable with their ministry.

She gave the example of one parish that began in the fall to prepare for full implementation of communion from the cup. Throughout September, October and November they began formation around the topic of the importance of the communion from the cup. During Advent the cup was offered at weekday masses. The ministers of communion, who had not previously been receiving from the cup on Sundays, began to do so at this time. The whole parish was being prepared for full implementation beginning at the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday. From then on communion from the cup would be offered at every celebration of eucharist.

As workshops probed more and more deeply into the Sunday celebration, the “work” aspect became stronger. These events addressed how to prepare effectively for the liturgy of the word, how to form a parish liturgy team, and other topics. Participants worked together in parish groups, brainstorming and sharing

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1 LMI, 4-7, 14, 55.
2 CSL, 55.
3 CSL, 55; GIRM, 240. GIRM 2000, 281.
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their insights into what they were learning. They tackled questions of:
• What are the needs of the parish?
• How do we bring this about step-by-step?
• What do the parishes need from the diocesan commission?

Seasonal Workshops

After a year of working on the Sunday celebration, the next year was spent on the unfolding of the liturgical year. Naturally the commission members were led through each experience before the workshops were presented across the diocese. As the seasons progressed—Advent, Christmas, winter Ordinary Time, Lent, Triduum, Easter, and summer Ordinary Time—participants returned to reflect on the flow of the Christian year. Participants began by exploring their own experience of the season. Then they plunged into the readings of the season to draw out its theological underpinnings. They reflected on why it was important to celebrate the season well, and on the role of music and the environment in supporting and enriching the season. Then participants were invited to take their learning back to the parish-at-large.

To support this initiative, paintings for each season, which would be reproduced in poster form for each parish, were commissioned to be a visual symbol uniting the whole diocese in its observance of the year. This set of paintings was used in the parishes year after year and became a marker of the progress of the Church’s year.

Staying Grounded

Prayer must be a part of the life of the commission. In addition to prayer at each gathering, the members benefitted from an annual daylong retreat together. The spiritual staff of a retreat house may prepare a service of morning prayer for the group, after which the group spent the rest of the day planning for the coming year. This task arises naturally out of the group’s acquaintance with the needs of their own and other parishes and from feedback in the workshops.

The Never-Ending Journey: Expanding the Scope of the Commission

Once the development of parish liturgy committees was well underway, the commission turned its attention to the sacrament of baptism. While a subcommittee (made up of a handful from the commission plus additional persons) continued to work with nascent liturgy committees, the commission’s focus for the year became the formation of parish teams who would work with parents seeking baptism for infants.

In following years, the topics of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, music, and first communion and confirmation for children baptized in infancy (jointly with the religious education office) were dealt with; other rites came later.

Asked what the established diocesan commission could provide for parishes with regard to the other rites, Sister Finnerty had several suggestions.
• Funerals should now be on the front burner for commissions. High profile funerals and innovative practices in the funeral industry have brought several pastoral issues to the fore.
• Rituals in the pastoral care of the sick have been in the background for too long. Too often the sacrament is celebrated only quasi-privately. Too many still look upon it as “the last rites.” Pastoral care personnel and liturgists need to work together to prepare ministers who work with the sick and the dying and in educating parishioners with regard to the rites.
• Musicians need assistance in choosing music for funerals and weddings.
• Parishes need policies and resources for preparing ministers for special liturgies such as weddings and funerals.
• Recent policy decisions in Rome with regard to the sacrament of penance have raised serious pastoral issues in
some places. The diocesan commission could help parishes to work through some challenging transitions.

- The commission can also provide material to assist in preparing various aspects of penance celebrations: homilies, music, and appropriate and meaningful litanies for the examination of conscience.

Concluding Remarks

Guiding Principles
Throughout our conversation Sister Sheila Finnerty kept bringing us back to the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The commission must constantly hold this foundational document in view to keep its work on track and to keep the vision and spirit of the document alive and thriving in the diocese.

Her second theme was the need for careful and thorough preparation. Take the time to move step by step. Engage people in the action of faith. If the work is done well at the diocesan level, the liturgical renewal will happen in the parishes.

Troubling Developments
Sister Finnerty is deeply troubled by the demise of diocesan commissions across Canada. She has challenging questions about the phenomenon.

- What is the vision for liturgy in the diocese?
- What pastoral planning went into the decision to discontinue the office of liturgy or the commission?
- The Sunday liturgy is the primary medium of evangelization. Without a commission, who will see to the pastoral care of the liturgy? Who will attend to this focus of the liturgy across the diocese?
- How will ongoing formation—of baptismal teams, adult initiation teams, marriage preparation personnel, and those who prepare celebrations of penance and ordination—occur?
- How will ongoing formation occur for those preparing and celebrating with children?
- Has the alternative in article 45—a bi- or multi-diocesan commission—been attempted?

Unsung Heroes
We cannot close this article without offering our sincere gratitude to those who are doing the work of the liturgical renewal: the directors of liturgy, the members of commissions, those working with or without the help of a director and/or commission. The harvest is indeed plenty and the labourers are few and heavily burdened, but God will be praised!

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

For Commission Members
1. How would you describe the energy within the commission?
2. What have been the goals of the commission in the last three years?
3. Does the commission have a plan for liturgical formation in the diocese for the next three years?
4. How does the commission divide its work among the members?
5. What formation opportunities have commission members been offered? What formation opportunities have commission members taken advantage of? Have any members attended the Summer School for Liturgy in Edmonton or the Summer Institute in Pastoral Liturgy in Ottawa? Does anyone have formal post-graduate education in liturgical studies?
6. How well do commission members know parishes other than their own?
### For Those Forming a New Commission

7. Where is the liturgical expertise in the diocese? How will the experts be drawn into the work of the commission? How will the presence of experts within the diocese be ensured? For small dioceses, can you identify experts with whom you might form a relationship?

8. How will potential commission members be formed?

9. How will commission members become acquainted with the needs of the parishes? How will links with every parish be forged?

10. How will the commission stay in communication with the bishop?

11. What will be the priorities of the commission for the first three years?

### Part Three:

**Reconsidering Parish Liturgy Committees: More than a Decorating Committee**

With regard to parish life, article 42 of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* says,

Both in attitude and in practice the liturgical life of the parish and its relationship to the bishop must be fostered among the faithful and clergy; efforts must be made toward a lively sense of community within the parish, above all in the shared celebration of the Sunday Mass.

The council fathers understood clearly that these things (the liturgical life of the parish, the relationship with the bishop, and the lively sense of community) do not just happen; they need fostering and a great deal of effort. Many well-meaning pastors wish they had a vibrant liturgy committee to work with to address these issues. All too often, however, the committee remains in the wish stage. Overwhelmed by attending to the immediate, to the hounds at their heels, pastors end up leaving the striking of the liturgical committee to some mythical future or limiting its duties to that of a decorating committee.

This article will deal with the role of the parish liturgy committee in fostering the liturgical life and making the sense of community a visible reality at the Sunday liturgy and will suggest one way to begin to bring a liturgy committee to reality. For existing committees in need of re-energizing, it offers a path to renewal and revitalization.

**Beginnings**

As indicated in the preceding article about diocesan liturgical commissions (see p. 73), membership on the parish liturgy committee must be founded on sound liturgical formation. Before parishioners are invited on to the committee they must have a clear picture of the relationship of the committee to the documents of the
Reconsidering Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and Parish Liturgy Committees

Church and to the rest of the parish. Experience in one or more liturgical ministries is not enough. Once the committee has been formed, it's too late to discover that one of the members is out of step with the vision of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy or has some other agenda in mind.

If the diocese is not able to offer the broad-based liturgical education necessary for the formation of potential committee members as described by Sheila Finnerty in the above-mentioned article, the parish will have to cast a broader net to draw in resources. The regional liturgical conferences—the Atlantic Liturgical Conference, the Ontario Liturgical Conference, and the Western Conference for Liturgy—may be of assistance in connecting with resource personnel. Perhaps several parishes could join together in constructing this formation process. Evening and Saturday workshops on the Sunday liturgy and the liturgical year will draw participants who are willing to learn. Parish staff must get to know those who come and must begin to discern the gifts present in the community.

Once members have been identified, the parish is well-advised to begin to sponsor their attendance at the Summer Institute in Pastoral Liturgy (St. Paul University, Ottawa, Ontario) or the Summer School in Liturgical Studies (Newman Theological College, Edmonton, Alberta). Existing or potential members of the parish initiation team should also be part of this education process.

**Membership**

The size of the committee will depend on the size of the parish and the work at hand. Like the diocesan commission, the parish liturgy committee should, from the outset, include a liaison with the initiation team. There may be wisdom in starting with a small group and a limited task. In fact, the committee may expand over time, especially through the development of subcommittees. Parishes that share a pastor will need to work out the relationship among the local liturgy committees; they might reach a point where amalgamation is possible, comfortable and even advantageous for all concerned.

**Begin with the Lived Reality**

**Observe**

Because the work of the committee is based on parish need, a mechanism is required for discerning the strengths and weaknesses of the parish Sunday liturgy. It is tempting to simply look to preparing the stronger seasons as a beginning, but the challenges of the seasons serve to further exacerbate any existing problems and will complicate pastoral efforts. Start with Ordinary Time.

A simple observation process is a most useful starting point. Committee members and others who have attended liturgical education sessions can be trained for this first step.

Since the constitution asserted the “full, conscious and active participation of the faithful” as the “aim to be considered before all else,” the first level of observation should be oriented to that. “Liturgy” in Greek means “the work of the people.” What are the people in the pews doing throughout the liturgy? What are they supposed to be doing? Do they exhibit a “lively sense of community” as they gather? Do they turn to watch processions and other special actions? Do they sing the processional songs, the psalms, the acclamations? Do they listen to the readings and homily? What does their body language say during the singing, the readings, the homily, and the periods of silence? Do they share in communion from the cup? Do they exhibit a “lively sense of community” as they leave? Do they exhibit a “lively sense of community” at any point in the liturgy? And so on.

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1 CSL, 14.
Reconsidering Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and Parish Liturgy Committees

The second element of the observation must be the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. Every parish makes pastoral decisions concerning the rubrics of the GIRM. The observation process must take note of these for later analysis of their effectiveness.

**Analyze**

In the analysis phase, the committee sifts through the observation reports for strong and weak points. Don’t change any practice that is actively engaging people at this time. There may be terribly aberrant things happening that do engage the assembly, but we don’t want to remove them before we have given parishioners other avenues of equally strong participation and an understanding of why the practice is considered aberrant.

Observers may provide comments about, or the committee may be able to discern, what is promoting or hindering participation at each point in the mass. Is there something about the worship space that is hindering participation? Do devotional objects compete with the liturgical focal points? Does the arrangement of pews contribute to the sense of community? Is it clear that this assembly gathers around the altar, ambo, presidential chair, and font? Are there enough hymnals for everyone who comes? If a screen is used, can everyone see it regardless of where they are seated? What is the quality of the sound system? Are there acoustically dead zones in the space? And so on.

A myriad of circumstances contribute to the level of participation by the people in the Sunday celebration. To a certain extent, every liturgical minister may be considered a “minister of participation.” Are the ministers sending mixed or negative messages? Do greeters make sure everyone is welcomed to this gathering of the household of God? Do the musicians...
Reconsidering Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and Parish Liturgy Committees

invite the people to sing only to turn their backs on them and direct the choir? Do the musicians call on the people to sing songs the people have not yet mastered? Do they play instruments too loudly or overpower the voice of the assembly by using microphones? Do the readers proclaim the readings articulately? Do readers make eye-contact so that the assembly is aware that they are being spoken to?

The committee must determine: What do the people in the pews need? What do the ushers and greeters need? What do the servers need? What do the musicians need? What do the readers need? What do the ministers of communion need? What do the presiders and homilists need?

Prioritize

Each parish will have its strengths and weaknesses. From these lists certain priorities will naturally rise to prominence. The greater the number of people affected by an impending change the more carefully the parish needs to prepare for it. Ministry specific problems are usually easily solved at ministry workshops. Among all lay liturgical ministries, the musicians are uniquely trusted to exercise the most freedom in choosing among options. They have a host of music available from which to choose the songs they will place on the lips of their fellow parishioners. If their choices and/or behaviour are hindering participation, a deeper and more lengthy educational program and close supervision and mentoring may be necessary. Extra-ordinary ministers of communion have a specific script and rubrics to follow, but they will need periodic updating and refreshment. Readers have prescribed texts to proclaim, but they like choir members will need a rehearsal before each celebration at which they minister. Parishioners should be reminded that they should not become involved in every ministry but only those for which they are suited and trained; also, that no ministry is permanent.

Environment issues often require great sensitivity and sometimes involve financial output. Careful preparation and strategizing will be required. Consultation with facilitators or other parishes that have undergone such change would be wise.

Take Action

Sunday

A maximum of four goals should be tackled in a single year. And even this number may be optimistic. Remember that most people involved in the process are doing so without recompense in their spare time; they have families and jobs that make unscheduled demands.

Each ministry has certain organizational requirements. This organization may be done under the auspices of the liturgy committee. Each ministry needs a coordinator to facilitate communication and make known the needs and concerns of those involved in the ministry. There should be a roster that includes contact information for all those trained for service in each ministry. All ministers should be provided with a schedule of when they are expected to serve and a handbook for their ministry. The liturgy committee should make sure that each ministry group is offered an annual retreat and training day. Some ministers will need to be reminded that their service in ministry is an addition to their full, conscious and active participation throughout the whole celebration, not a replacement for it. Musicians and readers will, of course, need rehearsal time before each celebration at which they serve. All-ministry, dry-run rehearsals will be needed before special celebrations such as the Triduum liturgies.

During this first phase, don't let unique, seasonal concerns and problems complicate the work of the committee. Stick to your priorities and make sure they are attended to during the seasons. The seasonal concerns will be addressed after focussed study and discussion.

The Seasons

When Ordinary Time seems well in hand, the group should begin its study of the
liturgical year with the Triduum, the heart of the year. The Sacramentary and the Lectionary are crucial starting points. The Circular Letter concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts (January 16, 1988) from the Congregation for Divine Worship is a useful resource. (See “Documents” list on p. 64.) Some soundly based pastoral resources are available to assist in fleshing out what the Church documents call for. (See the resource list following this article.) Because of the similarities of the palm procession and proclamation of the passion narrative on Passion (Palm) Sunday to parts of the Triduum liturgies, the committee would be wise to include Passion (Palm) Sunday in this study and preparation project.

It is important to give those involved a chance to discuss their learning as compared with their experience of the season. It is necessary to bring to light and clarify points of mismatch before moving on to action.

In the following year, the Lent and Easter seasons, along with the initiation rites attached to these seasons, should become the focus of attention. Advent and the feasts of the Christmas season can wait until the following year. The scripture readings of the seasons and the presid­ential prayer texts (collects and prefaces) are important objects of this study. Then, it is of utmost importance that the committee find a way to bring the musicians—at least those responsible for choosing music for the Sunday eucharist—into a study process for each season.

Subcommittees
While the committee as a whole works on the seasons, subcommittees composed of a few liturgy committee members and other interested and energetic people (perhaps liturgical ministers), can keep up the work of ministry in-servicing, updating and oversight. It is wise to have one subcommittee dedicated to the needs and concerns of each separate ministry.

Broadening Horizons
As the committee matures, it will be able to address other topics: weddings, funerals, infant baptisms, confirmation, first communion, reconciliation celebrations, and communal celebrations of the anointing of the sick, etc. If circumstances indicate a need, the committee should make plans for preparing the parish to celebrate on Sunday when a priest is not available.

Concluding Remarks
When provided with the tools for the job, a liturgy committee can be a tremendous asset to parish life. When you begin with broad based educational opportunities, hidden gifts and energy sources emerge. One prison ministry group even established a liturgy committee within the prison! After such a long string of special years (1997–2003) this year without special demands is a chance to begin your liturgy committee re-energizing project.

2 NBL 157, p. 107.
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Part Four: Helpful Resources for Commissions and Committees

A very thorough listing of liturgical resources—and a guide to building a good liturgical library—is available in Bulletin 150, p. 159 ff.

Basics

  A great collection of relevant documents. Readers are advised that several of the documents are American and not considered authoritative in Canada.

  A treasure-trove of documents of the first sixteen years of the renewal. Too bad there were never subsequent volumes!

• Guidelines for Pastoral Liturgy: Liturgical Calendar. (AKA “the Ordo”). Ottawa: CCCB, annually.
  “Pastoral Notes” in the introductory section are useful and authoritative.

  A pastorally oriented journal for the Church in Canada, but used around the world.

Going Deeper


84 • National Bulletin on Liturgy
Within the year following the promulgation of the Constitution on the Liturgy, the council fathers produced a flood of documents addressing various aspects of the four goals of the council stated in article 1 of the liturgy constitution. One of these was Nostra Aetate, the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, promulgated in October, 1965. Forty years after the fact, Catholic secondary schools in Ontario are offering a course in World Religions that opens up, for Catholic students, a window onto the world envisioned by Nostra Aetate.

In January 2003, in Peterborough, Ontario, a snow emergency inspired a series of events that made Nostra Aetate a living reality. In the fall of the same year, three congregations—one Catholic, one Muslim and one Jewish—together celebrated an “Abraham Festival.” In the pages that follow, the details of this story are unfolded in the very personal reflections of three participants. What is notable for those interested in liturgy is that the festival took on a bi-fold shape exploring both the lex credendi and the lex orandi of each community. They did not attempt to construct an interfaith prayer service; they invited each other to witness their own prayer life. In effect they said to one another, “This is what we believe, but you will understand much better if you see how we pray.”

The authors of the reflections do not claim to officially represent the faith communities in which they live and from which they take their identities. They simply share with readers of the Bulletin their own feelings about what happened when they tried to enact, consciously or not, the principles set forth in Nostra Aetate.
Part One:
What Did the Council Say?

What Did the Council Say?

From the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions:

1. In our time, when day by day mankind is being drawn closer together, and the ties between different peoples are becoming stronger, the Church examines more closely her relationship to non-Christian religions. In her task of promoting unity and love among men, indeed among nations, she considers above all in this declaration what men have in common and what draws them to fellowship.

One is the community of all peoples, one their origin, for God made the whole human race to live over the face of the earth. One also is their final goal, God, his providence, his manifestations of goodness, his saving design extend to all men, until that time when the elect will be united in the Holy City, the city ablaze with the glory of God, where the nations will walk in his light.

Men expect from the various religions answers to the unsolved riddles of the human condition, which today, even as in former times, deeply stir the hearts of men: What is man? What is the meaning, the aim of our life? What is moral good, what sin? Whence suffering and what purpose does it serve? Which is the road to true happiness? What are death, judgment and retribution after death? What, finally, is that ultimate inexpressible mystery which encompasses our existence: whence do we come, and where are we going?

2. From ancient times down to the present, there is found among various peoples a certain perception of that hidden power which hovers over the course of things and over the events of human history; at times some indeed have come to the recognition of a Supreme Being, or even of a Father. This perception and recognition penetrates their lives with a profound religious sense.

Religions, however, that are bound up with an advanced culture have struggled to answer the same questions by means of more refined concepts and a more developed language. Thus in Hinduism, men contemplate the divine mystery and express it through an inexhaustible abundance of myths and through searching philosophical inquiry. They seek freedom from the anguish of our human condition either through ascetical practices or profound meditation or a flight to God with love and trust. Again, Buddhism, in its various forms, realizes the radical insufficiency of this changeable world; it reaches a way by which men, in a devout and confident spirit, may be able either to acquire the state of perfect liberation, or attain, by their own efforts or through higher help, supreme illumination. Likewise, other religions found everywhere try to counter the restlessness of the human heart, each in its own manner, by proposing "ways,”

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1 Cf. Acts 17:26
2 Cf. Wisdom 8:1; Acts 14:17; Romans 2:6-7; 1 Timothy 2:4
comprising teachings, rules of life, and sacred rites. The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men. Indeed, she proclaims, and ever must proclaim Christ “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14.6), in whom men may find the fullness of religious life, in whom God has reconciled all things to Himself.4

The Church, therefore, exhorts her sons, that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these men.

3. The Church regards with esteem also the Moslems. They adore the one God, living and subsisting in himself; merciful and all-powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even his inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God. Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere him as a prophet. They also honour Mary, his virgin Mother; at times they even call on her with devotion. In addition, they await the day of judgment when God will render their deserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom.

4. As the sacred synod searches into the mystery of the Church, it remembers the bond that spiritually ties the people of the New Covenant to Abraham's stock.

Thus the Church of Christ acknowledges that, according to God’s saving design, the beginnings of her faith and her election are found already among the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets. She professes that all who believe in Christ—Abraham’s sons according to faith—are included in the same patriarch’s call, and likewise that the salvation of the Church is mysteriously foreshadowed by the chosen people’s exodus from the land of bondage. The Church, therefore, cannot forget that she received the revelation of the Old Testament through the people with whom God in his inexpressible mercy concluded the Ancient Covenant. Nor can she forget that she draws sustenance from the root of that well-cultivated olive tree onto which have been grafted the wild shoots, the Gentiles.7 Indeed,

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3 Cf. Revelation 21.23f.
4 Cf. 2 Corinthians 5.18-19
5 Cf. Gregory VII, letter XXI to Anzir (Nacir), King of Mauritania (J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina 148, col. 450f.)
6 Cf. Galatians 3.7
the Church believes that by his cross Christ, Our Peace, reconciled Jews and Gentiles, making both one in Himself.\(^8\)

The Church keeps ever in mind the words of the apostle about his kinsmen: "theirs is the sonship and the glory and the covenants and the law and the worship and the promises; theirs are the fathers and from them is the Christ according to the flesh" (Romans 9.4–5), the son of the Virgin Mary. She also recalls that the apostles, the Church's main-stay and pillars, as well as most of the early disciples who proclaimed Christ's gospel to the world, sprang from the Jewish people.

As holy scripture testifies, Jerusalem did not recognize the time of her visitation,\(^9\) nor did the Jews in large number, accept the gospel; indeed not a few opposed its spreading.\(^10\) Nevertheless, God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers; he does not repent of the gifts he makes or of the calls he issues—such is the witness of the apostle.\(^11\)

In company with the prophets and the same apostle, the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and “serve him shoulder to shoulder” (Zephaniah 3.9).\(^12\)

Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is thus so great, this sacred synod wants to foster and recommend that mutual understanding and respect which is the fruit, above all, of biblical and theological studies as well as of fraternal dialogues.

True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ;\(^13\) still, what happened in his passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the holy scriptures. All should see to it, then, that in catechetical work or in the preaching of the word of God they do not teach anything that does not conform to the truth of the gospel and the spirit of Christ.

Furthermore, in her rejection of every persecution against any man, the Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.

Besides, as the Church has always held and holds now, Christ underwent his passion and death freely, because of the sins of men and out of infinite love, in order that all may reach salvation. It is, therefore, the burden of the Church's preaching to proclaim the cross of Christ as the sign of God's all-embracing love and as the fountain from which every grace flows.

5. We cannot truly call on God, the Father of all, if we refuse to treat in a brotherly way any man, created as he is in the image of God. Man's relation to God the Father and his relation to men his brothers are so

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7 Cf. Romans 11.17–24  
8 Cf. Ephesians 2.14–16  
10 Cf. Romans 11.28  
11 Cf. Romans 11.28–29; Lumen Gentium  
12 Cf. Isaiah 66.23; Psalms 65.4; Romans 11.11–32  
13 Cf. John 19.6
linked together that scripture says:  "He who does not love does not know God" (1 John 4.8).

No foundation therefore remains for any theory or practice that leads to discrimination between man and man or people and people, so far as their human dignity and the rights flowing from it are concerned.

The Church reproves, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination against men or harassment of them because of their race, color, condition of life, or religion. On the contrary, following in the footsteps of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, this sacred synod ardently implores the Christian faithful to "maintain good fellowship among the nations" (1 Peter 2.12), and, if possible, to live for their part in peace with all men, so that they may truly be sons of the Father who is in heaven.  

14 Cf. Romans 12.18  
15 Cf. Matthew 5.45

Part Two:  
A Vatican Event  

John L. Allen, Jr.

In the January 23, 2004 issue of "The Word from Rome", John L. Allen, Jr.'s weekly internet newsletter for the National Catholic Reporter, Allen recounts his experience of an "official" event in the spirit of Nostrae Aetate.

I attended the gala papal "Concert of Reconciliation" on Saturday evening, Jan. 17, featuring choirs from Krakow, Pittsburgh and Ankara performing an original piece of music dedicated to Abraham, father of the three monotheistic faiths, as well as Mahler's Second Symphony, the "Resurrection Symphony."

Seated next to the pope were Rabbi Elio Toaff, emeritus chief rabbi of Rome and a friend of John Paul, as well as Abdulawahab Hussein Gomaa, imam of the Rome mosque. The images of the three religious leaders together underscored the evening's theme of reconciliation among the three monotheistic faiths. (For anyone who thinks this is cheap symbolism, let me point out that a Christian radio station in Pittsburgh accused the pope of asserting that Judaism, Christianity and Islam are equally valid paths of salvation, something John Paul did not say. But it illustrates the theological sensitivity surrounding interreligious gatherings, a sensitivity that has its echoes inside the Vatican).

In his remarks, the pope made a plea for understanding.

"The history of relations among Jews, Christians and Muslims is characterized by

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1 http://nationalcatholicreporter.org/word/word012304.htm. Reprinted with the author's permission.

lights and shadows," the pope said, "and unfortunately it has known painful moments. Today, we feel a pressing need of a sincere reconciliation among the believers in the one God."

"Jews, Christians and Muslims cannot accept that the earth be afflicted by hate, that humanity be overwhelmed by wars without end," the pope said. "May God find in us the courage of peace."

After the concert, the Knights of Columbus hosted a reception held, appropriately enough, at the Hotel Columbus on the Via della Conciliazione, the broad avenue leading up to St. Peter's Square. Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism, who had introduced the concert, offered a brief greeting.

Part Three:
Reflections of a Catholic Participant in the Abraham Festival

Helen McCarthy

Inspiration
The Abraham Festival began on a blustery winter day early in January, 2003. It was a "snow day" at St. Peter's High School. The students of my World Religions class were not at school, but my guest speaker was. I slinked down the stairs to meet her, fully expecting to find someone justifiably miffed that I had neglected to call and postpone the speaking engagement. Nothing could be further from the truth! Elizabeth Rahman was a cheerful, generous person who came to school through the whirling snow to be sure she didn't miss speaking to my class.

As I spoke to Elizabeth Rahman about her Muslim faith, it was obvious within minutes that Christianity and Islam had very much in common. We live in such a troubled world. Too many of the difficulties seem to come from misunderstandings among the monotheistic religions. Information sharing is a way to reduce fear and misunderstandings and to teach about the impact God has had on others. Elizabeth and I decided our common experiences had to be shared and celebrated.

I tried to think of the origins of our commonality; Abraham was the natural choice. The notion that God has never abandoned any of us was so compelling to Elizabeth and me that we knew we had to include the third partner of our mutual story, the Jewish community. The Abraham Festival seemed to be the right thing to do.

Beginnings
The following Sunday at the 7:00 p.m. mass at St. Alphonsus Parish, my home parish in Peterborough, I asked Fr. Paul Massel, our pastor, if we could have something called "Abraham Days." His eyes shone immediately and he said, "An Abraham Festival. What a great idea!"

Helen McCarthy teaches world religions at St. Peter's High School and is a member of St. Alphonsus Parish in Peterborough Ontario. She and partners from the Muslim and Jewish communities are currently planning the seven-day Second Annual Abraham Festival (Fall 2004), the theme of which will be "What Family Means to Our Tradition."
chatted over the next several weeks and everyone we spoke to had the same reaction. There was a "knowing" light in their eyes. There was something magnetic about the Abraham story; sharing his story with the other "children of Abraham" moved me deeply. Because I teach a course on the world's religions, I already had contacts with guest speakers. All I had to do was ask.

Having Fr. Paul sponsor the Abraham Festival was key to our success. He immediately made himself and his staff available for meetings at the rectory. Early in the summer, all three faith communities began a series of meetings at the St. Alphonsus Prayer Garden. Ron Molnar and Heather Pollock came from the Jewish community, Elizabeth Rahman and Imam Hamed Mohammed represented the Muslims, and Fr. Paul, Fr. John Rathinaswamy, Ann Farlow and I represented Catholic Christians. We began each gathering with a prayer from each group. Hearing the Imam sing in Arabic to God at our Catholic rectory was one of the holiest moments I've ever experienced.

We agreed that our vision was that we would come together in each other's houses of worship to see what Abraham meant to each of us. We agreed that we would not debate teachings; we wanted to find our common understandings and to see what intrigued us about each other's ideas and rituals. Elizabeth, Heather and Fr. Paul insisted that I remember our differences were also very important and we agreed to celebrate our diversity too.

We devised a simple statement that was to be read at the beginning of each gathering. We would begin with "Greetings, sons and daughters of Abraham." We decided, too, that each group would provide snacks for socializing afterwards. Finally, we created response sheets to ask people what they felt we had in common after each session. The sheets also asked what participants found intriguing about each faith.

We wrote up a brochure indicating the protocol expected at each place of worship. This included yarmulkes for the men at the synagogue and headscarves for women at the mosque. In addition, we were to leave our shoes in the cubby holes at the entrance to the mosque. In all places of worship, a dress code of modesty was in place.
I remember that I was very anxious to not offend during the early meetings and was concerned that this whole idea might be considered quite inappropriate. This anxiety ended during one gathering on a midsummer night, when Heather said that the synagogue probably didn’t have enough yarmulkes to give out to all the visiting men at the front door. Hamed asked if she could use extras if he brought them along from the mosque. Heather said, “That would be great!” My fears were replaced by deep feelings of warmth for these people and the communities they represented.

Our goal was to set up instruction nights on Tuesday evenings and worship services on the following weekend. Before long we discovered that our religious calendars were very complex and we couldn’t avoid scheduling conflicts. If the event were to happen at all in 2003, we had to manage without the company of the Jewish community on September 26, the Jewish New Year, the night we would experience Muslim prayer.

At the Mosque

We began on September 23 with Islam because Muslims have a special day of worship on Fridays. Everyone was rather nervous the first night because we had no model to follow and we weren’t sure what the turnout would be. But as I rounded the corner where the mosque is situated, there were cars pulling up from all directions. The turnout at the Mosque was far greater than we expected. It was thrilling!

Inside were Jews and Catholics and Muslims sitting in rows on the floor as the Imam concluded an evening prayer in Arabic. I loved seeing all those Catholic women’s faces looking out from under their scarves.

Hamed had set up a PowerPoint presentation to show us Mecca and the Muslim story of Abraham. He told us about the Muslim perspective on Mary, Jesus’ mother, and the fact that Muslims see Jesus as one of their five greatest prophets. Hamed explained the meanings of the Arabic inscriptions on the walls of the mosque and told us there were no pictures
or images out of respect for the greatness of God. We were invited to ask questions at the end. One Catholic man began to ask about the current situation in Iraq and he was reminded that we wouldn't be talking about politics. A visiting imam put us all at ease with some jokes. (He came to all the events and was a tremendous asset in lightening the mood.)

Our Muslim hosts then escorted us downstairs to join them in some wonderful snacks, tea, and coffee.

We arrived at 6:45 p.m. the following Friday to pray at sunset. People lined up according to the carpet pattern and faced Mecca. The imam chanted in Arabic and then translated into English for us. After the prayer, he invited a guest to come forward to try all the standing, kneeling and bowing positions. The young man had some difficulty with all the movements and the imam said that the Muslim prayer routine—five times a day—keeps a person fit in body, mind and spirit.

At the Synagogue
The instruction at the synagogue was conducted by two lay people, since the congregation is so small there isn't a resident rabbi. Heather Pollock gave a detailed explanation of what Abraham means to people of the Jewish faith. Heather told me later that when she spoke about how hard it is to teach children another language (Hebrew), she could see all the Muslim heads nodding.

Dan Houpt said he was “the show and tell guy”; he showed us the Torah and read some lines from it in Hebrew. He said he had memorized them for his bar mitzvah. Then he blew a ram's horn for us and told us that the horn reminds people of the ram that God substituted for Isaac as Abraham's sacrifice. At one point during his presentation Dan told us that we had to finish on time so our Muslim cousins could get downstairs in time for prayer.

At the synagogue the following weekend, participants followed along in a Jewish prayer book as words from the Torah were prayed and sung. Children were very much a part of the ceremony.

At the Church
The Catholic presentation explained the story of Abraham and Isaac. Children performed a pantomime of the events of Holy Week and the choir sang. We recited the Lord's Prayer. During question period visitors asked us how the confessional process works as well as various questions about changes since Vatican II.
At the Park

At the Millennium Park in Peterborough, we came together for a final time to unveil a plaque featuring a map showing Ur, Mecca and Jerusalem. It says, “Abraham’s Journey through Three Faiths: the Story Continues, 2003.

We also generated a book of responses to the whole experience that reflected on the commonalities we discovered during the instruction times. This booklet also recorded ideas that intrigued us.

The Journey Continues

I went back to the synagogue two weeks after the plaque ceremony, as we were all invited to hear Michael Soberman, a Jewish educator speak about his visit to Auschwitz. He described the Holocaust as a human tragedy. It happened once in a modern western society and it could happen again. He told us that we all must stand up when human rights are being violated, as they are in the case of Muslims who are presumed to be terrorists simply because they are Muslims.

At the time of writing we are sitting down for a debriefing on the Abraham Festival. People have told us they’re delighted with what we have learned and are learning about our neighbours. We have been profoundly moved by their spirit of hospitality, their wisdom, and their values of humility before God. People from all three traditions have asked what we’re doing next. The story is continuing indeed.

The fact that this idea was conceived and developed at the grassroots level was a factor contributing to its success. Expectations were met every time, mainly because we didn’t expect much—only that we recognized that we were all inspired by the same God. This was authentic and therefore huge.

For me, this is becoming the adventure of a lifetime.

Part Four:
Reflections of a Muslim Participant in the Abraham Festival

Elizabeth F. Rahman

“By dialogue we let God be present in our midst, for as we open ourselves to one another, we open ourselves to God.” (Pope John Paul II)

Roots

It all started last February with a “snow day.” I had been invited to speak on Islam to a World Religions class at St. Peters High School in Peterborough, but there had been a heavy snowfall during the night before the day in question and the school buses were not running. I was unaware of this and managed to get to the school; imagine my disappointment to find there were no students. Their teacher, Helen McCarthy, was most apologetic as a student

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Elizabeth Rahman

was supposed to have phoned to tell me not to come. Helen and I began to talk.

We talked a little of our faiths and of our shared conviction that interacting with people of other faiths is vital. Helen told me she had a dream of an “Abraham Festival” whereby Christians, Muslims, and Jews would come together to celebrate our common heritage. Since I have been involved in multifaith activities for many years I was very excited by her vision. We agreed to pursue the idea, although we had no idea how it would unfold. There was undoubtedly divine intervention at work that day with the snow day and no phone call to stop my coming!

When Helen and I talked that first day, we could not have imagined how the plans would evolve and almost take on a life of their own! Fr. Paul Massel, pastor of St. Alphonsus Parish was immediately receptive to Helen’s vision. But I felt I would have a more difficult time convincing the Muslim community to participate. Following 9/11 we had invited the community to open houses at the mosque, but getting some of the more traditional Muslims to visit a church and a synagogue, and convincing them to allow Christians to participate in our prayers could, I felt, be an arduous task. I approached our Imam, Hamed Mohammad, and by the grace of God he agreed to come to a planning meeting, although I knew he had some reservations about the whole project. However, once we all got together and talked in a spirit of friendship and cooperation, he was wholeheartedly behind the venture.

Hosting

We decided to hold two events at each place of worship; the first would be an information evening and the second a prayer or worship service. The first two evenings were held at the Masjid Al-Salaam (Peace Mosque) in Peterborough. Our community has about 60 families, so we were somewhat apprehensive about hosting a large community like St. Alphonsus Parish and we were not really sure of the motives of our potential visitors. Were they coming out of a sincere desire to meet Muslims? Did they really want to learn about our faith? Were they driven by curiosity? Were they coming to find some proof that Muslims preach...
violence and terrorism? Many in our community were wary, as some Muslims in Peterborough had endured racist remarks following 9/11: one Muslim student was attacked at night and the window of our mosque had been shattered by a brick. So it was with a certain amount of trepidation that we greeted our visitors on that first evening.

However, all apprehension disappeared when we saw our tiny mosque bursting at the seams with so many enthusiastic people! What a joy it was to host such a gathering. Everyone came with an open heart and a willingness to learn about our beliefs and practices. They observed our dress code of modesty and women covered their heads in respect.

Imam Hamed gave a talk on Abraham from the Muslim point of view and he talked of Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael at God’s command (differing from the Christian and Jewish traditions which identify Isaac as the son to be sacrificed). Abraham is known in the Muslim tradition as “the friend of God,” and many of our practices have been handed down from Abraham. The most important of these is the pilgrimage to Mecca and the circumambulation of the Ka'aba, the structure established by Adam and restored by Abraham and Ishmael to honour God.

Following the talk our guests had many questions on a whole range of topics, and they were surprised to learn that we honour and respect all the prophets of the old and new testaments, including Jesus (peace be upon him), and Mohammed (p.b.u.h.), the last prophet sent by God. Our guests (no doubt heavily influenced by CNN!) were also surprised to learn that Muslim women have had rights such as those of inheritance, initiating divorce, and voting long before western women secured those same rights.

The second evening at the mosque was a prayer service. Our guests watched as we performed our evening prayers and I was honoured when Helen, the mastermind behind the festival, stood alongside us and went through the motions of the prayers. Following the prayers we entertained our guests with traditional Middle Eastern goodies; there is something very spiritual and unifying about breaking bread together. As we talked about our hopes, our fears, and our families, each of us realized our concerns are not held only by members of our own faith community, but are shared by all of us. Our community was ecstatic about the openness with which people came to learn about our faith and our practices. Because of the goodwill shown by visitors to the mosque many Muslims then attended the events at the other venues.

Visiting

The next two evenings were held at the Beth Israel Synagogue. We were told beforehand that men had to wear a traditional cap or yarmulke but that the synagogue had very few of them, so our Imam offered to bring caps from the mosque—a true example of interfaith cooperation. We all felt very welcome at the synagogue. It was moving to see Jewish men in their yarmulkes, Muslim men in their traditional caps, Muslim women in their hijab and dress of different cultures, and Christian men and women all sitting together in a spirit of friendship and worship. Following the presentation it was time for maghrib (evening) prayers for the Muslims. Imagine a group of Muslims praying in the synagogue! This was a first for both communities.

Throughout all these sessions we gradually got to know one another so that by the time we visited St. Alphonsus Church it was as though we were visiting family.

The enthusiasm with which we were welcomed warmed our hearts and made us feel right at home. So many people greeted me with the traditional Muslim salutation “Asalaamu alaikum” (which they had learned at the mosque) and called me by name. I felt accepted for who I was, as a cousin in faith, not as a potential convert. Imagine my surprise when we were asked
during mass to greet those around us and everyone said “Peace” or “Peace be with you”—the exact meaning of our Muslim greeting “Asalaamu alaikum”! If we greet one another in peace, any potential hostility immediately evaporates.

By the end of the sessions at St. Alphonsus I felt I was an “honorary Catholic” and that I was accepted as a Muslim cousin who celebrates our common history, yet also rejoices in our diversity. How boring the world would be if we were all the same! God in His wisdom has made us like flowers in a garden: each one of us is an individual, different and beautiful in our own right, with our own talents. Put us all together and we form the most amazing garden of colours and scents. Little wonder that we decided to plant three different bushes each with their own colour and characteristics in a public park to commemorate our Abraham festival.

I got to talk personally with many of those who attended, and a common theme in our discussion was the fact that we are all on this same journey of life towards a common destination, albeit by different paths. We agreed that it is our duty as human beings to reach out if one of our fellow travellers stumbles, whether he or she is on the same path or a different one, and to help them regain their balance.

Celebrating
Our Abraham Days culminated in a gathering at a local park where three
young persons—one from each of our communities—together unveiled a plaque commemorating Abraham's journey through our three faiths. The leader of each community planted a bush, one to flower in the spring, one in the summer, and one in the fall. It was only much later that our Jewish friend Heather Pollock was jogging in the area when she realized that the plaque and bushes were situated at the convergence of three paths in the park. We all felt chills up and down our spines as she related her discovery and we again expressed our feeling that there was some divine guidance right from the beginning of our planning.

The Future

So where do we go from here? This is just the beginning—Our plan is to hold the Abraham Festival each year with a different theme that is common to our three faiths. The Muslim community is excited about the prospect of developing the festival. We pray that this is the beginning of a new era of understanding among “the people of the Book” in Peterborough. God tells us in the Holy Qur’an, “O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other, not that ye may despise each other.” Our challenge now is to build on the foundations we have laid, and the wonderful interfaith friendships we have made.

Part Five:
Reflections of a Jewish Participant in the Abraham Festival

Heather Pollock

The event didn’t begin in a promising way. A phone call. Could I attend a meeting about something called “An Abraham Festival” the very next night? Given the last minute request, and legitimately being busy, I was able to justify not attending. Too often, it seemed, a Jewish component was added to religious events almost as an afterthought. Beth Israel congregation in Peterborough is also a very small community (40 families), so trying to be the Jewish voice in city activities was a stretch for us. A polite “perhaps we could participate at another time, when we have more notice” seemed to be the end of that commitment. Thankfully, not so.

A scheduled visit to the religion class at our Catholic high school brought an introduction to teacher Helen McCarthy and a more detailed explanation of the event. Weeks earlier, Helen and Elizabeth Rahman, a member of Peterborough’s Muslim community, finding themselves alone in the classroom on a snow day had explored their common roots and contemplated an event that would educate their

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communities and celebrate their histories. They saw Abraham as the starting point for the process. They also saw a need to involve the Jewish community in discussions of Abraham.

Luckily, Helen was very articulate in her description of the vision she and Elizabeth had for this Abraham festival. She was also very persuasive in convincing me that her desire to include the Jewish community was sincere. While I could not completely picture the event, Helen could. Kindly, we were offered some flexibility in dates. Unfortunately, because of the scheduling in September/October, the Jewish community had only a one-week window within our various New Year celebrations. While fine points were ironed out in planning meetings, the concept of an educational evening followed by a religious service remained fixed as the cornerstones of Elizabeth and Helen's vision.

As the first evening—the educational session at the mosque—approached, I felt as if I were walking into an activity blindfolded. I knew what should happen, but I had no clue what would really take place. On the night of September 23, I drove to the mosque. I turned to go into the parking lot and found that it was full. Then I noticed that every side street in the residential area was lined with cars. Finally working my way inside the mosque I found one small corner of floor. The space was completely filled with people eagerly waiting!

The first words of the event would magically mark the spirit. Helen opened the evening reminding all of us that we came together to learn and in a spirit of
respect. If we inadvertently made errors while in the other houses of worship, we did so unintentionally and asked for understanding.

That first evening, Hamed used Power Point and prayers to chart the journey of Abraham, Ishmael and Hagar through their lifetimes and into the present day with an explanation of the hajj to Mecca. How strange to hear familiar names and stories but in a completely different context and with new details! It felt so much like being reunited with family members and learning what had happened to them since you had last met. It also pointed out how groups can live side by side in a civil society, know little about one another, and yet assume that they have a general understanding.

The week at the synagogue followed. I would be providing the educational component with the help of Dan Houpt who would explain the religious service. To go back to the Torah and study the story of Abraham and his family and various interpretations was a privilege. I chose to talk about the stories of this family, the significant events that marked their characters and their importance: leaving Ur; Abraham’s betrayal of Sarah; his kindness to strangers; Abraham’s and Sarah’s relationship with G_d, and the stresses within this complex family.

The synagogue slowly filled to bursting capacity. We watched the clock carefully so that we could start somewhere between the published time and the Jewish time that we often use (5-15 minutes later) and still be finished in time for Muslim evening prayers to take place. Questions—so many and so interesting! “Who writes the scrolls?” “What about rules regarding purity?” “Are all Jews rich?” Rather than being offended by this last question, we took it as an indication of the comfort zone that existed. We were all able to ask our questions. No offence was taken because none was meant. It was a chance to share our faith with people eager to learn and compare it to their own in a non-judgmental environment. It was a window suddenly opening to a new possibility that you never dared imagine before. It was a miracle!

The learning came more from the questions in the three evenings. I was especially intrigued by one example. In the Jewish presentation, we explained the importance of learning to read the Torah scrolls and prayer books. Hamed asked me if we encourage people to memorize sections of the Torah or the prayers, as Muslims do the Qur’an. I answered that we actually discourage memorization in case an error is made. So someone who says the same prayer every day of his or her life would choose to read it just to be sure that it is said correctly. Then at St. Alphonsus, Father Paul commented that in Catholic services, bible portions are read so that the congregation hears words that are alive with meaning, not static on a page. I continue to wonder how the differences in our perception of the appropriate uses of our holy words affect other aspects of our faith. And what else is just slightly different among us, giving us a unique way of looking at the world?

The session at St. Alphonsus in the final week was marked by a strong spirit of fellowship that had developed over the three weeks. The presentation at the Church was a gift designed and presented by many members of the congregation working together to share their knowledge and talents. The reception afterwards was marked by vibrant and comfortable conversations among new old friends.

For me personally, the Abraham Festival was about discovering that the energy that a community needs can come from within itself, but it can also come from interested people of other religious groups. Our Jewish community of 40 families continues to travel on the momentum of having a synagogue filled to the brim. Achieving big results makes you dream even bigger.

The event also made me recognize a missing aspect of my own life. It has been
a while since I have taught English as a Second Language. While had I worked with people from all over the world in this capacity, I recognized that teaching Islamic students from Libya, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iran, and Iraq was a special privilege. We ate together, talked, compared and shared. I think that we sensed that this chance to get to know one another beyond the stereotypes was incredibly valuable and an opportunity that might not happen again. I continue to value the hospitality and fellowship that we enjoyed in difficult times. In the Abraham Festival I keenly felt the joy of having that contact again. It was epitomized by the huge hug shared with the Iranian-born mother of my daughter's good friend when I introduced myself to her for the first time. Our daughters had discovered one another; now it was the mothers' turn.

It is sometimes hard to live in a small community. Trying to live as a Jew in a town like Peterborough can be exhausting. But something like the Abraham Festival can perhaps only happen in a small town, big enough for diversity but small enough that ethnic isolation is impossible. The Abraham Festival showed me the priceless heritage of a small town. We can find friendships and develop a respect that crosses over divisions of religion and politics. While I don't need any more proof of the value of this gift, I received it over the recent holidays. My daughter is studying Hebrew and English at McGill University and is preparing to return to Israel. But her greatest accomplishment was fighting her way into an oversubscribed course taught by three professors teaching together outside of their traditional faculties. The name, of course: "Women in Christianity, Islam and Judaism."
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July 5 - 15, 2004
- Introduction to Liturgy Sr. Donna Kelly, CND
- Reconciliation Sherri Vallee
- Word of God in the Lectionary Year A Fr. Jack Spicer, CSsR
- General Introduction to Christian Initiation Fr. Leo Hofmann
- Liturgical Ministries Practicum Sr. Zita Maier, OSU
- Liturgical Music for Sacramental Celebrations Sr. Donna Kelly, CND

Session 2
July 19 - 29, 2004
- Eucharist Sherri Vallee
- Liturgies with Children and Youth Marilyn Sweet
- The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Bp. Gerald Wiesner, OMI
- Liturgical Year Marilyn Sweet
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FROM THE POPE

Spiritus et Sponsa

Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II on 40th Anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy “Sacrosanctum Concilium”

1. “The Spirit and the Bride say ‘Come’. And let him who hears say, ‘Come’. And let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price” (Revelation 22.17). These words from the Apocalypse echo in my heart as I remember that 40 years ago today, exactly on December 4, 1963, my venerable predecessor, Pope Paul VI, promulgated the constitution, Sacrosanctum Concilium, on the sacred liturgy. What, indeed, is the liturgy other than the voice of the Holy Spirit and of the Bride, holy Church, crying in unison to the Lord Jesus: “Come”? What is the liturgy other than that pure, inexhaustible source of “living water” from which all who thirst can freely draw the gift of God (cf. John 4.10)?

Indeed, in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the first fruit of the Second Vatican Council, that “great grace bestowed on the Church in the 20th century,” the Holy Spirit spoke to the Church, ceaselessly guiding the disciples of the Lord “into all the truth” (John 16.13). The commemoration of the 40th anniversary of this event is a good opportunity to rediscover the basic themes of the liturgical renewal that the council fathers desired, to seek to evaluate their reception, as it were, and to cast a glance at the future.

2. With the passing of time and in the light of its fruits, the importance of Sacrosanctum Concilium has become increasingly clear. The council brilliantly outlined in it the principles on which are based the liturgical practices of the Church and which inspire its healthy renewal in the course of time. The council fathers set the liturgy within the horizon of the history of salvation, whose purpose is the redemption of humanity and the perfect glorification of God. The wonders wrought by God in the Old Testament were but a prelude to the redemption brought to completion by Christ the Lord, especially through the paschal mystery of his blessed passion, his resurrection from the dead and his glorious ascension. However, it needs not only to be proclaimed but also to be accomplished; this “is set in train through the sacrifice and sacraments, around which the entire liturgical life revolves.” Christ makes himself present in a special way in the liturgical gestures associating the Church with himself. Every liturgical celebration, therefore, is the work of Christ the Priest and of his Mystical Body, “full public worship” in which the faithful take part, with a foretaste in it of the liturgy of the heavenly Jerusalem. This is why the “liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed” and at the same time, “the fount from which all her power flows.”

3. The liturgical outlook of the council did not keep to interchurch relations, but was open to the horizons of all humanity. Indeed, in his praise to the Father, Christ attaches to

2 Cf. ibid., 3.
3 Cf. ibid., 5.
4 CSL., 6.
5 Ibid., 7.
6 Cf. ibid., 8.
7 Ibid., 10.
himself the whole community of men and women. He does so specifically through the mission of a praying Church which, “by celebrating the eucharist and by other means, especially the celebration of the divine office, is ceaselessly engaged in praising the Lord and interceding for the salvation of the entire world.”

In the perspective of Sacrosanctum Concilium, the liturgical life of the Church acquires a cosmic and universal scope that makes a deep mark on human time and space. It is also possible to understand in this perspective the renewed attention that the constitution pays to the liturgical year through which the Church journeys, commemorating and reliving the paschal mystery of Christ.

If the liturgy consists in all of this, the council rightly affirms that every liturgical action “is a sacred action surpassing all others. No other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree.” At the same time, the Council recognizes that “the sacred liturgy does not exhaust the entire activity of the Church.” Indeed, on the one hand the liturgy presupposes the proclamation of the gospel, and on the other, it demands a Christian witness in history. The mystery proposed in preaching and catechesis, listened to with faith and celebrated in the Liturgy, must shape the entire life of believers who are called to be its heralds in the world.

4. Then with regard to the different elements involved in liturgical celebration, the constitution pays special attention to the importance of sacred music. The Council praises it, pointing out as its objective: “the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.” In fact, sacred music is a privileged means to facilitate the active participation of the faithful in sacred celebration, as my venerable Predecessor St Pius X desired to highlight in his motu proprio on the Restoration of Sacred Music Tri le Sollecitudini, whose centenary occurs this year. It was this very anniversary that recently gave me an opportunity to reassert the need to preserve and to emphasize the role of music at liturgical celebrations, in accordance with the directives of Sacrosanctum Concilium and mindful of the liturgy’s real character as well as the sensibility of our time and the musical traditions of the world’s different regions.

5. Sacred art was another fruitful topic addressed by the conciliar constitution. It gave rise to many developments. The council gives clear instructions to continue to leave considerable room for it in our day too, so that the splendour of worship will shine out through the fittingness and beauty of liturgical art. To this end it will be appropriate to make provision for projects to train the various craftsmen and artists who are commissioned to build and decorate places destined for liturgical use. At the root of these guidelines is a vision of art, and sacred art in particular, that relates it to “the infinite beauty of God in works made by human hands.”

From Renewal to Deepening

6. Forty years later, it is appropriate to review the ground covered. I have already suggested on former occasions a sort of examination of conscience concerning the reception given to the Second Vatican Council. Such an examination must also concern the liturgical and sacramental life. “Is the liturgy lived as the ‘origin and summit’ of ecclesial life, in accordance with the teaching of Sacrosanctum Concilium?” Has the rediscovery of the value of the word of God brought about by liturgical reform met with a positive confirmation in our celebrations? To what extent does the liturgy affect the practice of the faithful and does it mark the rhythm of the individual communities? Is it seen as a path of holiness, an inner force of apostolic dynamism and of the Church’s missionary outreach?

7. The council’s renewal of the liturgy is expressed most clearly in the publication of

8 Ibid., 83.
9 Cf. ibid., 5.
10 Ibid., 7.
11 Ibid., 9.
12 Cf. ibid., 10.
13 Ibid., 112.
14 Cf. ibid., 6.
15 Cf. ibid., 127.
16 Ibid., 122.
18 Ibid.
liturgical books. After a preliminary period in which the renewed texts were little by little incorporated into the liturgical celebrations, a deeper knowledge of their riches and potential has become essential.

The mainspring of this deepening must be a principle of total fidelity to the sacred scriptures and to Tradition, authoritatively interpreted in particular by the Second Vatican Council, whose teachings have been reasserted and developed in the ensuing Magisterium. This fidelity engages in the first place the bishop “to whom is committed the office of offering the worship of Christian religion to the Divine Majesty and of administering it in accordance with the Lord’s commandments and with the Church’s laws”; at the same time, it involves the entire ecclesial community “in different ways, depending on their orders, their role in the liturgical services and their actual participation in them.”

In this perspective, it is more necessary than ever to intensify liturgical life within our communities by means of an appropriate formation of the pastors and of all the faithful with a view to the active, conscious and full participation in liturgical celebrations desired by the council.

8. Consequently, what is needed is a pastoral care of the liturgy that is totally faithful to the new ordo. Through these, renewed interest in the word of God has gradually developed as the council desired, hoping for a return to a “more ample, more varied and more suitable reading from sacred scripture.” The new lectionaries, for example, offer a broad choice of passages from scripture which constitute an inexhaustible source from which the people of God can and must draw. Indeed, we cannot forget that “in listening to the word of God the Church grows and is built, and the wonderful works God once wrought in many different ways in the history of salvation are represented in their mystical truth through the signs of the liturgical celebration.” In this celebration, the Word of God expresses the fullness of their meaning, inciting Christian life to continuous renewal, so that “what is heard at the liturgical celebration may also be put into practice in life.”

9. Sunday, the Lord’s Day, on which the Resurrection of Christ is especially commemorated, is at the heart of liturgical life as the “foundation and nucleus of the whole liturgical year.” There is no doubt that considerable pastoral effort has been expended to bring people to rediscover the value of Sunday. Yet it is essential to make a point of this, for “the spiritual and pastoral riches of Sunday, as it has been handed on to us by tradition, are truly great. When its significance and implications are understood in their entirety, Sunday in a way becomes a synthesis of the Christian life and a condition for living it well.”

10. Liturgical celebration nourishes the spiritual life of the faithful. The principle I formulated in my apostolic letter Novo Millennio Ineunte: “calling for a Christian life distinguished above all in the art of prayer,” stems from the liturgy. Sacrosanctum Concilium interprets this urgency prophetically, spurring the Christian community to intensify its prayer life, not only through the liturgy but also in “popular devotions,” for as long as these are in harmony with the liturgy, they are in some way derived from it and lead to it. The pastoral experience in recent decades has reinforced this insight. In this regard, the Congregation for Divine Worship

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19 LG, 26.
20 CSL, 26
22 CSL, 35 (1).
23 LMI, 7.
24 Ibid., 6.
27 Ibid., 32; AAS 93 (2001), 288.
28 Cf. CSL, 13.
and the Discipline of the Sacraments has made a valuable contribution with its Directory on Popular Piety, Liturgy, Principles, Guidelines. Then, with the apostolic letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae and the announcement of the Year of the Rosary, I myself wanted to make explicit the contemplative treasure of this traditional prayer that has spread far and wide among the people of God. I therefore recommended its rediscovery as a privileged path to contemplation of the face of Christ at the school of Mary.

Future Prospects

11. Looking to the future we see various challenges that the liturgy is called to confront. During the past 40 years, in fact, society has undergone profound changes, some of which have put ecclesial commitment severely to the test. We have before us a world in which the signs of the gospel are dying out, even in regions with an ancient Christian tradition. Now is the time for new evangelization. This challenge calls the liturgy directly into question.

At first sight, spirituality seems to have been put aside by a broadly secularized society; but it is certain that despite secularization, a renewed need for it is re-emerging in different ways in our day.

How can we not see this as proof that the thirst for God cannot be uprooted from the human heart? Some questions find an answer only in personal contact with Christ. Only in intimacy with him does every existence acquire meaning and succeed in experiencing the joy that prompted Peter to exclaim on the mountain of the transfiguration: “Master, it is well that we are here” (Luke 9.33).

12. The liturgy offers the deepest and most effective answer to this yearning for the encounter with God. It does so especially in the eucharist, in which we are given to share in the sacrifice of Christ and to nourish ourselves with his Body and his Blood. However, pastors must ensure that the sense of mystery penetrates consciences, making them rediscover the art of “mystagogic catechesis,” so dear to the Fathers of the Church. It is their duty, in particular, to promote dignified celebrations, paying the proper attention to the different categories of persons: children, young people, adults, the elderly, the disabled. They must all feel welcome at our gatherings, so that they may breathe the atmosphere of the first community of believers who “devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2.42).

13. One aspect that we must foster in our communities with greater commitment is the experience of silence. We need silence “if we are to accept in our hearts the full resonance of the voice of the Holy Spirit and to unite our personal prayer more closely to the Word of God and the public voice of the Church.” In a society that lives at an increasingly frenetic pace, often deafened by noise and confused by the ephemeral, it is vital to rediscover the value of silence. The spread, also outside Christian worship, of practices of meditation that give priority to recollection is not accidental. Why not start with pedagogical daring a specific education in silence within the coordinates of personal Christian experience? Let us keep before our eyes the example of Jesus, who “rose and went out to a lonely place, and there he prayed” (Mark 1.35). The liturgy, with its different moments and symbols, cannot ignore silence.

14. Pastoral attention to the Liturgy through the introduction to the various celebrations must instil a taste for prayer. To do so, it will of course take into account the ability of individual believers and their different conditions of age and culture; but in doing so it will not be content with the “minimum.” The Church’s teaching must be able to “dare.” It is important to introduce the faithful to the celebration of the liturgy of the hours “which, as the public prayer of the

29 Vatican City, 2002.
30 Cf. AAS 95 (2003), 5–36.
32 Institutio Generalis Liturgiae Horarum, 202
Church, is a source of piety and nourishment for personal prayer. It is an action that is neither individual nor “private, but is proper to the entire Body of the Church.... Thus, if the faithful are summoned for the liturgy of the hours and gather together, joining heart and voice, they make manifest the Church, which celebrates the mystery of Christ.

Priority attention to liturgical prayer does not vie with personal prayer but indeed implies and demands it, and harmonizes well with other forms of community prayer, especially when it is recognized and recommended by the ecclesiastic authority.

15. Pastors have the indispensable task of educating in prayer and more especially of promoting liturgical life, entailing a duty of discernment and guidance. This should not be seen as an uncompromising attitude that is incompatible with the need of Christian souls to abandon themselves to the action of God’s Spirit who intercedes in us and “for us with sighs too deep for words” (Romans 8.26). Rather, the guidance of pastors constitutes a principle of “guarantee,” inherent in God’s plan for his Church that is governed by the assistance of the Holy Spirit. The liturgical renewal that has taken place in recent decades has shown that it is possible to combine a body of norms that assure the identity and decorum of the liturgy and leave room for the creativity and adaptation that enable it to correspond closely with the need to give expression to their respective situation and culture of the various regions. Lack of respect for the liturgical norms can sometimes even lead to grave forms of abuse that obscure the truth of the mystery and give rise to dismay and stress in the people of God. This abuse has nothing to do with the authentic spirit of the council and should be prudently and firmly corrected by pastors.

Conclusion

16. The promulgation of the Constitution on the Liturgy marked a stage of fundamental importance in the life of the Church for the promotion and development of the liturgy. It is in the liturgy that the Church, enlivened by the breath of the Spirit, lives her mission as “sacrament – a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all men,” and finds the most exalted expression of her mystical reality.

In the Lord Jesus and in his Spirit the whole of Christian existence becomes “a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God,” genuine “spiritual worship” (Romans 12.1). The mystery brought about in the liturgy is truly great. It opens a glimpse of heaven on earth, and the perennial hymn of praise rises from the community of believers in unison with the hymn of heavenly Jerusalem: “Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis!”

At the beginning of this millennium, may a “liturgical spirituality” be developed that makes people conscious that Christ is the first “liturgist” who never ceases to act in the Church and in the world through the paschal mystery continuously celebrated, and who associates the Church with himself, in praise of the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

Together with this wish, I impart my blessing to everyone from the depths of my heart.

From the Vatican,
4 December 2003,
26th Year of the Pontificate of John Paul PP. II

33 CSL, 90.
34 Institutio Generalis Liturgiae Horarum, 20, 22.
35 Cf. CSL, 12.
36 Cf. ibid., 13.
38 LG, 1.
FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE

New Guidelines for the Use of Mustum and Low-Gluten Communion Bread

Introductory Note

Some people are unable to take bread and/or wine at communion. This topic was previously addressed in depth in Bulletin #159. Reprinted below is a letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to the presidents of the episcopal conferences regarding a change in the norms regarding the use of mustum and low-gluten hosts.

Letter

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

July 24, 2003
Prot. N. 89/78 – 17498

Your Excellency

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has been for many years studying how to resolve the difficulties that some of the faithful encounter in receiving Holy Communion when for various serious reasons they are unable to consume normal bread or wine.


In light of the experience of recent years, it has been deemed necessary at this time to return to the topic, taking up the above-mentioned documents and clarifying them wherever necessary.

A. The Use of Gluten-free Hosts and Mustum

1. Hosts that are completely gluten-free are invalid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist.

2. Low-gluten hosts (partially gluten-free) are valid matter, provided they contain a sufficient amount of gluten to obtain the confection of bread without the addition of foreign materials and without the use of procedures that would alter the nature of bread.
3. *Mustum*, which is grape juice that is either fresh or preserved by methods that suspend its fermentation without altering its nature (for example, freezing, is valid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist.

**B. Communion under One Species or with a Minimal Amount of Wine**

1. A layperson affected by celiac disease, who is not able to receive Communion under the species of bread, including low-gluten hosts, may receive Communion under the species of wine only.

2. A priest unable to receive Communion under the species of bread, including low-gluten hosts, when taking part in a concelebration, may, with the permission of the Ordinary, receive Communion under the species of wine only.

3. A priest unable to ingest even a minimal amount of wine, who finds himself in a situation where it is difficult to obtain or store mustum, when taking part in a concelebration, may, with the permission of the Ordinary, receive Communion under the species of bread only.

4. If a priest is able to take wine, but only a very small amount, when he is the sole celebrant, the remaining species of wine may be consumed by a layperson participating in that celebration of the Eucharist.

**C. Common Norms**

1. The Ordinary is competent to give permission for an individual priest or layperson to use low-gluten hosts or mustum for the celebration of the Eucharist. Permission can be granted habitually, for as long as the situation continues which occasioned the granting of permission.

2. When the principal celebrant at a concelebration has permission to use mustum, a chalice of normal wine is to be prepared for the concelebrants. In like manner, when he has permission to use low-gluten hosts, normal hosts are to be provided for the concelebrants.

3. A priest unable to receive communion under the species of bread, including low-gluten hosts, may not celebrate the Eucharist individually, nor may he preside at a concelebration.

4. Given the centrality of the Eucharist in the life of a priest, one must proceed with great caution before admitting to Holy Orders those candidates unable to ingest gluten or alcohol without serious harm.

5. Attention should be paid to medical advances in the area of celiac disease and alcoholism and encouragement given to the production of hosts with a minimal amount of gluten and of unaltered mustum.

6. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith enjoys competence over the doctrinal aspects of this question, while disciplinary matters are the competence of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

7. Concerned Episcopal Conferences shall report to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments at the time of their *ad limina* visit regarding the application of these norms as well as any new developments in this area.

Asking you kindly to communicate the contents of this letter to the members of your Episcopal Conference, with fraternal regards and prayerful best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Joseph Ratzinger
Prefect
Summary

• The letter reaffirms the right of laypeople (and deacons) who are gluten intolerant to receive communion under the species of wine alone.
• It also reaffirms that any permission granted stands as long as the condition persists.
• The new norms make it easier to receive permission to use mustum and/or low-gluten communion bread. It is now within the competence of the local authority to grant all such permissions. Furthermore, under canon 137.1, he may delegate pastors to grant this permission to laypeople.
• Medical certification is no longer required for the use of mustum and/or low-gluten hosts.
• Presiding priests (sole celebrants and principal celebrants at a concelebration) must receive communion under both species, i.e., either regular or low-gluten communion bread and either wine or mustum.
• Priests who are not able to eat even low-gluten bread or mustum may not celebrate individually, nor may they preside at a concelebration.

Pastors are encouraged to reach out to members of the faithful who might need this accommodation in order to heighten their full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy. A sample parish bulletin announcement is provided following the letter.

Pastors are advised to discuss specific needs with the individuals concerned. In some cases it might even be necessary to reserve for those who are severely gluten-intolerant a cup in which a fragment of a regular host has not been commingled.

Suggested Bulletin Notice

This notice (right) could perhaps be printed once or twice a year so that new parishioners will notice it.

Communion for All

Is your participation in communion limited due to an inability to take gluten or alcohol?

We now have access to approved low-gluten hosts (approx. 0.01% total gluten content) and "mustum" (a wine substitute with less than 1.0% alcohol) that might enable you to partake more fully in the communion rite.

Please contact the pastor for more details.

Suppliers

The National Liturgy Office is attempting to compile a list of sources, especially sources within Canada, of mustum and low-gluten hosts that meet the norms. If you can help us to add to the list blow, please submit complete contact information (and the approximate gluten content of hosts in terms of percentage) for publication in future issues of the National Bulletin on Liturgy to: National Bulletin on Liturgy, 2500 Don Reid Dr., Ottawa, ON, K1H 2J2 or FAX: 416-461-0174 or E-mail: mbick@cccb.ca.

Low-Gluten Hosts

Sisters of the Precious Blood
Altar Bread Department
P.O. Box 1046, LCD 1
Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3R4
Phone: (905) 527-9851
Fax: (905) 527-2888

Congregation of Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
Altar Bread Department
31970 State Highway P
Clyde, MO 64432
U.S.A.
Phone: 1-800-223-2772 (toll-free)
Sr. Lynn
New Guidelines for the Use of Mustum and Low-Gluten Communion Bread

Mustum
Ranelle Trading/Ojai Fresh Juice Corporation
2501 Oak Hill Circle, Suite 2032
Ft. Worth, TX 76109
Phone: 1-877-211-7690 (toll-free)

Mont La Salle Altar Wine Company
385-A La Fata St.
St. Helena, CA 94575
Phone: 1-800-447-8466 (toll-free)

A Cautionary Note
In a conversation with someone who does dietary counseling with people living with celiac disease we were advised that any gluten at all acts as a poison to someone with celiac disease. Therefore, offering low gluten communion wafers is of no value to a person who must be on a gluten-free diet. Some people may not react to low gluten, but the gluten is still damaging their small intestine. This is the reason that companies are no longer providing low gluten communion wafers. Medical data says that 1 in 133 people have celiac disease. Unfortunately, because it is so hard to diagnose many of these people are still suffering. For further information on celiac disease, see <www.celiac.ca>.

Summer Institute in Pastoral Liturgy
Saint Paul University • July 5-16, 2004

Responding to Vatican II and the Church's ongoing liturgical renewal, the Faculty of Theology of St. Paul University, in close cooperation with the National Liturgy Office of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, established the Summer Institute in Pastoral Liturgy. The aim of SIPL is to enable those who prepare, lead and evaluate the liturgical activity of the Church (parish liturgy committee members, ministers, musicians, catechists, clergy, religious and seminarians) to become more familiar with the various liturgical rites of the Church and to develop skills useful for liturgical ministry. SIPL is staffed mainly by Canadians who hold graduate degrees in pastoral liturgy or related fields.

Introduction to Liturgy
The Liturgy of the Hours: A Prayer of the Whole Church
Introduction to Christian Initiation
Preparing Music for the Sacraments
Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
The Ministry of Healing and Consolation
Synthesis Course for Graduates

For further information contact:

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SAINT PAUL UNIVERSITY

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Saint Paul University
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Fax: 613-751-4016
Email: fquesnel@ustpaul.uottawa.ca

Volume 37 • Number 177 • 111
In this new feature we present answers to frequently-asked questions.

Holding Hands during the Lord’s Prayer

Q: Is it appropriate to instruct the assembly to hold hands during the Lord’s Prayer at mass?

A: The first place to look for an answer to this question is in the Church documents. In this case we look in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. A study of the GIRM shows that no gesture has been prescribed during the Lord’s Prayer and no gesture has been expressly forbidden. (It is, however, forbidden to substitute hand-holding during the Lord’s Prayer for a proper sign of peace.) When liturgical law is silent, we have to look at liturgical, theological and pastoral considerations.

Often this kind of innovation is a symptom of pastoral problems in the celebration of the rite. At this point it is useful to ponder the question, “Why?” Why does this assembly, or its leadership, want to hold hands during the Lord’s Prayer? Why has the Church never prescribed this gesture for this part of the Mass?

Is this the only possible experience of unity and intimacy at the parish Sunday liturgy? Perhaps this action is seen as a chance to manifest the communion of the assembly in a gesture before approaching the eucharistic table for sacramental communion. This is a laudable effort but it might be a sign that the introductory rites did not achieve one of their primary purposes.

Or is this action a substitute for engagement in the eucharistic prayer that is somehow being denied to the assembly-at-large? Is it because they have not experienced the eucharistic prayer as their own? Is the assembly not aware that the whole eucharistic prayer is addressed to God, our Father? Have they not noticed...
that there is no sentiment contained in the Lord’s Prayer that is not already expressed in other words within the eucharistic prayer? Has their ritual experience given them the idea that the Lord’s Prayer as a more important moment than the eucharistic prayer?

Holding hands for the length of time it takes to pray the Lord’s Prayer is an act of physical intimacy. Not everyone is ready to engage fellow worshippers at this level of intimacy. Since this gesture has never before been part of the rite we may assume that achieving this level of intimacy is not one of the Church’s priorities within the liturgical assembly.

**Recommendation:** If this practice is an established custom in the parish it may be unnecessarily hurtful to stop it—“unnecessary” because it is not currently a forbidden practice. On the other hand, it is probably unwise to introduce it or to pressure people to participate. If there is a movement within the community to introduce the holding of hands during the Lord’s Prayer, take the time to learn why before taking any action. Perhaps the energy is best spent energizing liturgical hospitality in general and or the introductory rites specifically. Perhaps the eucharistic prayer needs more attention: the presider’s gestures, his proclaimation style, the effectiveness of the eucharistic acclamations. Perhaps a program of mystagogical reflection on the experience of the parish Sunday eucharist would be more fruitful than introducing a novel gesture into the liturgy. Some communities may have been using the gesture for many years without re-examining the wisdom of the practice; a program of mystagogical reflection may cause a community to do so.

**Obeying the New General Instruction**

Each week the National Liturgy Office receives questions regarding practices in local parishes that are not in keeping with some published versions of the GIRM 2000. In this regard, pastors and parishioners are reminded of the “Note by Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Implementation of *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani,*” issued by the president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Most Reverend Jacques Berthelet, C.S.V., in March 2002. This note appeared in the *National Bulletin on Liturgy #170* (Fall, 2002) and is still applicable. The intent of the note is to emphasize some key pastoral principles:

- Implementation of the GIRM 2000 in the parishes is to be carried out under the direction of the bishop.
- Canada does not yet have approval of its proposed indults and adaptations.
- Canada has not yet published an approved translation of the GIRM 2000.
- It is best to continue present practice until the local bishop says otherwise.

This is the text of the message:

1. The Latin text of the third typical edition of the Missale Romanum has been approved and published and is to be applied when the Eucharist is celebrated in Latin. The necessary translations into English and French of the Missal and its *Institutio generalis* or “General Instruction” will now need to be made, followed by the approval of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the recognitio of the Holy See. With respect to the implementation of this new edition of the Roman Missal in Canada, the directives of the diocesan bishop are to be followed, taking into account as appropriate the following points.

2. At their September 2001 Plenary Assembly, the Bishops of
Canada agreed to request an indult from the Holy See concerning the general practice of preparing and purifying the sacred vessels at Communion when ordinary ministers or instituted acolytes are lacking. While awaiting the response of the Apostolic See, it is recommended that diocesan bishops advise their parishes to continue their present practice.

3. The new General Instruction requires that the Episcopal Conference of each country make adaptations on various matters concerning the celebration of the Eucharist, and also permits a number of additional adaptations. The adaptations being considered by the Bishops of Canada concern musical texts, musical styles, melodies and instruments; Communion under both kinds; Masses on days of prayer for particular intentions; vesture of lay ministers; art and environment—altar, furnishings and vessels; and acclamations in the Eucharistic Prayer. While awaiting the approval of these particular adaptations and their recognitio by the Apostolic See, it is recommended that diocesan bishops advise their parishes to continue their present practice.

4. As allowed in the new General Instruction, the Bishops of Canada will also propose appropriate postures for the Eucharistic Prayer and Communion Rite. While awaiting the approval of these particular adaptations and their recognitio by the Apostolic See, it is recommended that diocesan bishops advise their parishes to continue their present practice.

5. The new General Instruction asks the Conference of Bishops to determine an appropriate sign of reverence when Communion is received standing. The Bishops of Canada are considering what this appropriate sign of reverence should be. While awaiting the approval of this particular adaptation and its recognitio by the Apostolic See, it is recommended that diocesan bishops advise their parishes to continue their present practice.

6. Should questions arise on the correct and appropriate implementation of individual norms in the new edition of the Roman Missal, pastors and faithful are to refer these to their bishop. As the Second Vatican Council decreed, "The bishop is to be considered the high priest of his flock. In a certain sense it is from him that the faithful who are under his care derive and maintain their life in Christ" (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, no. 41). [7]
MUSIC FOR THE SUNDAY ASSEMBLY:
Year C – 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time – 34th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Christ the King)
(August 22–Nov. 21, 2004)

The following pages provide hymn suggestions from the Catholic Book of Worship (CBW) III for the end of Ordinary Time. Music directors are reminded that these weeks are a good time to begin teaching the assembly whatever new piece of Advent or Christmas music (if any) you have chosen to introduce this year. One new piece is plenty. Examine the parish repertoire to see where the gaps are. If there is a good song in the repertoire that people are unsure of, these weeks can be used to solidify their mastery of it. Remember that listening a few times is not enough. It’s not enough for you or your choir; it’s not enough for the assembly. The assembly must be actively taught new music.

Unfamiliar Hymns
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. For instance, you are looking for a good hymn for the recessional. You like the text of 514, but your assembly does not know the tune, and they are not ready to learn a new one. If you changed the tune from LLEDROD to OLD HUNDREDTH or DUKE STREET, for instance, the assembly would probably be able to sing the hymn quite well. There are a number of other long metre (88 88) tunes that would work just as well; there are some that would not, such as, ERHALT UNS, HERR, and JESU DULCIS MEMORIA. 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 at 700 in both pew and choir editions of the hymnal.

Ritual Music

Glory to God
The “Glory to God” is more fittingly sung than recited. Singing it during these weeks will strengthen the assembly’s ability to enter into it joyously during the Christmas season. If you are looking for a new setting see nos. 238–246. Choose one that meets the needs and ability of your assembly. (Although strict matching of the “Glory to God” with the eucharistic acclamations is not necessary, asterisks in the list below indicate settings for which eucharistic acclamations are available in CBW III.)

- 238* unison [Somerville]
- 239 bilingual Latin (descant) and English (melody) [Alstott]
- 240* refrain setting in three voice-parts [Haugen]
- 241 several opportunities for the assembly to interject phrases of acclamation [How]
- 242* plainsong [Hurd]
- 243* harmony for the midsection and ending [Young]
- 244 en français [Thompson]
Music for the Sunday Assembly

- 245* refrain setting [Isele]
- 246 several opportunities for the assembly to interject phrases of acclamation [Jones]

**Responsorial Psalms**

During these weeks the proper psalm changes each week with no recurrences. If this constant change would inhibit the assembly's ability to participate in the responsorial psalm, a seasonal refrain may be chosen. Nos. 122 and 204 are seasonal psalms for Ordinary Time and are assigned to the 27th and 31st Sundays this year. It is best to use the verses of the day with the seasonal refrain, but if this is not possible use the verse of the seasonal psalm. These changes should be conveyed in advance to the homilist in case he is going to refer to the psalm.

If you choose to use only one refrain for all these weeks, no. 204 is recommended. If you can manage two refrains, use no. 122 on the 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 27th, and 29th Sundays and no. 204 on the rest.

If at all possible use any familiar setting of the proper psalm for the 34th Sunday, Christ the King. See nos. 114 and 213 in CBW III.

**Eucharistic Acclamations:**

"Holy, Holy," Memorial Acclamation, "Great Amen"

The eucharistic acclamations ("Holy, Holy," memorial acclamation, and "Great Amen") unite the eucharistic prayer (and the people singing them) when they are all sung and they all belong to a single mass setting by one composer. If all three are not being sung in the parish, these weeks may be used to complete one of the sets.

CBW III places complete sets of the acclamations together at nos. 276–284. The chart below indicates which memorial acclamations are included in each setting. A brief glance at the chart below shows that the Isele setting offers the most options, while the Schutte, Hurd, Proulx and Hughes settings offer the least.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settings</th>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Memorial Acclamations Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>276</td>
<td>Young</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>277</td>
<td>Benoit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>278</td>
<td>Schutte</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>279</td>
<td>Haugen</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>280</td>
<td>Isele</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281</td>
<td>Hurd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>282</td>
<td>Proulx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>283</td>
<td>Somerville</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>284</td>
<td>Hughes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lamb of God

This litany accompanies the breaking of the bread and filling of communion cups. Various settings are found at nos. 288–298. If you are looking for a new setting see nos. 288–296. Choose one that meets the needs and ability of your assembly. (Although strict matching of the "Lamb of God" with the eucharistic acclamations is not necessary, asterisks in the list below indicate settings for which eucharistic acclamations are available in CBW III.)

- 288* unison [Somerville]
- 289 varied invocations; assembly refrain; four voice-parts [Isele]
- 290 unison [Coutinho]
- 291 varied invocations; assembly refrain; four voice-parts [Haugen]
- 292* melody and descant [Benoit]
- 293* melody and descant [Isele]
- 294* unison [Young]
- 295* plainsong [Hurd]
- 296 varied invocations; assembly refrain; four voice-parts [Trapp]
- 297* melody and descant [Proulx]
- 298 en français [Martel and Normand]

Hymn Suggestions

Hymns are specifically suggested for Entrance, Presentation of the Gifts, and Recessional. The suggested Entrance Songs are rhythmically strong expressions of praise; the songs for the Presentation of the Gifts need not be as strong. The Recessional Songs, which are always optional, speak of living out the eucharist in daily life. That being said most of the pieces suggested for these moments are interchangeable. Communion Songs are treated separately because they are unique to that ritual moment (see below).

Procesional Songs for the 21st–33rd Sundays in Ordinary Time

Note that this year no Ordinary Sundays are replaced by celebrations of the solemnities or feasts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>548</td>
<td>All the Ends of the Earth (Ps. 98)</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>585</td>
<td>Christians, Lift up Your Hearts</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>581</td>
<td>Church of God</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>531</td>
<td>For the Beauty of the Earth</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>591</td>
<td>God Is Alive!</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>663</td>
<td>Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>562</td>
<td>O Bless the Lord</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>590</td>
<td>On This Day</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>565</td>
<td>Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>443</td>
<td>There's a Wideness in God's Mercy</td>
<td>Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>613</td>
<td>A Living Hope</td>
<td>Presentation of Gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>482</td>
<td>Eye Has Not Seen</td>
<td>Presentation of Gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>560</td>
<td>God Is Love! The Heavens Are Telling</td>
<td>Presentation of Gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>495</td>
<td>We Walk by Faith</td>
<td>Presentation of Gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>514</td>
<td>Forth in the Peace of Christ We Go</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>508</td>
<td>Go to the World!</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>555</td>
<td>Holy God, We Praise Your Name</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>521</td>
<td>Now Let Us from This Table Rise</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>593</td>
<td>O Praise the Lord, Sing unto God</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>567</td>
<td>Praise the Lord, You Heav'ns, Adore Him</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Music for the Sunday Assembly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>533</th>
<th>Sent Forth by God's Blessing</th>
<th>Recessional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>574</td>
<td>We Will Extol Your Praise</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Processional Songs for the 34th Sunday (Christ the King)**

Any of the above pieces may be used. If the community knows the following, they are particularly suited to this day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>472</th>
<th>Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise</th>
<th>Presentation of Gifts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>498</td>
<td>Lord of Creation, to You Be All Praise</td>
<td>Presentation of Gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>442</td>
<td>Praise to You, O Christ, Our Savior</td>
<td>Presentation of Gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>518</td>
<td>The Sky Tells the Glory of God (Ps. 19)</td>
<td>Presentation of Gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>429</td>
<td>Word of God, Come Down On Earth</td>
<td>Presentation of Gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>475</td>
<td>God, Whose Glory Reigns Eternal</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>555</td>
<td>Holy God, We Praise Your Name</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>691</td>
<td>Lord, You Give the Great Commission</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>444</td>
<td>Lord, We Hear Your Word with Gladness</td>
<td>Recessional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Communion Procession**

It may seem to be stating the obvious to say “during the communion procession always sing a communion hymn,” so perhaps an explanation is needed. It is not true that whatever you sing at communion time is a communion song. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 56i gives specific characteristics for this song: “Its function is to express outwardly the communicants’ union of spirit by the means of the unity of their voices, to give evidence of joy of heart, and to make the procession to receive Christ’s body more fully an act of community.”

When planning what to sing at communion time, choose something familiar from the extensive list of Communion Processional Hymns listed in the hymnal index, the core of which is found at 595–612. Choose carefully with the size, needs and ability of the assembly in mind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>595</th>
<th>Christians Let us Love One Another: brief refrain; 5 verses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>596</td>
<td>Let All Mortal flesh Keep Silence: 4 stanzas; no refrain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>597</td>
<td>Bread of Life: memorable refrain: 5 verses plus special seasonal verse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>598</td>
<td>Gentle Shepherd: memorable refrain; voice-parts; 3 English verses / 3 français</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>599</td>
<td>No Greater Love: memorable refrain; voice-parts; 4 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600</td>
<td>Our Daily Bread: memorable refrain; voice-parts; 6 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601</td>
<td>Gather Us Together: memorable refrain; melody and harmony; 5 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>602</td>
<td>Eat This Bread: easy refrain; voice-parts; 5 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>603</td>
<td>Gift of Finest Wheat: popular refrain; voice-parts; 5 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>604</td>
<td>Seed, Scattered and Sown: long refrain; 3 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>605</td>
<td>I Am the Living Bread: memorable refrain; two voice-parts; 4 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>606</td>
<td>My Shepherd Is the Lord: Gelineau; refrain in English/français; 5 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>607</td>
<td>The Lord Is My Shepherd: familiar refrain; voice-parts; 5 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>608</td>
<td>Now in This Banquet: long refrain in three seasonal versions; 6 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>609</td>
<td>My Soul Is Thirsting for the Lord: Gelineau; refrain in English/français; 12 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>610</td>
<td>Taste and See: memorable refrain; voice-parts; 3 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>611</td>
<td>Take and Eat: memorable refrain; voice-parts; 3 verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>612</td>
<td>Drink in the Richness of God: memorable refrain; verses sung on psalm tone; 8 verses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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118 • National Bulletin on Liturgy
SUMMER SCHOOL FOR LITURGICAL MUSICIANS

Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs …
Making Melody to the Lord
Epheians 5.19

August 9 - 13, 2004
Redeemer University College
Ancaster, Ontario

Hosted by the Hamilton Diocesan Music Committee and
The Liturgy Office of the Diocese of Hamilton

Come and join us for a wonderful week of learning, prayer and music making. If you are an organist, guitarist, instrumentalist, choir director, cantor, choir member, or if you just like to celebrate your faith in song, we look forward to meeting you at this year's Summer School for Liturgical Musicians.

During the week, we will explore the various forms of music used in our liturgical celebrations and develop our music-making skills to more effectively lead our communities in prayerful song and celebration. Each day we will celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours (morning and evening prayer) and we will conclude the week with a festive celebration of the Eucharist. Participants will have an opportunity to discover new music resources and discuss a variety of pastoral concerns. We will learn and sing together and enjoy good meals and the spacious campus of Redeemer University College. Above all, we will grow in faith as a singing community and be energized to exercise music ministry in our parish communities. We hope you will join us!

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and a host of highly qualified musicians who will lead the practicum sessions.

For information or registration, contact:
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Diocese of Hamilton
700 King Street West
Hamilton, ON L8P 1C7

Phone: (905) 528-7988
E-mail: liturgy@hamiltondiocese.com
Brief Book and Music Reviews

Books

Forming the Assembly to Celebrate the Mass, by Lawrence E. Mick (Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago, 2002); 70 pages, $7.00 US.

In this short book the author sees the deeper liturgical formation of the people of God as a pressing pastoral issue. Members of the assembly need and deserve to understand the liturgy more fully so that they can benefit from the spiritual riches that the liturgy offers. Beginning with a very useful essay on the history and reason for renewal, the reader is gently guided through not just what the assembly does when it gathers for Mass, but the meaning behind the symbols, prayers and ritual actions. At the end of each chapter questions to foster further reflection and discussion are included.

This is an excellent resource for those who have the responsibility of preparing the celebration of the liturgy, those who form liturgical ministers, and for adult and youth catechesis.

Forming the Assembly to Celebrate the Sacraments, by Lawrence E. Mick (Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago, 2002); 72 pages, $7.00 US.

Lawrence E. Mick begins this book where he leaves off in its companion “Forming the Assembly to Celebrate the Mass” (reviewed above) by seeking to invite the people of God to explore further the other six sacraments and their meaning for a full Christian life. After the Second Vatican Council much time and effort was devoted to creating and implementing the revised liturgical books and more often than not the catechesis on these changes focused mostly on teaching the responses and actions that the people needed to know. Here, in short well-crafted essays and extensive questions for reflection and discussion, the reader or study groups are moved further along in their understanding of what we do when we celebrate the sacraments.

Liturgy committees, parish study groups, and teachers seeking supplementary material on the sacraments would find this a very rewarding resource.


Richard Hart begins this book by making a very clear case for the obligation on behalf of the preacher to develop not just the art of editing homilies but being open to regularly engaging with others in honing and developing preaching skills. After looking at the importance of developing these skills he then invites preachers to look at how to preach on social sin, the environment, ageing, the reign of God and on the letters of Paul.

Homilists willing to take the risk of seriously looking at the issue of editing and inviting critiques of their homilies will find this a very valuable resource.


More and more in some pastoral ministry settings we are asked to adapt rites such as the Rite of Marriage to accommodate cultural customs. This very helpful book presents a model of how the Catholic Rite of Marriage may be adapted to the
language and culture of a particular people using the typical edition of the rite and the guidelines for the development of an adapted rite as presented by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

The first part of the book gives the reader a thorough presentation on the revised Order of Marriage and the second section looks at the issue of inculturation and contextualization. The third section presents a study of the Ilocano people of the Philippines and their customs, rites and beliefs regarding marriage. A liturgical adaptation for the Ilocano people is presented and discussed.

This is a scholarly work but will be welcomed by pastors and persons engaged in marriage preparation work that is sensitive to and respectful of the pastoral needs of cultural minorities.

_Catholicism in the Third Millennium_,

This is a non-technical book that presents a precise, clear and straightforward account of Catholicism for mature Catholics. Beginning with the Second Vatican Council the author guides the reader through the history, tradition and teaching of the church and ends with a critical reflection on the most important issues facing the church today. The conclusion to each section is especially valuable as are the carefully crafted questions.

This would be a welcome addition to parish libraries, as a resource for high school teachers, or as a text for more serious study of the Catholic faith.

_Liturgy and Justice – To Worship God in Spirit and Truth_, Anne Y. Koester, Editor. (The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, 2002); 188 pages, $19.95 US.

The essays in this collection were initially presented at the 2001 Pastoral Liturgy Conference at the University of Notre Dame and explore the connection between liturgical celebrations and the work of justice and the ongoing renewal of church life. Gathering to worship and striving for justice are not separate compartments or unrelated endeavours in the Christian life; together liturgy and justice are constitutive of and expressive of the Church itself. Full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgy is a continuous engagement that stretches us and empowers us to be full, conscious and active servants of justice. These essays are challenging, thought provoking, and admit to just scratching the surface of the many issues raised.

Pastoral staff and parish councils would appreciate its insights and challenges.

_Seasons, Sacraments and Sacramentals_, Dennis C. Smolarski SJ, (Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago, 2003); 126 pages, $11.95 US.

Divided into nine sections, Dennis C. Smolarski's recent work answers some
frequently asked questions about the sacraments and rites, such as how to choose a name at baptism and why cremation should follow the funeral liturgy. Each question is answered seriously and with a background and reference to the Church’s rites and instructions that is both informative and useful.

Highly recommended for parish staff and parish and school resource centres.

A Sourcebook About Mary, Edited by Robert Baker and Barbara Budde, (Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago, 2002); 147 pages, $18.00 US.

This welcome addition to the “Sourcebook” series brings together a great range of texts that offer glimpses into the vast tradition about Mary. Each section begins with a phrase from the Hail Mary and continues using scripture, the writings of the early church, and the works of writers down through the centuries that offer insight into Mary’s discipleship and into ways we can emulate her steadfast faith. There are many examples of ecumenical writings and the use of twentieth century writers is inspiring. The “Magnificat” is woven into each section as a beginning and the traditional “Litany of Loretto” brings it to a conclusion.

On its own this would make for an excellent daily meditation and prayer source and would be an excellent resource for preaching on Marian feasts and during Advent.

Cornelius ‘Con’ O’Mahony is pastor of St. Aloysius Parish in Kitchener, Ontario. He lectures extensively in liturgy, catechetics, and parish ministry.

Choir Director Basics, by Oliver Douberly (Portland: Pastoral Press, 2002); 117 pages, $14.95 US.

Doublerly’s book is intended for the new Church choir director or as a reminder for the seasoned one. I found its treatment of the task of the choir director to be informative, interesting and comprehensive, although in an introductory way. After an interesting prologue about the music minister’s craft and vocation, Doublerly includes chapters about the physical placement of the choir and some inaugural preparations, e.g. setting up a library, buying music, engaging instrumentalists, personal preparation, etc. In Part Two (four chapters) he includes very practical suggestions about the rehearsal: prayer, posture and breathing, the warm-ups and how to rehearse a hymn. Part Three, entitled “Choral Sound,” deals with musical items such as tempo, rhythm, ensemble sound and even basic conducting techniques. This chapter is more suited to someone without formal music training. Part Four addresses the actual Sunday celebration and Part Five is all about administration.

There are two weaknesses I find with the book. First, there isn’t an extensive treatment of the importance of the choir director’s knowledge of the liturgy. A good music minister must at least know basic liturgical principles. Second, I think that Doublerly overestimates the amount of time available to a music minister. For example, there are few choir directors, if any, who have de-briefing time after each rehearsal to examine both their own and the choir’s performance or time to do a similar stock-taking after each Sunday celebration. There is no doubt that regular assessment is a good thing but twice weekly is certainly beyond my time limits!

The “Ten Commandments for Music Ministers” and the “Select Bibliograph,” which conclude the book are good.

Half of this pocketsize book deals with the “spirituality” of the Church musician as articulated by John Michael Talbot. The rest of the book deals, in a very brief and cursory way, with the biblical and doctrinal background, along with some history of Church music. With so many better books available on the music ministry, and in consideration of the fact that most music ministers do not have a great deal of reading time, this is not recommend for reading.

Heather Reid has master’s degrees in music and liturgy. She is currently director of music at St. Basil’s Parish, Ottawa, chair of the Ontario Liturgical Conference, and a member of the National Council for Liturgy.

Music

On This Day: Music for Sunday and the Season of Ordinary Time, by Ricky Manalo (Portland, OR: OCP Publications, 2003); 12 songs, CD ($15.95 US) and Songbook ($10.95 US).

Ricky Manalo offers some pleasant pieces in a contemporary style. The songbook provides both guitar and choir/organ scores. However, parishes looking for new liturgical repertoire need to exercise caution in music selection; this collection illustrates some key things to watch for.

“Come to Our Gathering,” because it is addressed to humans, is best used before the Sunday liturgy as a call to worship. “Mater Ecclesiae” is a laudable effort at a post-Vatican II Marian song. This piece clearly places Mary in the worshipping assembly. I would not recommend that it be sung during the Sunday eucharist, but it would certainly serve as a good prelude to Mass on Marian feasts. “Saints of the Americas/Litany of Saints” is presented as a combination of the litany and a song that includes verses based on the beatitudes, but this is very long. If one omits the beatitude song verses, the piece provides a viable choice for parishes looking for a new setting of this litany. The songbook includes a very complete list of saints and blesseds of the Americas along with a pronunciation guide.

Liturgical song, as distinct amidst the whole gamut of religious music, should be prayer to God. At eucharist, the dominant theme should be praise. Several of the pieces in On This Day fail in this regard. “With One Voice” and “Many and Great” are about us and do not turn to praise of God. “Song of the Servant” is written in the voice of God addressing us. Two of the pieces, “On This Day” and “Now Is the Time,” even Manalo himself describes in the accompanying notes as teaching songs.

An additional caution with this collection is that many of the songs have verses that begin on unstressed beats; this can make it difficult to bring an assembly in. This collection is not recommended for use in the liturgical assembly.

Margaret Bick, editor of the National Bulletin on Liturgy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>English Title</th>
<th>Latin Title</th>
<th>DOL</th>
<th>Internet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSL</td>
<td>Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (1963)</td>
<td>Sacrosanctum Concilium</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>V, I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDC</td>
<td>General Directory for Catechesis (1997)</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>V, I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIRM</td>
<td>General Instruction of the Roman Missal (1975)</td>
<td>Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IO</td>
<td>(First) Instruction on the orderly carrying out of the Constitution on the Liturgy (1964)</td>
<td>Inter Oecumenici</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Fifth Instruction on the right implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (2001)</td>
<td>Liturgiam Authenticam</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (1965)</td>
<td>Nostrae Aetate</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBL</td>
<td>National Bulletin on Liturgy</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCIA</td>
<td>Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (1985)</td>
<td>Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adultorum</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LG</td>
<td>Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (1964)</td>
<td>Lumen Gentium</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>V, I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV</td>
<td>Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (1965)</td>
<td>Dei Verbum</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>V, I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS</td>
<td>Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (1965)</td>
<td>Gaudium et Spes</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>V, I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 www.vatican.va
3 www.intratext.com (offers a concordance of all documents in the collection)
4 www.catholicliturgy.com
Your Turn

Got something to say about the National Bulletin on Liturgy? Topics you think people need help with? Ideas for helpful things we could put in the Bulletin? Let us know how we can be more helpful. Just copy and enlarge the form below or use your own stationery to send us your thoughts about this or any other issue of the Bulletin or just about the Bulletin in general:

National Bulletin on Liturgy,
2500 Don Reid Dr., Ottawa, ON K1H 2J2
Fax: 416-461-0174  E-mail: mbick@cccb.ca

About This Issue
Which articles did you find most helpful or informative? ____________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Which were neither? _______________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________
What do you think should have been included and wasn’t? _________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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Would you recommend this issue of the Bulletin to others? _________________________________________________________
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About Bulletin # __________
Which articles did you find most helpful or informative? __________________________________________________________
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__________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Which were neither? _______________________________________________________________________________________
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What do you think should have been included and wasn’t? _________________________________________________________
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Would you recommend this issue of the Bulletin to others? _________________________________________________________
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About the Bulletin in General
Which issues of the Bulletin have you found most helpful or informative? _____________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Which were neither? _______________________________________________________________________________________
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Your Turn

What topics should we address in future issues? (Be as specific as you can about questions and areas of concern.)

__________________________________________________________________________
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Any other ideas about what might be helpful to readers?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
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The more we know about our readers, the more we can serve their needs. We would appreciate it if you would provide the following information:

■ Reader Information

What, if any, is your involvement in liturgical ministry?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Describe your pastoral situation:
parish, diocesan, religious community, other?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

size of above community?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

rural or urban?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Sunday worship led by priest?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

frequency of Sunday worship without a priest?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

How long have you been receiving the National Bulletin on Liturgy?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

How did you hear about the National Bulletin on Liturgy?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
THE INITIATION EXPERIENCE INSTITUTES present the compelling vision and pastoral skills to implement the initiation process and emphasize the relationship of good liturgy to good catechesis.

BEGINNINGS & BEYOND INSTITUTE
July 11–16, 2004 Diocese of Gary (IN) – with a rural focus
July 25–30, 2004, Diocese of Winona (MN) – with a rural focus
August 1–6, 2004, Diocese of Ogdensburg (NY)
   – with a dialogue group on children's issues
August 1–6, 2004, Diocese of Helena (MT)
October 17–22, 2004, Archdiocese of Winnipeg, (MB)

BEGINNINGS "PLUS" INSTITUTES
July 15–18, 2004, Diocese of Trenton (NJ)
November 11–14, 2004, Diocese of Greensburg (PA)

BEGINNINGS INSTITUTE
August 6–8, 2004, Diocese of Grand Rapids (MI)

THE FOCUS ON INITIATION INSTITUTES concentrate on specific aspects of initiation using presentations, celebrations of the rites, and small group discussions. It is preferable that they follow the "Initiation Experience Institutes."

CHILDREN AND CHRISTIAN INITIATION
August 26–28, 2004, Archdiocese of Detroit (MI)

THE INITIATING COMMUNITY INSTITUTES explore advanced issues of implementation for experienced ministers as they broaden the initiation experience to include the entire community. Small groups discuss, share, and critique models.

DEVELOPING THE MINISTRIES
July 8–10, 2004, Archdiocese of Seattle (WA)

ECCHING GOD'S WORD
August 12–14, 2004, Diocese of Portland (ME)

AMBASSADORS OF CHRIST: BUILDING RECONCILING COMMUNITIES explores the faces of alienation and methods of reaching out to the alienated and examines theological, pastoral, and psychological implications of reconciliation. Celebrate liturgical rites.
October 28–30, 2004, Diocese of Rochester (NY)
In 1984 I was asked to represent our diocese of Prince Albert at a meeting of the Western Liturgical Conference and to bring back useful ideas. That was the beginning of many years of involvement in matters liturgical at the diocesan level. From the start, it was clear that a group of interested, committed people—a diocesan liturgy commission—was absolutely necessary. Several people already had a strong experience of liturgical education and planning through parish committees, and were eager to take up the challenge of promoting liturgical formation and renewal across the diocese. Though much had been done, there had been no diocesan-wide initiatives for liturgical development.

The years that followed saw the organization of numerous workshops and training sessions, reflection upon liturgical issues, the setting forth of guidelines, and the preparation and coordination of diocesan celebrations, and, through it all, the education of our members, by means of attendance at summer programs and at conferences. All this generated excitement and energy as we grew in our understanding of liturgy and strove to share this with people from all across our diocese.

As a commission, we took on the practice of having sessions prior to Advent and Lent every year. These sessions, while presenting resources for the upcoming liturgical season, were also the occasion for a liturgical formation and training in our diocese. Our early efforts centred around the proclamation of the word, music ministry, preaching, art and environment, communion, lay-led services, etc. Often we would also organize an annual liturgical conference, inviting in a gifted speaker to lead us into a deeper reflection on one aspect or another. These sessions and conferences provided rich on-going opportunities for people to gather and grow together, supporting each other across the diocese in developing strong liturgical understanding and practices.

I read with interest Sheila Finnerty’s account of the development in the Archdiocese of Ottawa and their very wise emphasis on the Sunday eucharist and on the liturgical year as the main focus in liturgical formation for people. I caught the same sense of how it is indeed such rewarding work to help people come to an experience of beautiful, life-giving liturgy. As members of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission it was personally enriching for us to be part of this awakening and development of the richness of the Church’s prayer life, to see increased participation and especially increased understanding and depth in so many people as they engaged the liturgical life of their parishes. (And, I must add, our efforts were certainly strengthened by our Commission’s close participation in the conferences and efforts of the Western Liturgical Conference).

While I am no longer part of the Prince Albert diocese, I know the commission continues with much vibrancy; the diocese has even seen fit to hire a half-time liturgical director. Now, my experience is with the liturgical commission in the diocese of Saskatoon which also has a history of and is continuing to energetically promote strong liturgy.

In closing, I can only say that a diocesan liturgical commission is a very great asset for any diocese. And I believe such commissions are more than ever necessary in our present phase of the implementation of Vatican II as we continue on and deepen the liturgical renewal movement especially in regards to the liturgical spirituality that must undergird all our liturgical practices.
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