

SHEPHERDS AFTER MY OWN HEART
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For National Priestly Ongoing
Formation

Lit 30/4

Course 35, Module on Sacred Liturgy

LITURGICAL
REMINDERS

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Contents

PARTICIPANTS.....	3
INTRODUCTION	6
QUESTION BOX	11
THE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.....	16
PLACE OF THE EUCHARIST IN A PRIEST’S LIFE	22
OUR ATTITUDE TO CELEBRATING MASS.....	23
FACTORS THAT HINDER THE FRUITFULNESS OF THE EUCHARIST ..	27
<i>Position of the Eucharist in my scale of values</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>State of our soul.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Fatigue.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Lack of Liturgical books</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Activities that we find more interesting</i>	<i>28</i>
HOW TO BENEFIT FROM DAILY CELEBRATION OF MASS.....	29
<i>Prepare the Rite.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Prepare the homily</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Concentrate on what you say.....</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Confess</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Pray before and after Mass</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Celebrate The Liturgy of the Hours.....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Let go of “the Sin that Clings so Easily”</i>	<i>33</i>
BASIC GUIDELINES REGARDING MASS.....	35
INTRODUCTORY RITE.....	35
<i>Entrance Procession.....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Opening hymn.....</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Veneration of the altar and the tabernacle.....</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>The Sign of the Cross and Greeting.....</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Introduction of the Mass.....</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Penitential Rite</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>The Gloria</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Opening Prayer</i>	<i>44</i>
LITURGY OF THE WORD	46
<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Readings and their Proclamation.....</i>	<i>47</i>

<i>The Responsorial Psalm</i>	48
<i>Readers</i>	49
<i>The Gospel</i>	52
<i>The Homily</i>	55
<i>Silence</i>	56
<i>Profession of Faith</i>	57
<i>Prayers of the Faithful</i>	58
LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST.....	62
<i>Main parts</i>	62
<i>Presentation of the Gifts</i>	62
<i>Eucharistic Prayer</i>	64
<i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	65
<i>The Rite of Peace</i>	66
<i>The Breaking of Bread</i>	67
<i>The Commingling</i>	67
<i>Agnus Dei</i>	67
<i>Silent Prayer of the Priest</i>	68
<i>Communion Rite</i>	68
<i>Thanksgiving</i>	73
<i>Concluding Prayer</i>	73
CONCLUDING RITES.....	74
<i>Announcements</i>	74
<i>Mass stipends and intentions</i>	75
<i>Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist</i>	75
SOME SELECTED SACRAMENTS	77
RECONCILIATION.....	77
ANOINTING OF THE SICK.....	80
MARRIAGE.....	84
FUNERALS	86
RÉSUMÉ	87
INDEX	94

INTRODUCTION

The one-day colloquium on Sacred Liturgy is dedicate to:

- answering of participants' questions on the liturgy accruing from their own experience and observations in their different pastoral situations
- An input on a chosen topic on the liturgy deemed to be relevant and timely.
- Group discussions aimed at sharing experiences and insights.

The question box

Liturgy is an integral part of a priest's daily pastoral life; a priest who works in a parish celebrates Mass daily, hears confessions, baptizes, weds couples, anoints the sick, and buries the dead. The priest leads the faithful in adoration and benediction. He prepares people for the reception of the different sacraments. Even one who is assigned in an institution or diocesan department cannot divorce liturgy from his daily activities. He has at least the celebration of Mass and that of the liturgy of the hours.

Because liturgy is part and parcel of a priest's daily life, every priest who comes to the course has considerable liturgical experience. His liturgical practice from the time of ordination to the present moment has taught him what works and what does not work. At the same time many questions come up in the course of that practice. He can recall moments when he was in doubt on the proper thing to do and did not have someone to consult. He may have

worked out his own way of doing things and is not sure whether he is correct or not. The way other priests perform the liturgy may have raised doubts in his mind. The question box provides an opportunity to air out such questions. Even one who has no questions of his own might benefit from the sharing of others.

Participants are invited to place in the box whatever question on the liturgy they may have. In particular, they are to think of those questions which aim at improving liturgical ministry. The question box is put out some days before in order to give the facilitator a chance to prepare the answers. Obviously, no one has got all the answers. Questions whose answers are related to a particular diocese or ecclesiastical region might feature under the discussion. The same applies to questions whose answers vary according to individual experience.

In this summary booklet is printed the questions from the box together with their corresponding answers.

The In-put

Besides the question box the facilitator prepares some topic on the liturgy to be given in the second session. We are all aware that there is always something new to learn. Absorbed in the ministry in parishes and other places of pastoral work, we may be unaware of the constant effort by the universal Church to renew and update its liturgy. The course provides a wonderful occasion to address such new trends. Besides, the facilitator may have observed through the different celebrations by the participants a particular area in the liturgy that necessitates a general consideration. Or again the recurrence of a particular issue in the question box may require that such an issue be treated in a more

comprehensive manner.¹ Moreover, we can all benefit from hearing again things we know already but have forgotten or taken for granted.

QUESTION BOX

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¹ However, topics inspired by the questions in the box are more likely to provide subject matter for the next priestly session, since there would be too little time for the preparation and delivery of such topics in the present session.

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THE DISCUSSIONS

The areas proposed for discussion in this particular session are:

1. The effectiveness of our celebration of Mass; focusing on our ministry of preaching.
2. The effectiveness of our celebration of sacraments and sacramentals; focusing on the sacraments of Reconciliation.

Obviously, these selected areas are too extensive to be discussed exhaustively within a single day. Any one of them could require several days, if not weeks, to be studied. For that reason the discussion needs to be very much restricted and streamlined. The participants are invited to share in the light of their own pastoral *experience or observation* of others' experience. On each question they share about a) what they have experienced or observed, positive and negative b) how they would wish things to be, and c) how to achieve the desired goal.

To articulate the method more technically, we deal first with the *present scenario*, secondly with the *preferred scenario* and thirdly with the *future scenario*. It is a method commonly used in counselling but that can be applied in a liturgical discussion as well.

Concretely the questions are the following:

1. Share your experience of listening to a good preacher and listening to a bad preacher. Share your experience of the joys and difficulties of preaching at Mass. How do you prepare your homily? What do you consider to be good preaching? How can this be achieved?

2. How is confession for you as a penitent? As a confessor?
How is the situation of confession in your area of work?
How can things be improved?

During the discussion there must be a secretary to write down the deliberations. Later these deliberations are given to the facilitator who edits them to include them in the session booklet.

THE IN-PUT

Apart from the introductory theme “the Eucharist in the Life of a Priest”, the input consists largely in a doctrinal supplement to the discussions covered. It is a synthesis of the teaching of the Church on the areas covered and our pastoral experience.

After the session the booklet is edited to include the results of the question box and the discussions. Its content is also re-edited to eliminate what is of less importance or well known to this particular group and to include areas that are considered to require greater attention as a result of the session.

The booklet is meant to be a modest kind of liturgical companion during ministry. For that reason all the paragraphs in the doctrinal section are numbered for ease of reference. At the end there is a brief index to assist the search for particular topics that may not be outlined in the Table of Contents.

QUESTION BOX

1. Is it possible for an unbaptised adult to receive the sacrament of Penance before receiving Baptism and First Holy Communion?

It is possible but not necessary. The sacrament of Baptism removes original sin, as well as any other sin committed before its reception. Baptism is the sacrament that constitutes children of God and members of the Church, so it is the first sacrament to be received. All other sacraments are administered to members of the Church, therefore, to people who are already baptized. This should be clearly explained to the baptismal candidate.

An adult entering the Church might benefit with some kind of counselling in order to see how best to overcome weaknesses in his or her life, in the same way as counselling is sometimes given in the context of the sacrament of Reconciliation. That can be given before Baptism and First Holy Communion, but not as a form of sacrament.

2. Why don't we place the cross on the altar here when saying Mass?

We don't place a cross at the altar because we do already have a cross behind the altar. A duplication or multiplication of religious symbols is not necessary. The purpose of a cross at the altar is to remind us of the sacrifice and suffering the Lord underwent to give us this sacrament of his love. We do not need two crucifixes to be reminded of that.

Normally in a Church there is a crucifix hanging in a prominent place either above or behind the altar. This is sufficient. When Mass is celebrated outside a church building, or within a Church that for some reason lacks a cross placed in a prominent place for all to see, then it is necessary to have a cross at the altar or on the side of the altar.

However, when there has been a procession preceded by a cross, usually that cross is placed in an honorable position, say on the side of the altar, even where you have a big cross behind.

3. What is the right liturgical posture for the praying of the “Our Father?”

It is better perhaps to talk of the customary rather than the “right” liturgical posture for the Our Father. Gestures and postures are necessitated by our being limitations as human being, with a spiritual and material nature. We want to communicate to the divine who is pure spirit, but we can only do so as we are. In other words, we compose ourselves and reflect on what we are doing (spiritual nature) and we use movements of our bodies to accompany our sentiments (physical nature). The outside signs are conditioned by our cultural background.

To use an example from the secular world, many cultures shake their heads to indicate negation and nod them to indicate assent or approval. Indians shake their heads to indicate approval. What matters is the inner sentiment and the fact that the gesture is understood within the context of the culture in which it is applied.

The customary and widely used gesture for the Our Father is the opening of the hands and raising them slightly in front. It is a favorite gesture of petitionary prayer, and the Our Father is one of these. Normally, the main celebrant who prays on behalf of the congregation uses this gesture in the presidential prayers, (that is prayers specific to him as presider). However, at the Our Father he invites each and every one to pray directly and confidently to the heavenly Father as Jesus Christ taught us. So at this moment it makes sense that everyone can use the gesture of petition to the Father.

There are many cultures where the gesture is left to the main celebrant and perhaps the concelebrants. As already said, this is also acceptable, as long as it is customary in these cultures.

For the sake of unity in worship the General Introduction to the Roman Missal makes a minimum of prescription of the more widely acceptable gestures, and leaves others to the discretion of individual Episcopal Conferences or groups of Episcopal Conferences. With regard to the gesture accompanying the Our Father the General Instruction speaks only about the celebrant. This does not mean that it forbids or allows the congregation to use the same gesture. Here is what it says.

The priest invites the people to pray, and all should say this prayer with him. The invitation is made with joined hands, while the actual praying is done with outstretched hands.²

Elevation of the hands has always been used by the celebrant, for instance during the presidential prayers and at principal consecratory actions. However, traditionally it was not a gesture exclusive to the main celebrant. Rather it was used by the entire congregation in the early Church. This is attested to in the ancient liturgical texts and from iconography. The gesture was also widely used at Jewish worship.³

² *General Instruction 2002*, no. 152.

³ *Exodus* 9:29 Moses said to [Pharaoh], "As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the Lord's. *Exodus* 17: 9-12, Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands grew weary; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; so his hands were steady until the sun set. *Psalms* 28:2, Hear the voice of my supplication, as I cry to you for help, as I lift up my hands toward your most holy sanctuary. *Isaiah* 1:15, when you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. *Lamentations* 3:41, Let us lift up our hearts as well as our hands to God in heaven.

4. This year the feast of the Uganda Martyrs (3rd June) coincided with the solemnity of the Holy Trinity. The Church in Uganda celebrated Martyrs' Day instead of Trinity Sunday. Why?

The celebration of the Uganda Martyrs is indicated as a memorial in the Universal Calendar, but it is celebrated as a solemnity in Uganda. It is normal practice throughout the Catholic Church for regions to celebrate as solemnities particular saints of special importance to them, who otherwise in the General Calendar are commemorated as memorials or even optional memorials. Another example is the feast of St. Patrick which in Ireland is celebrated as a solemnity whereas in the rest of the world it is a memorial. St. Patrick evangelized this nation and is of special importance to the nationals.

When such a local solemnity coincides with a more important solemnity in the universal calendar, then the local Church (the Episcopal Conference) has the prerogative to make a decision which celebration to suppress or shift, guided by the pastoral good of the people. If they have a particular calendar published, such decisions are foreseen and permission for them is sought from and granted by the Congregation for Divine Worship in Rome.

You probably recall that a few years ago again the celebration of the Uganda Martyrs coincided with the solemnity of Pentecost. Many pilgrims who came had in mind a single idea, namely the Uganda Martyrs. But it is not difficult to show them that the Uganda Martyrs attained to their victory solely through the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

5. Here at the institute we have to set time aside for a singing practice in preparation for daily and Sunday liturgy, if we are to have a vivid and lively praise of the Lord.

I agree with the statement. Every good liturgy has to be prepared well, and this includes singing. Even though we may not all be

gifted in singing, our singing could greatly improve if we practiced before.

However, like in many other matters the staff of St. Augustine's institute is keenly aware that the participants are mature priests. For that reason maximum room is given to personal initiative. The participants are free to discuss the possibility of setting aside time for practice for singing. Past groups have proposed to themselves such devotional practices like the Way of the Cross during Lent and the celebration of the Rosary. When a decision of that kind is decided upon by the group, the institution administration gives whatever necessary assistance is required. What is avoided is giving people the impression that they are back to the seminary, which is not the case.

6. Both the staff and participant priests should be allocated time in the rota to act as main celebrants during the celebration of the Eucharist. This will enhance a better spirit of unity and a sense of family in the praise and service of the Lord of the Lord.

The staff has in fact been indicated time for the celebration as main celebrants during the last week of the course, aside from the fact that the inaugural Mass was celebrated by one of them. This is normal practice of the institute.

THE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Share your experience of listening to a good preacher and listening to a bad preacher. Share your experience of the joys and difficulties of preaching at Mass. How to you prepare your homily? What do you consider to be good preaching? How can this be achieved?

A bad preacher:

Irritates

Is dogmatic

Offends the hearers

Has no sense of time

Is pinned to the homily notes

Wastes the time of the hearers

Makes one feel ashamed of him

Uses examples to brag or show off

Makes you wonder when he will end

Shares uninspiring personal experiences

Moves up and down the isle like an actor

Preaches what is irrelevant to people's life

Cannot hide the fact that he is ill-prepared

Beats about the bush without being focused

Applies humour for the sake of entertaining

Gives scandalous examples from personal life

Makes one feel a desire to correct his mistakes

Does not challenge the congregation to action

Substitutes proper readings with those that suit him

Preaches about people and not the gospel of salvation

Uses complicated concepts that only confuse the assembly

A good preacher:

Inspires
Prepares well
Is spontaneous
Talks to the heart
Challenges to action
Makes one grow in faith
Pays attention to the readings
Does not preach for too long
Preaches along a central theme
Keeps one awake and attentive
Makes the listeners feel touched
Shares life experiences, not just stories
Is relevant to the life of the congregation
Makes one feel that he should continue preaching
Has ideas that are remembered long after the homily
Applies humour while remaining focused on the theme

The joy of preaching

It When I have prepared I feel confident
I feel good after delivering a good homily
I feel happy when people clap after my homily
I am grateful when people give positive feedback
I feel elated when I sense that people are attentive
People elevate me by thanking me for a good homily
People who ask me for a copy of my homily uplift me
It is satisfying to see people change after listening to me
The encouragement of people challenges me prepare more
I am encouraged when people inquire about a specific point
I have a sense of fulfillment preaching to large congregation

Difficulties of preaching

I don't find it easy to preach to children
A reader that does not read well upsets me
I feel nervous when I have not prepared well
I dislike having to reprimand the congregation
I feel unsure before an unfamiliar congregation
I find it difficult to preach to a mixed congregation
Preaching to a critical congregation makes me tense
Sometimes I cannot find an inspiration for a homily
Noise and disorder during the homily is disconcerting
Noticing people sleeping, walking out, or obviously bored
Lack of feedback after a well prepared homily discourages
Having to wake up in the night in order to finalize a homily
I find it difficult to preach about readings that challenge me
Photographers, poor microphones, etc can distract preaching

How to prepare a homily well

Pray to God just before Mass
Read and reflect on the readings
Discuss the homily with colleagues
I gather ideas from listening to the radio
Pray for God's guidance before the preparation
Develop your thoughts around one central theme
Listen to other preachers on Catholic FM stations
Prepare a day or two before unless pressed by time
Refer to commentaries only after personal reflection
Trust in the power of God when readings appear dry
Type the homily, but you don't have to read the notes
Write out main points of the homily in summary form
Make use of relevant quotations to supplement message
Take note of ordinary events that can be inserted in homily

2. How is confession for you as a penitent? As a confessor? How is the situation of confession in your area of work? How can things be improved?

As a penitent

Confess often

Confess regularly

Confession cleanses

Confession is healing

Confession humbles me

Confession brings me relief

Confession strengthens my faith

Going to confession is challenge to me

After confession I feel healed and at peace

Confession teaches me to become merciful

Confession reminds me that I am not perfect

I feel more comfortable confessing to my age mates

I feel insecure and exposed, confessing to many priests

It takes me great courage to decide to go to confession

Confession makes me more understanding to penitents

I feel ashamed and guilty taking long without confession

I draw strength from confessing to face challenges ahead

Confession helps me to encourage others to do the same

I particularly feel guilty at consecration with a burden of sin

As a confessor

It is a joy to hear confession
I am reminded of God's mercy
I feel thankful for the trust of penitents
I feel unworthy to stand in God's shoes
I resent penitents that are dirty and smelly
Others' petty sins make me feel so humbled
I am wearied by listening to irrelevant stories
This sacrament teaches me patience and listening
I am reminded that I am a channel of God's mercy
Others' confessions challenge my state of life as well
I resent penitents who talk ill of others in confession
Hearing others confess makes me aware of my spiritual needs
I am always disposed to hear the confession of those who ask
Confessions just before mass at times make me to alter homily
I resent penitents who are not satisfied with previous confessors
It is tiring for me to hear the monotonous confession of children

The situation of confession in my area of work:

Many come late for confession
A few come only during Advent and Lent
We give time for confession every Saturday
The same people normally come for confession
Mostly children and women come to confession
Announce special times for confession before Mass
The youth and men are reluctant to go to confession
People are given opportunity to confess daily after Mass
Schedule time for confession before safaris in outstations
There are more penitents in outstations than in main church
Evidently many people go to communion without confession

How can things be improved?

Make use of penitential services

Give deeper catechesis about the sacrament

Make use of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Invite other priests to hear people's confessions

Prepare convenient private places for confession

Continue to be faithful to the timetable for confession

Show people the relation between the Eucharist and confession

PLACE OF THE EUCHARIST IN A PRIEST'S LIFE

A priest who has served in the pastoral ministry for a considerable period already knows much about the Eucharist: from his own seminary formation, from the daily celebration since ordination, and from instructing others about the sacrament. This theme is proposed, not as a study session about the Eucharist, but as a reflection aiming at two things: 1) That our fervor in the Eucharist may be renewed in us as individual priests, and 2) that we may be more capable of transmitting to faithful under our charge, not just knowledge about the Eucharist but above all, love and devotion for the sacrament..

The ultimate goal is that our lives may be transformed by the Eucharist; for Christian life is much more than pious sentiments. In other words, the goal is that our celebration may reflect what we believe and teach, and that it may be reflected in how we live.

This theme was partly inspired by the latest Apostolic Letter of the Holy Father entitled *Sacramentum Caritatis* (The Sacrament of Love), which came out on the feast of the Chair of St. Peter, on 22nd February this year 2007. In this Apostolic Letter the Holy Father re-emphasizes what had already been stressed at the Second Vatican Council, and more recently during the Year of the Eucharist, that the Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life. This is very clearly brought out in the structure of the Letter.

The Apostolic Letter is divided into three parts: 1) Eucharist, mystery to be believed, 2) Eucharist, mystery to be celebrated, and 3) Eucharist, mystery to be lived. It evokes a well-known concept among liturgists and sacramental theologians: *Lex credendi, lex*

orandi, lex vivendi: The law of faith, is the law of prayer, it is the law of life; what we believe, is what we celebrate, is what we live. In other words the Pope examines 1) the attitude we should have *before* we approach the Eucharist, 2) how we should celebrate *during* the Eucharist, and 3) how we should live *after* the Eucharist. These three aspects cover practically the entire Christian life.

I can never forget the late professor Triacca who pumped this concept into my head once and for all. I had failed his exam, so he gave me an oral reseat. During the reseat he asked me to summarize the theology of the Eucharist in three words *only*. I looked at the man and thought he was a kind of sadist. I tried to tell him all that I had been revising but he insisted on his three words. If I started by saying: “You see...” he would interrupt me and say: “those are two!” I think I failed again but he was merciful not to fail me twice. He then told me the answer. The words were *mystery, action, life*. These are the three subdivisions of *Sacramentum Caritatis*: The *mystery* we believe, is celebrated in a liturgical *action*, and actualized in our *life*.

If all Christian life should flow from what we celebrate, and if what we celebrate should reflect what we believe, then the priests who teach others what they believe and who celebrate the Eucharist for them have a great responsibility even with regard to how believers live and behave.

OUR ATTITUDE TO CELEBRATING MASS

Many are aware of the canon in the Code that states that the daily celebration of Mass is highly recommended to priests. Many have also met priests who argue that since according to this canon Mass is not obligatory, therefore they are justified to celebrate it only when they have to, that is for the people.

However, we are also aware that within the greater part of our local Church, the celebration of Mass is as regular for an average

Catholic priest as a daily meal. The majority of us if not all of us feel there is something missing if for some reason or another we cannot celebrate our daily Mass. Most find some way of going to Mass even during difficult circumstances. Those who can afford it carry around portable Mass kits for that purpose.

Precisely because it is a daily activity there is danger sometimes that it becomes a routine; something to go through and have done with. It is possible to listen to readings and at the end not to recall at all what was said in them. It is possible to let the lips say the prayers without paying attention to what the words mean. It is possible to accept stipends and say the intentions so casually or even to forget to say them at all. We can even come to a point where we perceive the Mass as a burden. We can wonder in frustration what to tell the people in the homily.

Of course, it would be unrealistic to expect that our attention can be held 100% at every Mass, or that we feel inspired every time we preach a homily. As long as we are in this world, a sense of dryness constitutes part of the journey of growth. Prayer now and then is indeed a *sacrifice* of praise. What is important is that we look positively at the sacrificial element, and that we never give up, even when the sacrifice seems too great.

I have met priests who pounce at every opportunity to say Mass for others. In the seminary, as one responsible for the organization of the liturgy, I knew priests I could rely on to jump in and save an emergency situation when we had no main celebrant. However, these are few in my experience. Unpleasant as this might sound, I think it is not an exaggeration to state that generally priests are reluctant to act as main celebrant at Mass, particularly if they are required to preach. I have seen it in the seminary; I have seen it when we gather for retreats in my diocese; I have seen it at other occasions. I have heard stories of others who have seen it too. And I observe it within myself sometimes! Perhaps those attending this session are an exception to this tendency.

There is the story of one priest who asked his friend to stand in for him because he would not be around. He then turned up the next morning in the sacristy. The friend was surprised to see him vest as a concelebrant, but said nothing. As usual the concelebrant walked ahead of the main celebrant. He opened the sacristy door and stepped out into the sanctuary. What the would-be main celebrant did was to close the door after him, go back into the sacristy, unvest and walk out of the sacristy.

Priests are willing enough to be main celebrants when it is their turn to do so according to the rota, but in my experience there are few who volunteer when all of a sudden it turns out that the one supposed to lead has for some reason not appeared.

One of the reasons why we feel reluctant to lead Mass is that it takes effort to preach. You need to recollect yourself in order to talk sense. You need to have looked at the readings and reflected on them, and this takes time and effort. I do not think I am the only one who usually looks at readings only when it is my turn to lead the Mass. This creates a reluctance to take over if for some reason the one on duty is not present. And so it is not uncommon for a priest to complain or even to rebel when told at the last moment that he is to celebrate Mass, particularly when he is expected to preach. Such complaint is justified; if I am expected to do a good job I have the right to know ahead of time.

However, it is not in order to be prepared for the eventuality that someone calls on us at the last moment to celebrate Mass and to preach that I propose that we reflect on the proposed theme. Rather, it is because we ourselves stand to gain much more from the Eucharist if we put in all the necessary effort that I propose this theme.

Our reflection is in three phases:

- What are the necessary conditions if the Eucharist is to be effective in our daily activity?

- What are the things that hinder it from being effective?
- What am I going to do as an individual in order to increase its effectiveness in my life and ministry?

Some personal inspirations for reflection during your private time

- What would you say is the effect of the celebration of Mass this morning on your activities of today since this morning? Can you recall what was contained in the readings? Any point that inspired you or has some relevance on your activities?
- What is your usual reaction when asked to lead the Mass on an occasion when you are not required to?
- Do you recall occasions when you volunteered to lead the Mass when you were not required to?
- How do you prepare your celebration on those occasions when you are not the main celebrant?

How do I know that the Eucharist is Effective in my Life?

- You must not expect concrete results. When we think we are making great progress in spiritual life we might actually be regressing.
- You can feel it? You are eager to celebrate it. You feel a sense of fulfillment when you do it. You feel that something is missing when you do not.
- The reaction of others. Some may tell you directly. You can sense their sincerity or lack of it. Usually they point out something that they found inspiring.
- You remember phrases or elements of your reflection even at the right moment.
- General growth in love, in patience, in understanding of others, in self control.

FACTORS THAT HINDER THE FRUITFULNESS OF THE EUCHARIST

POSITION OF THE EUCHARIST IN MY SCALE OF VALUES

I give time and effort to things that are important in my life. I dedicate less time and effort to things I consider of less importance. Within the many activities including pastoral administration, attending of meetings, personal projects, relatives, etc. the Eucharist might assume a secondary place.

STATE OF OUR SOUL

Our faults, however small and insignificant, when unchecked weaken us by degrees and erode our resolutions. They are like a tiny leakage on a water tank. You can see a tank full of water with a very small leakage. It looks insignificant compared to the large volume. But when left to go on, it widens the opening as the rust eats into the metal, and it eventually becomes a major problem. We can grow weary of sacred things. We can lose fervor and get too used to the sacred.

Bigger faults create within us a correspondingly greater sense of guilt. To celebrate Mass with mortal sin replaces love for God with fear and remorse. Because remorse and fear are unpleasant, we either get rid of them correctly through the sacrament of reconciliation or we try to repress them. When we do the latter our fervor may die out all together. We soon slide into laziness with regard to holy things. This laziness also invades our other activities and duties.

Diminution of my faith also erodes my capacity to gain spiritually from the celebration of the daily Eucharist. If I do not believe strongly in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, if I consider as legends and myths the biblical stories I read – even

though I lack the courage to say that out loud – if do not believe that my prayers are actually answered, then the whole celebration of the Eucharist can become nothing less than a farce.

FATIGUE

How effectively I prepare for the Eucharist depends largely on the time of day. We all have our rhythm of work and rest; our pick hours as well as our lows. There are hours when we are most alert and active, as well as times when we feel most sluggish. If I have chosen a time when I feel most fatigued then perhaps, the likelihood is to fall asleep or to give up the activity and turn to something more interesting.

LACK OF LITURGICAL BOOKS

Sometimes we find ourselves in a place where we have no access to the necessary tools for preparation of the next day's liturgy. There are some basic books which every priest should have and should travel with whenever possible. These include the daily missal which combines both Missal and lectionary, the Ordo as well as the Breviary.

ACTIVITIES THAT WE FIND MORE INTERESTING

We are more inclined to dedicate time to those activities that we find more interesting, unless we consciously exert our will in opposition to our desires. It may be more interesting for me to watch television, or to read newspapers or to sleep or to engage in conversation, than to prepare for the Mass of the next day. All these activities have a place in my life, and I would myself a great disservice if I ignored them. But they have their place, and must not be allowed to supplant my duty and right to nourish my soul. The key issue is that of how I manage my time.

HOW TO BENEFIT FROM DAILY CELEBRATION OF MASS

PREPARE THE RITE

Consult the *Ordo* on the ceremony to be celebrated. Spare yourself the awkward situation in which you discover within the celebration of the liturgy that you prepared for the wrong day, or that you ignored a major feast. On this I talk from experience. I have known a number of occasions when I goofed, having prepared the wrong readings. After several such occasions I have learnt always to acquire my own personal *Ordo* at the beginning of the liturgical year, and to make it a point to consult it every time I am going to give a reflection about readings. But even then I am caught every now and then. Find your own way of avoiding preparing the wrong readings.

PREPARE THE HOMILY

The Reverend Louis J. Cameli wrote a humorous but insightful article in *Church* (Spring 1990) entitled “Six Ways to Preach a Truly Bad Homily.” He begins by saying: “It takes effort to preach a truly bad homily. Poor delivery – mumbling, shouting, monotoning, stammering – can enhance the badness of a homily. But the precious essence of a truly bad homily is content, and composition is the task.” Then he goes on to expound the “six ways” which consist in summary of: 1) moralizing (telling people what to do), 2) saying something nice to offer cheap comfort, 3) getting people “to sign up” or urging them to get involved in some parish activity, 4) telling a tale that has nothing to do with the message and whose purpose is for the preacher to sound interesting, 5) sharing about personal struggles which instead of consoling the congregation only scandalize or stir up pity and 6) repetition of dogmas without explaining or applying them.

All of us by now have our ways of preparing a homily. We do not need to be given a homiletic lesson again. The important thing to emphasize is not how we prepare, but that we prepare.

The people we minister to constantly observe us. They evaluate how we teach, how we relate to other fellow priests, how we relate to the faithful themselves, the kind of visitors we have, our attitude to prayer, to material things, etc. Above all they evaluate us when we preach. The person who has not prepared well constantly worries about this evaluation. This person worries about how he is performing. But the person who is well prepared is beyond this kind of worry. The only concern is that he has given to others the word of God; the word of life.

CONCENTRATE ON WHAT YOU SAY

Focus on the words as you speak them. Let them make sense to you. If you are addressing God the Father, be aware that you are speaking to God the Father. If you are speaking to the Son, be attentive to the fact that you are addressing the Son. If you are speaking to the congregation bear that in mind. It is only recently that I realized that most of the time in the Mass we are speaking to God the Father. The only moment we speak to Jesus is at the prayer for peace. This was when I make more concerted effort to pay attention to whom I was speaking with during the liturgy. None of us like to be addressed by someone who has something else altogether on their minds. Do not do that to God or to the congregation.

People who just read a text without paying attention to what it says are often betrayed when they make a glaring mistake and go on without being aware of what they have said. Do not allow such a thing to happen to you. Make use of moments of silence. Pause when necessary, but avoid dragging the liturgy. Do not impose your piety.

CONFESS

Go to confession whenever you need it and at the earliest possible opportunity. There is joy in being forgiven; a feeling of lightness of a clear conscience which those who receive the sacrament of Reconciliation understand very well. On the other hand, a regular penitent experiences a sensation of being weighed down and burdened; a feeling that something is not right when he or she goes to communion without prior sacramental confession of serious sins. If this person insists and goes to communion repeatedly against of this voice of conscience while it is possible for the person to receive confession first, the feeling diminishes by degrees. This is unfortunate, for it is the process of killing conscience. Correspondingly, the effects of the Eucharist in the person's life diminish.

The Eucharist is union with Christ who is holy. This union is not possible if we at the same time are united with some sin which we are not willing to give up. We read in the first letter of John 1:8-9: *"If we say we have no sin in us, we are deceiving ourselves and refusing to admit the truth; but if we acknowledge our sins, then God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and purify us from everything that is wrong..."*

The Church teaches us to liberate our consciences before participating in the Lord's Supper. We are instructed that:

Anyone who is conscious of grave sin may not celebrate Mass or receive the Body of the Lord without previously having been to sacramental confession, unless there is a grave reason and there is no opportunity to confess; in this case the person is to remember the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, which includes the resolve to go to confession as soon as possible⁴

Even in this stern requirement, the Church is conscious of pastoral situations in which it may be difficult for a communicant to receive confession of grave sin before celebrating the

⁴ Canon 916

Eucharist, even if the person may have wanted to. Therefore, there is a qualification to the quoted canon: "...unless there is a grave reason and there is no opportunity to confess..."

PRAY BEFORE AND AFTER MASS

It is not uncommon to see priests habitually coming into the sacristy at the last minute, breathless and wiping perspiration, with no time for reflection. It is a good habit to set one's time for entry into the church for Mass earlier than the actual time for starting in order to allow for private preparation. "A priest is not to omit dutifully to prepare himself by prayer before the celebration of the Eucharist, nor afterwards to omit to make thanksgiving to God."⁵ It is helpful to focus on what one is about to do, to recall the great mysteries one is about to approach. This evokes an attitude of humility and a sense of gratitude towards them. The same effort should be made through the celebration to focus attention on what one is doing, so that the words do not simply flow through the lips as it were. This focus of attention is made more real if the priest recalls that he is required to imitate what he celebrates and to model his life on it.⁶

The practice of spending time in a church before the celebration of Mass is not only beneficial to the celebrant, but also enlightening to the congregation. Obviously it must not be done for the purpose of edifying the on-lookers. It must also be said that in the case of concelebrated Masses concelebrants need this preparation in the same way as the main celebrant does. It is not uncommon on big celebration to see a priest 'sneaking' or 'sliding' into Mass that has already begun. This is forbidden. "No

⁵ Canon 909.

⁶ *Rite of Ordination of a Priest*, no. 14, 26: "know what you are doing and imitate the mystery you celebrate, make every effort to die to sin and to walk in the new life of Christ...imitate the mystery you celebrate: model your life on the mystery of the Lord's cross."

one is ever to enter into a concelebration or to be admitted as a concelebrant once the Mass has already begun.”⁷

CELEBRATE THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

As we read in the *General Instruction to the Liturgy of the Hours*, “the Liturgy of the Hours extends the Eucharist to the various hours of the day.”⁸ At the same time it is an excellent preparation for Mass. Already one finds much in it in reference to what is about to be celebrated in the Mass. Moreover the two forms of prayer follow the same liturgical calendar, for instance in the celebration of the liturgical seasons, celebration of the calendar of saints, offices of the dead, etc. Again the scriptural readings are selected in such a way that they complement.⁹

In order that the Liturgy of the Hours serve as preparation for Mass it is necessary that one celebrates it before the Eucharist. Thus Lauds precede morning Mass while Vespers precede Mass when celebrated in the evening.

LET GO OF “THE SIN THAT CLINGS SO EASILY”

In the letter to the Hebrews 12:1 we read: “*With so many witnesses in a great cloud on every side of us, we too, then, should throw off everything that hinders us, especially the sin that clings so easily, and keep running steadily in the race we have started. Let us not lose sight of Jesus, who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection...*”

⁷ *General Instruction* 2002, no. 206.

⁸ No. 12. Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 41.

⁹ “The arrangement for the reading of sacred scripture in the Office of Readings has taken account of both the sacred seasons during which certain books are traditionally read, and the sequence of readings at Mass. The reading of scripture in the Liturgy of the Hours is linked with and completes the reading at Mass; in this way the history of salvation is viewed as a whole. *General Instruction to the Liturgy of the Hours*, 143.

We all have gifts and talents; things we do so well and so easily and that others admire us for. But we also have weaknesses that are peculiar to us, flaws we have tried so hard in the past to overcome without success. Sometimes these flaws are imagined, and what we really need is to learn to be patient with ourselves and to accept our limitations. Such flaws can be a channel of grace towards humility. But it can also be that our weaknesses are actual sinful habits that are a stumbling block to God's grace in our life given through the Eucharist. In such a case what we need is the courage to choose to overcome them no matter what it costs.

There is a Luganda song that goes: "*Bingi by'olemedde Sitaani kw'ayima akuswaze, mweyambule omusuule wuuno anakunyamba waali.*" There are weaknesses you have refused to part with. These give Satan a grip upon which he gets into your life to disgrace you.

I once heard Msgr. Mbweega preach about the parable of the Ten Bridesmaids. He said that suppose a bridesmaid stocked her lamb with extra oil. But if the container had a very tiny leakage, taking out the oil, the girl would also be foolish if she did not take trouble to stop the leakage. With time the oil would all flow out. Our little faults which we know very well about, but which we are reluctant to overcome are like small holes on our container of oil. With time they drain our treasure away. Moreover, when not checked they can only grow bigger; they can't diminish or disappear.

Weakness that we have had for years are not easy to get rid of; for habits are "second nature." But in the verse quoted above the writer gives us a very good tip: not to lose sight of Jesus who leads us in our faith. It is like following a guide in a crowd or maze where the guide alone knows the way. You cannot afford to lose sight of the guide, for then you lose our way. We keep Jesus in sight as long as we never cut the lifeline of prayer.

BASIC GUIDELINES REGARDING MASS

INTRODUCTORY RITE

1. The Mass is made up, as it were, of two parts: the “Liturgy of the Word” and the “Liturgy of the Eucharist.” These two, however, are so closely interconnected that they form but one single act of worship.¹⁰ The other parts are the Opening Rites which basically prepare for the full and active celebration of the Mass, as well as the Concluding Rites.¹¹
2. The rites preceding the Liturgy of the Word, namely the Entrance, Greeting, Act of Penitence, *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, and Collect, have the character of a beginning, introduction, and preparation. Their purpose is to ensure that the faithful who come together as one establish communion and dispose themselves to listen properly to God’s word and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily.¹²
3. There are eleven elements that constitute the Introductory Rite, namely: 1) entrance procession, 2) veneration of the

¹⁰ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 56; *General Instruction 2002*, no. 28.

¹¹ Because Mass in its basic structure is a unit, it is not permissible for a priest to retreat into the sacristy and quickly say the prayer of consecration on the sacred species, just to provide more sacred hosts on a big occasion at which the faithful who are to communicate have been grossly under-estimated. For the same reason people who come after the readings and the homily, unless genuinely impeded, should consider themselves to have missed the full attendance of the Mass.

¹² *General Instruction 2002*, no. 46.

tabernacle and altar, 3) opening hymn, 4) [incensing],¹³ 5) sign of the cross, 6) greeting, 7) introduction of the Mass, 8) penitential rite or alternatively the rite of blessing and sprinkling with holy water, 9) Kyrie Eleison (omitted when the rite of sprinkling with holy water is used), 10) [*Gloria*] and 11) opening prayer or Collect.

¹³ Both the incensing and the *Gloria* do not occur at every Mass.

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

4. Whatever the kind of entrance procession it ought to be dignified, prayerful and orderly.¹⁴

Order of Procession

5. In ordinary processions it is customary to keep two by two in the course of the procession, apart from some individuals with special roles such as the cross-bearer, the deacon or other person carrying the book of the gospels and the bishop or some other main celebrant at the end of the procession. If one person in a procession stands out as an odd number he or she can join some two people to make three walking together, or move in the middle like a reader carrying the book. It is preferable that people with special roles such as the Master of Ceremonies take that odd position.

6. The following is a typical form of an entrance procession:¹⁵

- The thurifer carrying a thurible with burning incense, if incense is used;
- The ministers who carry lighted candles, and between them an acolyte or other minister with the cross;
- The acolytes and the other ministers;
- Concelebrating priests if there are any.
- A lector, who may carry the Book of the Gospels (though not the Lectionary), which should be slightly elevated. This takes place when there is no serving

¹⁴ Cf. *General Instruction 2002*, no. 44.

¹⁵ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 120.

deacon. Otherwise it is the deacon who carries the book of the gospels and walks ahead of the priest.¹⁶

- The priest who is to celebrate the Mass.

7. Where the choir, a brass band, or even the whole congregation is to take part in the procession – such as during a funeral, or ordination – these can be located between the cross bearer (flanked by the candle bearers) and the other acolytes and other ministers.

8. A procession should neither be too fast nor too slow. People who are singing during a procession should make an extra effort to listen to each other so that voices are in unison. The difference in distance tends to make uniform singing particularly difficult. For that reason, where possible a portable microphone is useful to carry along during a procession so that the voices of the soloist or leading choir can be heard and followed by everyone.

Entrance Procession Dance

9. In general procession dances, like all other components of the liturgy, should help people to pray. The directive given in the *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* applies also to procession dance:

10. ...among some peoples, song is instinctively linked with handclapping, rhythmic corporeal movements and even dance. Such are external forms of interior sentiment and are part of popular traditions, especially on occasions such as patronal feasts. Clearly, such should be genuine expressions of communal prayer and not merely theatrical spectacles. The fact of their prevalence in one area, however, should

¹⁶ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 194, otherwise the deacon walks at the side of the main celebrant (no. 172).

not be regarded as a reason for their promotion in other areas, especially where they would not be spontaneous.¹⁷

11. Where it is customary to have procession dances they can be located at different moments in the liturgy: during the entrance rite, presentation of gifts, post communion and at the end of Mass. However, one needn't have all three procession dances within the same Mass. Generally, one procession dance is sufficient.

OPENING HYMN

12. The purpose of the opening hymn is to commence the celebration. It intensifies the unity of the gathered people. It also focuses their thoughts to the mystery, feast or season celebrated. The opening hymn accompanies the procession of the priest and ministers to the altar.¹⁸

13. The opening hymn gives the presider a chance to settle and recollect himself for the beginning of the liturgical function. For that reason it is sometimes good for the choir to sing a little longer after the presider has reached the presidential chair.

14. The opening hymn belongs to the singable parts of Mass referred to as the "Proper of the Mass" as opposed to the "Ordinary of the Mass" (Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Agnus Dei, etc.) The Proper of the Mass consists of those singable parts that vary according to the occasion celebrated and that, therefore, can be used to reflect the particular occasion or mystery being celebrated. It is important therefore, to make some effort to choose an entrance hymn with the occasion celebrated in mind.

¹⁷ Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of Sacraments, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, Catholic Truth Society, 2002, no. 17.

¹⁸ Cf. *General Instruction 2002*, no. 47. Other parts that are not rites in themselves but accompany another rite include the Offertory song, the *Agnus Dei* at the Fraction of bread, and the Communion song.

15. For this reason it is necessary for the choir leader to choose the hymns of the Proper of Mass after consulting the *Ordo* and on occasions where there is alternative Masses provided, to consult with the main celebrant as well.

VENERATION OF THE ALTAR AND THE TABERNACLE

16. During Mass, three genuflections are made by the priest celebrant: namely, after the showing of the host, after the showing of the chalice, and before Communion. If, however, the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is present in the sanctuary, the priest, the deacon, and the other ministers genuflect when they approach the altar and when they depart from it, but not during the celebration of Mass itself.

17. The tabernacle is venerated with the gesture of genuflection. The altar on the other hand is venerated with the gestures of bowing, kissing and incensing; depending on the occasion.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GREETING

The Sign of the Cross

18. The sign of the cross is made as the official opening of the liturgical action. It ought to be bold, but not exaggerated.

19. The sign of the cross is an indication of belonging to Christ, for it is Christ who turned the cross into a sign of victory and salvation. It is a sign of defeat for the devil. At the same time it is a sign of the Holy Trinity, as the words that accompany it show, for Christ always acts in union with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Eucharist is a celebration of the memorial of Christ, but we see that in it the Father and the Holy Spirit are fully involved.

The Greeting

20. After the biblical or liturgical greeting, the presider need not add “good morning”, etc. This is an attempt to be more personal and less formal with the congregation. The intention is good, but it pre-emptively empties the liturgical greeting, as if to say that the latter is mere words without meaning. The sacred greeting includes human sentiments of good will. It is important to recall Christ’s words to the disciples as he sent them to preach. He told them that “whatever house you enter let your first words be peace to this house.”¹⁹ His insistence on a formal, and, as it were, liturgical greeting, did not mean that they were to be impersonal. Rather, it emphasized the fact that they were heralds of an important message of salvation; a message that was not to be trivialized or confused with the casual.

21. That does not mean that celebration has to be stiff and cold, strict to the book and deprived of warmth. There is abundant room to extend one’s cordiality to the people such as in the homily, in the presidential commentaries, and in the introduction to the Mass that immediately follows after the greeting.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MASS

22. After the greeting the introduction of the Mass follows. The introduction provides the main celebrant with the opportunity to make the congregation aware of what they are about to celebrate. This he normally does in his own words. Several things can be woven into the introduction. The one who makes the introduction does not have to use them all, but has to choose whichever are more appropriate according to the occasion. They include a commentary on the readings, explanation of the mystery celebrated, intention of the Mass, life of a saint of the

¹⁹ Luke 10:5. “Peace” was an ordinary greeting in the oriental world. However, Jesus emphasizes it as a mark of those sent on the mission of evangelization.

day, use of an illustrative story and link between the liturgy of the Word and that of the Eucharist.

23. Normally, it is the main celebrant that gives the introduction to the Mass. But this is not always the case. He can delegate. He may ask another person, say a deacon, to preach. In such a case it is appropriate that the person who will preach also gives the introduction. Or on special occasions a commentator may be appointed to explain the liturgical celebration at opportune moments. The introduction of the Mass is one of those moments.

24. A commentator should ideally collaborate with the main celebrant in the preparation of his introduction, as well as of his other commentaries.

25. The introduction of the Mass is not meant to be a mini homily. Nor should it be a full explanation of the readings, which the congregation has not yet heard at this stage. The introduction should be brief; a help to comprehend the message of the readings yet to be heard, or of the Mass celebrated.²⁰

PENITENTIAL RITE

26. The penitential act placed at the beginning of Mass has the purpose of preparing all to be ready to celebrate the sacred mysteries. It also serves, together with other penitential parts of the Eucharist, as an antidote, by which we are freed from daily faults and preserved from mortal sin. Even so, it lacks the efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance, and cannot be regarded as a substitute for the Sacrament of Penance in remission of graver sins.²¹

²⁰ *General Instruction*, no. 31.

²¹ Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 80. See Mark Searle, *Liturgy Made Simple*, 20. See also Daniel P. Grigassy, "Penitential Rite at Mass", in *New Dictionary of Sacramental Theology*, pp. 944-945.

27. Like all prayer, the effectiveness of the penitential act depends on the extent to which it comes from the heart. The short period of silence made before the penitential act is a call to focusing, to concentration of thought, to contemplation of the immensity of the mystery we are about to approach and our own unworthiness aggravated by our sinfulness.

28. The period of silence should not be too prolonged as if to allow room for a full examination of conscience, which is properly made during the sacrament of reconciliation. Rather it is a call to recognition of our unworthiness, and the mercy of God that offers himself to us in spite of that unworthiness. At the same time it should not be too brief as to be pre-empted of its meaning.

29. The rite of sprinkling with holy water can serve as a replacement of the penitential rite. The emphasis in this form of prayer is not on our sinfulness and plea for forgiveness. Rather, it is on recalling our original dignity and vocation. In the waters of baptism all sin was cleansed from us, whether the original sin or personal sins if we had any. We were then claimed as children of God destined to share his everlasting life. And we were adopted in the community of believers. We are now about to be enlightened by the word of life that guides us to that destiny and to be fed with the bread of everlasting life. We are therefore challenged to recall the purity we acquired on the day of our baptism, to shake off whatever holds us back, and in loving gratitude assume the responsibilities imposed on us by Love.

THE GLORIA

30. The *Gloria* is a very ancient and venerable hymn in which the Church, gathered together in the Holy Spirit, glorifies and entreats God the Father and the Lamb. The text of this hymn may not be replaced by any other text.

31. The *Gloria* is one of those songs in the Mass that constitute an independent rite or act, as opposed to those that accompany

another rite. Other examples are the Responsorial Psalm, the *Alleluia* and verse before the Gospel, the *Sanctus*, the Memorial Acclamation and the Post-communion hymn.²²

OPENING PRAYER

32. Before the Opening Prayer the priest invites the people to pray. All, together with the priest, observe a brief silence so that they may be conscious of the fact that they are in God's presence and may formulate their petitions mentally.

33. Then the priest says the prayer which is customarily known as the Collect and through which the character of the celebration is expressed. In accordance with the ancient tradition of the Church, the collect prayer is usually addressed to God the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit... The people, uniting themselves to this entreaty, make the prayer their own with the acclamation *Amen*.²³

34. The purpose of the Opening Prayer or Collect is to conclude the introductory rite, to gather up the prayers of the individual worshipers as well as the community and present them to God. The Opening Prayer also reflects the mystery celebrated on the particular day.

35. The Opening Prayer is concluded with the longer Trinitarian ending: If it is directed to the Father: “(Grant this) through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever”...²⁴

36. Only one opening prayer is to be said at each Mass. Formally provision was granted to add before the single conclusion another prayer from the Mass of profession of men or women religious, prayer for anniversaries of pope and bishop, and for

²² *General Instruction*, no. 31a.

²³ *General Instruction 2002*, nos. 54, 127.

²⁴ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 54.

the anniversary of the priest's own ordination, when the rubrics allow this.²⁵

²⁵ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 54: "There is always only one collect used in a Mass." Cf. *Tres abhinc annos*, no. 4.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

INTRODUCTION

37. The main part of the Liturgy of the Word is made up of the readings from Sacred Scripture together with the chants occurring between them.

38. The homily, Profession of Faith, and Prayer of the Faithful, however, develop and conclude this part of the Mass. For in the readings, as explained by the homily, God speaks to his people, opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation and offering them spiritual nourishment; and Christ himself is present in the midst of the faithful through his word.

39. By their silence and singing the people make God's word their own, and they also affirm their adherence to it by means of the Profession of Faith. Finally, having been nourished by it, they pour out their petitions in the Prayer of the Faithful for the needs of the entire Church and for the salvation of the whole world.²⁶

²⁶ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 53.

READINGS AND THEIR PROCLAMATION

40. When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his own word, proclaims the Gospel. Therefore, all must listen with reverence to the readings from God's word, for they make up an element of greatest importance in the liturgy.²⁷

41. Readings may neither be omitted nor shortened. Nor may they be substituted by non-biblical readings.²⁸ There are occasions, however, when rubrics permit the omission of a reading, or give option to choose a shorter version of the same reading. At the Easter Vigil or during ritual Masses, for instance, it is permissible to omit some readings. Always such choices are governed by the pastoral good of the people and not personal convenience.

42. "By tradition, the function of proclaiming the readings is ministerial, not presidential."²⁹ In other words, someone other than the presider should proclaim the reading.

43. On certain occasions it may be judged appropriate to give a commentary on or introduction of the readings before they are proclaimed, in order to enable the congregation to benefit from them more. When this is done, the commentary should be clear, short, simple, faithful to the text and carefully prepared. It is also of advantage if the commentary is in harmony with the homily, for then it helps people understand the homily better.

²⁷ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 29.

²⁸ "It is ...illicit to omit or to substitute the prescribed biblical readings on one's own initiative, and especially 'to substitute other, non-biblical texts for the readings and Responsorial Psalm, which contain the word of God'" *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 62. Cf. *General Instruction 2002*, no. 57.

²⁹ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 59.

44. Increasingly, the procession of the word is located before the entire Liturgy of the Word (i.e. immediately after the Collect and before the first reading) instead of before the gospel reading alone, signifying the fact that all the readings, and not just the gospel, are the word of God and are meant for our edification.

45. Once there has been a procession before the Liturgy of the Word, i.e. before the first reading, a second procession before the reading of the gospel seems superfluous. However, this does not mean that the gospel reading may not be welcomed in the customary way e.g. of singing the gospel acclamation.

THE RESPONSORIAL PSALM

46. The Responsorial Psalm is better sung than recited.³⁰ This can be done using some published music for Responsorial Psalms or by means of improvised music just for the occasion.

47. Since the responsorial psalm is a carefully selected biblical text that provides a response to the first reading, it should not be arbitrarily and habitually replaced with a song. When it is replaced, the song should be such as can play the substitutive role of providing a response to the first reading. Pay attention to the instruction:

48. “It is also illicit to omit or to substitute the prescribed biblical readings on one’s own initiative, and especially ‘to substitute other, non-biblical texts for the readings and responsorial Psalm, which contain the word of God.’”³¹

³⁰ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 61 gives detailed instructions on how to pray the Responsorial Psalm.

³¹ *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 62.

READERS

49. A lector is a man or woman³² who officially proclaims the word of God at Mass and other liturgical functions. Under normal circumstances the lector takes any other scriptural reading apart from the gospel which reserved to the ordained minister when present.

50. The lector may also take the general intercessions as well as carry the book of the gospels in procession in the absence of a deacon.

51. A good lector has to seek to gain the techniques of good reading and not assume that these come to him or her naturally. These skills include volume of voice, speed of reading, confidence, tone of voice, articulation and pronunciation, phrasing and eye contact. They also include adequate preparation, knowledge of the use of public address systems as well as gait and posture. Each of these skills is expounded below.

Volume

52. The reader should be loud enough to be heard by the entire congregation. His projection should be made in particular towards those that are furthest from the lectern and those that may have difficulty in hearing. It is very easy to assume that one is loud enough if one does not check one's loudness with listeners at the back pews.

53. Even the soft-spoken must make an effort to be heard. If in spite of effort made one's voice does not carry enough, this is an indication that a person is not fit to read to this particular congregation, and ought to be replaced. For the proclaimed word of God is meant to be heard.

³² Generally female voices carry further than those of men. Moreover, since women may not serve as priests, it is only fair that they are not deprived of roles which they rightfully share with men.

54. At the same time one's volume should not be too loud to be irritating to the listeners. This is particularly the case in very small communities. A person should regulate the voice according to the size of the church or the congregation if it does not fill the church.

Speed

55. Reading can be fast or slow. Nearly always the tendency is to be too fast. Fast reading, even when understood, is always unsatisfactory. Words, phrases and sentences are not given the chance to sink any depth into people's hearts. However, it is also possible to exaggerate the slowness of reading. Particularly when one has a long reading to go through the speed should be moderate, not so boringly slow.

Articulation and Pronunciation

56. The reader must seek to pronounce every word clearly, putting the stresses in the proper place. A well-articulated word is the result of a deliberate effort to produce a clear sound of the vowels and consonants. We must move our tongue and our lips to shape the sounds as clearly as possible. People should not be left guessing at what is the precise word we read. It is better to exaggerate a little with articulation than to under-articulate in public reading.

57. Words in any particular language can have a different meaning, depending on how they are pronounced. For this reason it is always helpful to go through the reading ahead of time and understand the meaning of every phrase. This enables the reader to put the appropriate pronunciation to each phrase read.

58. With regard to reading in English, on the one hand one does not expect people for whom English is a second language to pronounce in the same way as those for whom it is the mother tongue. On the other hand, it is a commendable thing to learn to speak a language as well as one possibly can. The more we say

words as they ought to be said, the greater the likelihood to be understood by more people, particularly those who do not share our mother tongues.

Use of the public address system

59. Even a good reader could be hampered by the improper use of a microphone. The best way to check one's use of the system is to practice before hand with someone or some people listening from different places in the church and giving feedback on the performance.

60. Other things to consider is the regulation of the voice to march the public address system. Sometimes people may trust too much to the microphone and lower their voice to the extent that even with it they are not clearly heard. On the other hand shouting in the microphone may be irritating to the people who hear you. Talking too close into the microphone may give "Ps" an explosive sound, while keeping the microphone too far may reduce its effectiveness.

61. Before using the microphone one should avoid the irritating habit of tapping on it or blowing in it to "test" even when this is not called for. Again moving the microphone about can create a lot of unwanted noise. Where possible first switch the microphone off before transferring or adjusting it.

Posture, gait and dress of the Lector

62. What we are and how we feel can be expressed by the way we move, place our hands, hold our head or stand. There is such a thing as a lazy, impolite, purposeless, unconvincing posture. When we approach the lectern or stand behind it, we should move and stand in a way fitting to the speaker of God, with dignity, seriousness and solemnity. Avoid standing akimbo, first on one leg and then on the other.

63. The lectors should also take proper care of what they wear. Be neat and presentable while reading. At the same time be

modest in dress. This particularly applies to ladies who read. Do not dress in a spectacular and eye-catching or provocative manner. The speaker of God is not there to draw attention to self but to the word of God.

The Lector's Preparation

64. It is clear from what has been said above, that it is impossible to read well without preparation *well in advance*. It helps at least for the beginning to ask people how they feel about the volume, speed, tone and pitch of our reading. Humility is needed to ask for the pronunciation of certain words.

65. Many people who are otherwise very good readers can become confused with the pronunciation of unfamiliar biblical terms and names. Terms like "phylacteries" and names like "Ahasuerus" do not form part of ordinary vocabulary.

66. Although it is not forbidden, it may not be necessary to announce chapter and verse, in Catholic reading. Usually the congregation is not prepared to note these down as they are read out, so it is unnecessary to read them. Announce the source of the biblical text only when you know that the congregation, or at least part of it, benefits from this knowledge. Otherwise, go straight to the reading.

THE GOSPEL

67. "Within the celebration of Sacred Liturgy, the reading of the Gospel, which is 'the high point of the Liturgy of the Word', is reserved by the Church's tradition to an ordained minister. Thus it is not permitted for a layperson, even a religious, to proclaim the Gospel reading in the celebration of Holy Mass, nor in other cases in which the norms do not explicitly permit it."³³

68. Since by tradition the reading of scripture during the liturgy is a ministerial rather than a presidential function, it is proper that

³³ *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 63.

as a rule a deacon or, in his absence, a priest other than the one presiding reads the gospel.³⁴ However, in the absence of a deacon and other priest concelebrants the main celebrant reads the gospel himself.

69. In the absence of a deacon a priest bows to the altar³⁵ and prays silently for God's blessing. It is not required that a priest bows to the main celebrant before reading the gospel, unless this is a bishop.³⁶ In the latter case the *Ceremonial of Bishops* stipulates: "In the absence of a deacon, a presbyter asks for and receives a blessing from the bishop..."³⁷

70. Lectors for other readings apart from the gospel do not receive blessings in the liturgy as in the case of the Ambrosian rite. They receive a blessing at their installation as readers, and that is all. However, they do well also to pray privately for themselves before reading at the liturgy, as well as for others who are about to hear them, that these may listen to what is read and take it to heart.

71. With regard to the ritual honour surrounding the proclamation of the gospel during Mass it is worthwhile to recall

³⁴ *General Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass* 49: *General Instruction* 2002, no. 59.

³⁵ Note that the bowing at this moment is not made to the tabernacle. The altar and not the tabernacle is the centre of Eucharistic celebration. The tendency is to reason that if Christ is *really* present in the tabernacle and only *symbolically* present in the altar, why then bow to the altar instead of the tabernacle. However, as Smolarski suggests in his book *How Not to Say Mass*, pg. 52, the rationale behind the rubric in *General Instruction* 2002, no. 132 is that the priest does not bow to the tabernacle in order not to interrupt the liturgical celebration of which Christ's presence in the tabernacle is only the fruit.

³⁶ "In a concelebration where a priest presides... the concelebrant who in the absence of a deacon proclaims the Gospel neither requests nor receives the blessing of the principle celebrant" *General Instruction* 2002, no 212.

³⁷ *Ceremonial of Bishops* 74, 173.

the words of Jesus to Martha in Luke 10:38-42: *“Martha, Martha, you worry and fret about so many things, and yet few are needed, indeed only one...”* It is possible to be bogged down by the many liturgical details and to lose the one thing that really matters, namely: listening to the word of God and taking it to heart. When this essential component is lacking the ensemble of ritual honors is rendered useless, even hypocritical. It is the listening and assimilation of the word of God that gives meaning to all the ritual honour that surrounds its proclamation.

THE HOMILY

Purpose and Content

72. “In the homily the mysteries of the faith and the norms of the Christian life are proclaimed from the sacred text throughout the course of the liturgical year.”³⁸ “[The homily] should be an exposition of some aspect of the readings from Sacred Scripture or of another text from the Ordinary or from the Proper of the Mass of the day and should take into account both the mystery being celebrated and the particular needs of the listeners.”³⁹

73. On Sundays and holy days the homily is obligatory at Masses celebrated with the community (canon 767 par. 2). On these occasions the homily may be omitted only with serious reasons. On other occasions particularly when there is a sufficient gathering of people the homily is strongly recommended. This is particularly the case during Advent and Lent, at funerals and on special feasts and occasions.⁴⁰

74. Lay persons may not give a homily which is reserved to a priest or deacon at liturgy, but they may preach, even during the liturgy, for example, at liturgies of the word, the liturgy of the hours, and other celebrations at which they may preside. They may also preach at the Eucharistic liturgy at times, for example, at Masses for children.

75. The universal law assumes that lay preaching will be regulated by the conference of bishops. However, in the absence of a policy from the episcopal conference, the diocesan bishop is competent to enact norms and regulate lay preaching for his diocese. Outside Eucharistic celebration non-ordained ministers can give a reflection.

³⁸ Canon 767.

³⁹ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 65.

⁴⁰ Cf. *General Instruction 2002*, no. 66.

76. Effective pastors know how to exploit every suitable occasion (conferences, catechesis meetings, workshops, Small Christian Communities, retreats and recollections, support groups, lay Christian associations, RCIA, etc) by inviting lay ministers who are experts in one field or another to talk to the Christian community about their field of expertise that has some bearing to the life of the Christian community. Often it is better that such experts or experienced lay members address the community than that the priest does, even when he too is knowledgeable in the field.

77. On big occasions with many dignitaries attending, it does not seem appropriate to begin the proclamation with an observation of lengthy and comprehensive protocol. The homily needs to be distinguished from a formal speech, for before God we are all brothers and sisters.

78. The question whether or not to begin and end the homily with a sign of the cross was raised and answered by the competent authority in the quotation below.

79. Query: Is it advisable to invite the faithful to bless themselves before or after the homily, to address a salutation to them, for example, “Praised be Jesus Christ, etc.”? Reply: It all depends on lawful local custom. But generally speaking it is inadvisable to continue such customs because they have their origin in preaching *outside Mass*. The homily is *part* of the liturgy; the people have already blessed themselves and received the greeting at the beginning of Mass. It is better, then, not to have a repetition before or after the homily...⁴¹

SILENCE

80. The Liturgy of the Word is to be celebrated in such a way as to promote meditation, and so any sort of haste that hinders recollection must clearly be avoided.

⁴¹ *Notitiae* 9 (1973), *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979*, 1432, footnote R8.

81. During the Liturgy of the Word, it is also appropriate to include brief periods of silence, accommodated to the gathered assembly, in which, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, the word of God may be grasped by the heart and a response through prayer may be prepared. It may be appropriate to observe such periods of silence, for example, before the Liturgy of the Word itself begins, after the first and second reading, and lastly at the conclusion of the homily.⁴²

82. Five possible moments of silence are indicated in the course of the Liturgy of the Word: 1) before the readings are taken, 2) after the first reading,⁴³ 3) after the second reading,⁴⁴ 4) after the gospel reading, if there is no homily or reflection, and 5) after the homily, as a help to reflection and assimilation of the message expounded.⁴⁵

PROFESSION OF FAITH

83. The purpose of the *Symbolum* or Profession of Faith, or Creed, is that the whole gathered people may respond to the word of God proclaimed in the readings taken from Sacred Scripture and explained in the homily and that they may also call to mind and confess the great mysteries of the faith by reciting the rule of faith in a formula approved for liturgical use, before these mysteries are celebrated in the Eucharist.⁴⁶

84. The Creed is one of those parts that are to be taken by the whole congregation and that foster active participation. It is to be sung or said by the priest together with the people on Sundays and Solemnities. It may be said also at particular celebrations of a more solemn character.

⁴² *General Instruction 2002*, no. 56.

⁴³ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 128.

⁴⁴ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 130.

⁴⁵ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 66.

⁴⁶ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 67.

85. Because it is a profession of faith, the Credo is best sung by all or else sung in a manner that allows the congregation's proper participation. This may be for instance when the people alternate with the choir.⁴⁷

86. Although in some places the recitation of the Creed is the exception rather than the rule, "it is usually preferable that the Creed be spoken in a declamatory fashion rather than sung. If it is sung it might more effectively take the form of a simple music declamation rather than an extensive and involved musical structure."⁴⁸

87. When the Creed is recited or sung the text should indeed be a profession of faith, not some pious text close to the Creed. The song "I believe in God the Father, I believe in God the Son..." found in *We Pray and Sing to the Lord* is a beautiful hymn that contains elements of the profession of faith and that can be used with profit in the liturgy. However, its content shows that it is not just an artistic rearrangement of the Creed, but a totally different song that is better not used as a substitute of the Creed.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

88. In the Prayer of the faithful we ask God *for something*, we ask *for the whole world and for ourselves*, and we ask *as the whole assembly*. In other words, we should not confuse the prayers of the faithful with thanksgiving prayer for instance; we should not make them to focus too much on our needs at the exclusion of the needs of the wider Church or the other way round; and we should as much as possible avoid formulations that are too individualistic as if we were praying alone and not in community.

89. The General Intercessions act as a hinge; they conclude the Liturgy of the Word in which God's wonderful works and the Christian calling are brought to mind, while at the same time they usher in the Liturgy of the Eucharist by stating some of those

⁴⁷ *Musica Sacram*, no. 34. Cf. *General Instruction 2002*, no. 68.

⁴⁸ *Music in Catholic Worship*, 37-38.

general and particular intentions for which the sacrifice is to be offered.⁴⁹

90. It is for the priest celebrant to direct this prayer from the chair. He himself begins it with a brief introduction, by which he invites the faithful to pray, and likewise he concludes it with a prayer.

91. The words of the introduction given by the principle celebrant are addressed to the people and not to God. They are an invitation to prayer, not a prayer itself. They should be brief. They may refer to the liturgical season, or feast or mystery celebrated, and connect this with the prayers that follow. In fact for a good reason the introductory words may be omitted all together.⁵⁰

92. To ensure its effectiveness care must be taken that the intentions made on behalf of the whole world's needs are suited to the gathered assembly; this means that there be a certain flexibility proportioned to the nature of this prayer in the preparation of the intentions.⁵¹

93. Unlike the introduction which is addressed to the people, the conclusion is addressed to God – normally God the Father through Christ the Lord. The prayer should be in the form of a conclusion, and not another intention offered by the main celebrant.

94. In some areas it is customary to invoke the intercession of Our Lady at the end of the General Intercessions. But it does not seem appropriate that the Hail Mary serves as a substitute of the concluding prayer. Mary's intercession is very powerful but it does not substitute Christ as the Mediator between God and humanity.

⁴⁹ Cf. *General Intercessions*, (DOL 1894).

⁵⁰ *General Intercessions* 7, DOL 239, no. 1897.

⁵¹ *Eucharistiae Participationem*, no. 16.

95. A deacon, a reader, a cantor or one of the lay faithful may present the General Intercessions.⁵² At Masses with Confirmation or First Holy Communion the neophytes who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood should be given a chance to present the General Intercessions.⁵³ At Masses for children the children should be encouraged to present the intentions,⁵⁴ even though the preparation of the intention may be made by an adult.

96. Whoever presents the intentions should strive to be loud and clear so that the rest of the congregation may hear them.

97. Furthermore, prayers of the faithful should be reasonably short, in order to give the opportunity to as many people as possible to present theirs.

98. The one who presents the intention does just that: presents the intention, and not pray on behalf of the assembly. Then he or she invites the congregation to prayer after they have heard the intention for which they are going to pray.

99. The members of the congregation listen to the intention, adapt it as their own, place themselves mentally in the presence of the loving God, and, at the invitation of the one who introduced the intention, together present it to God. The real moment of prayers is in the response of the community, and not in the presentation of the intention by the individual.

100. The response of the people to the intercessions can be sung in a tune that the cantor or reader of the intercessions introduces to the people. However, even if according to the directive of the universal Church “the singing of the general intercessions follows local custom,”⁵⁵ the practice in some areas,

⁵² *General Instruction 2002*, no. 71.

⁵³ *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 36.

⁵⁴ *Directory for Masses with Children*, no. 22.

⁵⁵ *Ordo Cantus Missae*, no. 11.

of the choir singing varied responses each time a petition is presented appears showy.

101. Intentions presented in different languages express the wealth of cultures and show how God hears us no matter what we are and what language we speak. They, in a way, express how we are brothers and sisters even when we speak different tongues. The congregation trusts that what the person who presents the intention says is for the good of all, even though they do not understand the words; and so they give their assent by taking the response.

102. Yet these multi-lingual intentions have the disadvantage of not edifying those who do not understand the language, and so undermine the value of full and conscious participation. That is why it is good that one who presents them gives a summary of the intention in a language known to all, before presenting it in vernacular.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

MAIN PARTS

103. The main parts of the liturgy of the Eucharist may be summarized in the words of consecration.⁵⁶ He 1) took bread, 2) gave thanks, 3) broke the bread, and 4) gave it to his disciples.

104. The *Presentation of Gifts* corresponds to taking. The priest takes the bread and the wine and presents them to God, asking that God may transform them into the body and blood of his Son.

105. The *Eucharistic Prayer* corresponds to the act of giving thanks, in accordance with the original meaning of the word “Eucharist”. Its basic purpose is thanksgiving to God for the work of salvation and its various aspects.

106. The *Breaking of the Bread* and the accompanying prayers corresponds to Christ’s fraction of the bread, enacting the customary role of a Jewish host, while at the same time symbolizing his own passion; the body and the spirit that would soon be broken.

107. And finally the *Communion Rite* corresponds to Jesus’ act of giving the bread and the wine, transformed into his body and blood, to his disciples to eat and to drink. These four main divisions constitute the outline of this section on the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

108. ...external gifts must always be a visible expression of that true gift that God expects from us: a contrite heart, the love of God and neighbour by which we are conformed to the

⁵⁶ Cf. *General Instruction 2002*, no. 72.

sacrifice of Christ, who offered himself for us. For in the Eucharist, there shines forth most brilliantly that mystery of charity that Jesus brought forth at the Last Supper by washing the feet of the disciples.⁵⁷

109. The role of the choir at this stage is that of accompanying the offertory procession. An offertory song should normally not end before the gifts are placed on the altar and presented to the Lord.⁵⁸

110. The bread used for the Eucharist should be unleavened, purely of wheat, and recently made so that there is no danger of decomposition.⁵⁹ It follows, therefore, that bread made from another substance, even if it is grain, or if it is mixed with another substance different from wheat to such an extent that it would not commonly be considered wheat bread, does not constitute valid matter for confecting the Sacrifice and the Eucharistic Sacrament...⁶⁰

111. It is strongly favored that the people receive particles consecrated at the Mass in which they participate. Moreover, care should be taken to renew the particles in the tabernacle at least every two weeks, preferably more frequently.

112. The wine used for the Eucharist is natural grape wine.⁶¹ Only wine authorized by the competent authority should be used. Usually this wine is labeled as “altar wine.” However, sometimes even labels can be deceptive, for they are easy to duplicate. Some commercial wines may not be made out of grape fruit, or may be mixed with some other substances.

⁵⁷ *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 70.

⁵⁸ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 74.

⁵⁹ Can 924 §2, 926; GIRM 282, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 48.

⁶⁰ Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 173.

⁶¹ Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 50. Regarding the gravity of substituting the wine with some other drink cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum* no. 173.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

113. Now the centre and summit of the entire celebration begins: namely, the Eucharistic Prayer, that is, the prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. The Eucharist Prayer demands that all listen to it with reverence and in silence.⁶²

114. The First Eucharistic Prayer may be used on any occasion. However, it is more appropriate for some occasions more than for others. For instance it is suited on feasts of apostles since their names are mentioned in it. The same applies to the celebration of the memorial of the saints of the early Church whose names are mentioned in this prayer e.g. (Agatha, Lucy, Perpetual, Cecilia, Anastanzia, Kosmas and Damian). This prayer also has insertions for Christmas, Easter Octave, Epiphany, Easter octave, Ascension, and Pentecost.

115. The Second Eucharistic Prayer⁶³ is the shortest of the four traditional prayers. It has a preface of its own, but it may nevertheless be used with other prefaces. Pastors should avoid the indolence of forgetting about all other Eucharistic Prayers and of using the second prayer almost exclusively.

116. The Third Eucharistic Prayer, like the first one, has no preface of its own and can be used with any preface. It is most suitable on Sundays or Feast Days because of its medium length. This prayer also has a special formula for a dead person, to be inserted in the place indicated by the rubrics.

117. The Fourth Eucharistic Prayer is inseparable from its preface because it gives a conspectus of the whole history of salvation. To this effect the *Consilium* added a note:

118. In our view it is very important pastorally that the faithful from time to time hear this kind of orderly and complete summary of the

⁶² *General Instruction 2002*, no. 78.

⁶³ Inspired by the Anaphora of St. Hippolytus (from the beginning of the 3rd century). Anton Hänggi and Irmgard Pahl, *Prex Eucharistica*, p. 80-81.

history of salvation; it can serve as a general framework within which they can later locate the many details of this history as they hear them on other occasions.⁶⁴

119. The two Eucharistic Prayers having prefaces of their own (second and fourth) may retain their prefaces even when the Mass would otherwise have the seasonal preface. This is time of Advent or Lent for instance. One has to make a distinction here between a “proper” and “seasonal” preface.

120. Only those Eucharistic Prayers are to be used which are found in the Roman Missal or are legitimately approved by the Apostolic See and according to the manner and the terms set forth by it. It is not to be tolerated that some priests take upon themselves the right to compose their own Eucharistic Prayers, or to change the same texts approved by the Church, or to introduce others composed by private individuals.⁶⁵

121. At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest takes the paten with the host and the chalice and elevates them both while alone singing or saying the doxology, *Through him*. At the end the people make the acclamation, *Amen*.⁶⁶

122. The parts spoken by all the concelebrants together and especially the words of consecration, which all are bound to say, are to be said in such a way that the concelebrants speak them in a very low voice and that the principal celebrant’s voice be clearly heard. This way the words can be better understood by the people.⁶⁷

THE LORD’S PRAYER

123. The Lord’s Prayer is a form of Grace before the Eucharistic meal. In this prayer the Lord Jesus taught his

⁶⁴ *Au cours des derniers mois*, DOL 244, no. 1957b.

⁶⁵ *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 51. Cf. *Eucharistiae Participationem*, no. 4-6)

⁶⁶ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 151.

⁶⁷ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 218.

disciples to ask from the Father for their daily bread. We ask for that, as well as for our spiritual food which we are about to partake of; Christ the Bread of Life.

124. The priest invites the people to pray, and all should say this prayer with him. The invitation is made with joined hands, while the actual praying is done with outstretched hands.⁶⁸

125. When the Our Father is sung, the singing should be such that it does not muffle or distort it so as to make it unrecognizable as the Lord's Prayer.

126. The main celebrant alone recites the embolism. The people respond with the doxology.

THE RITE OF PEACE

127. The Rite of Peace follows, by which the Church asks for peace and unity for herself and for the whole human family and the faithful express to each other their ecclesial communion and mutual charity before communicating in the Sacrament. ...⁶⁹

128. "The concelebrants who are nearer the principle celebrant receive the sign of peace from him before the deacon does."⁷⁰

129. It is appropriate that each one gives the sign of peace only to those who are nearest and in a sober manner. The priest may give the sign of peace to the ministers but always remains within the sanctuary, so as not to disturb the celebration. He does likewise if for a just reason he wishes to extend the sign of peace to some few of the faithful...⁷¹

⁶⁸ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 152.

⁶⁹ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 82, 154; *Ceremonial of Bishops*, no. 99-103.

⁷⁰ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 239.

⁷¹ *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 72.

THE BREAKING OF BREAD

130. The priest breaks the Eucharistic Bread, assisted, if the case calls for it, by the deacon or a concelebrant. Christ's gesture of breaking bread at the Last Supper, which gave the entire Eucharistic Action its name in apostolic times, signifies that the many faithful are made one body (1 Corinthians 10:17) by receiving Communion from the one Bread of Life which is Christ, who died and rose for the salvation of the world.

131. The fraction or breaking of bread is begun after the sign of peace and is carried out with proper reverence, though it should not be unnecessarily prolonged, nor should it be accorded undue importance.⁷²

THE COMMINGLING

132. "Commingling" designates the gesture of breaking a piece of the consecrated host by the main celebrant, and dropping it into the consecrated wine, while saying the words "may this mingling of the body and blood of Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it".

133. "The priest breaks the Bread and puts a piece of the host into the chalice to signify the unity of Body and Blood of the Lord in the work of salvation, namely, of the living and glorious Body of Jesus Christ..."⁷³

134. It is not required for the main celebrant to make a sign of the cross over the chalice as he does this.

AGNUS DEI

135. During the breaking of bread and the commingling the invocation "Lamb of God" is usually sung by the choir or the cantor with the people responding. If it is not sung, it should be said aloud. The invocation may be repeated as often as is needed

⁷² *General Instruction 2002*, no. 83.

⁷³ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 83.

to cover the whole action of bread-breaking, but on the last occasion it always has the conclusion “Grant us peace.”⁷⁴

136. Alternatively, a longer version of the Lamb of God may be chosen if the choirmaster foresees that the breaking of bread will last longer than usual, for example during a pilgrimage with so many priests concelebrating.

SILENT PRAYER OF THE PRIEST

137. In the Missal there are two alternative prayers provided from which the main celebrant chooses. He says one of these prayers as personal preparation for the reception of the Eucharistic Lord.⁷⁵ He does not need to say them aloud. Nor are they to be omitted.

COMMUNION RITE

138. A priest must communicate at the altar at the moment laid down by the Missal each time he celebrates Holy Mass, and the concelebrants must communicate before they proceed with the distribution of Holy Communion. The priest celebrant or a concelebrant is never to wait until the people’s communion is concluded before receiving communion himself.⁷⁶

139. It is charitable and a sign of good manners to wipe the chalice at the spot from which one has communicated, for the convenience of the next communicant. The purificator should not then be used to wipe one’s mouth like a personal handkerchief, especially when other concelebrants follow.

140. The communion of priest concelebrants should precede, always using hosts consecrated at the same Mass and always with communion under both kinds being received by all of the concelebrants.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Misicam Sacram*, no. 34; *General Instruction 2002*, no. 83.

⁷⁵ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 84.

⁷⁶ *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 97.

141. It is to be noted that if the priest or deacon hands the sacred host or chalice to the concelebrants, he says nothing; that is to say, he does not pronounce the words ‘The Body of Christ’ or ‘The Blood of Christ’.⁷⁷

142. The celebration of Holy Mass is not to be inserted in any way into the setting of a common meal, nor joined with this kind of banquet. Mass is not to be celebrated without grave necessity on a dinner table nor in a dining room or banquet hall, nor in a room where food is present, nor in a place where the participants during the celebration itself are seated at tables.

143. If out of grave necessity Mass must be celebrated in the same place where eating will later take place, there is to be a clear interval of time between the conclusion of Mass and the beginning of the meal, and ordinary food is not to be set before the faithful during the celebration of Mass.⁷⁸

144. The more complete form of participation in the Mass by which the faithful, after the priest’s communion, receive the Lord’s body from the same sacrifice, is strongly endorsed.⁷⁹

145. It is desirable that the presider has the first prerogative in giving out communion, in his capacity of representing Christ who took bread and gave it to his disciples.⁸⁰ Therefore, he should avoid entirely delegating the task of giving communion to others such as concelebrants, deacons, acolytes, Eucharistic ministers or catechists, unless there is a good reason such as ill health, or a severe cold. However, he can be assisted by any of these.

⁷⁷ *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 98.

⁷⁸ *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 77.

⁷⁹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 55.

⁸⁰ *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, 31; *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 88. Cf. Diocese of Jinja, *Parish Pastoral Policies and Guideline*, no. 4.2.3.f.

146. In case of necessity, he may depute suitable faithful who are not instituted and regular Eucharistic ministers to distribute Holy Communion, but only for this single occasion.⁸¹

147. “The faithful are not permitted to take the consecrated bread or the sacred chalice by themselves and, still less, to hand them from one to another...”⁸²

148. Unconsecrated hosts may not be distributed by dipping them into consecrated wine, even with the explanation that the faithful take the blood of Christ. Such a practice carries with it the danger of causing confusion among Christ’s faithful concerning the Eucharistic doctrine of the Church.⁸³

149. Catholic ministers may lawfully administer the sacraments only to catholic members of Christ’s faithful, who equally may lawfully receive them only from catholic ministers... (Canon 844 paragraph 1).

150. Whenever necessity requires or a genuine spiritual advantage commends it, and provided the danger of error or indifferentism is avoided, Christ’s faithful for whom it is physically or morally impossible to approach a catholic minister, may lawfully receive the sacraments of penance, the Eucharist and anointing of the sick from non-catholic ministers in whose Churches these sacraments are valid (canon 844 paragraph 2).

151. It is permissible for the faithful to receive communion in the hands or on the mouth, kneeling or standing, according to what they prefer. The minister may refrain from giving communion in

⁸¹ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 162.

⁸² *General Instruction 2002*, no. 160.

⁸³ Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 96. “...the word of the Lord was addressed to the prophet Haggai as follows, ‘The Lord Sabaoth says this: Ask the priests for a decision on this question, ‘If a man carries consecrated meat in the fold of his gown and with this fold touches bread, broth, wine, or food of any kind, does such food become holy?’” The priests answered, ‘No, it does not...’ (Haggai 2:12).

the hands only when he judges that there is a risk of profanation.⁸⁴

152. Pastors have the obligation to instruct the faithful especially regarding receiving Holy Communion in the hand in a reverent manner, that is, with clean hands. The left hand is to be held crossed over the right. On receiving the sacred host the person takes one step aside, then, with index and thumb takes the host from the palm of the left hand and puts it in the mouth with the right hand.⁸⁵

153. “A lay member of Christ’s faithful who has already received the Most Holy Eucharist may receive it again on the same day only within a Eucharistic celebration in which he or she is participating, with due regard for the prescription of can. 921 par. 2.”⁸⁶

154. It is not required that the main celebrant, or whoever else reposes the Blessed Sacrament into the tabernacle, genuflects at the altar before taking it in his hands, as many in fact do. At the launching of the reform of the Second Vatican Council six genuflections by the main celebrant were prescribed, and all other genuflections were to be omitted. These were: a) on going to or leaving the altar if there is a tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament (two); b) after elevating the host and the chalice (two); c) after the doxology at the end of the canon;⁸⁷ d) at communion, before the words ‘this is the Lamb of God...’; e)

⁸⁴ Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 90-92

⁸⁵ Diocese of Jinja, *Parish Pastoral Policies and Guideline*, no. 4.2.4.

⁸⁶ *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 95. Cf. Can 917. (It is not quite clear in this directive and in the canon quoted, what “participation” means; whether it means attendance of Mass in which case a lay member who attends two Masses may receive communion in both, or whether it means taking an active part, say conducting, serving or taking a reading).

⁸⁷ Although this has come into disuse over time.

after the communion of the faithful, when he [the main celebrant] has placed the remaining hosts in the tabernacle.⁸⁸

155. If there is to be no singing during the communion procession, the antiphon given in the Missal should be said by the faithful, (if they have the text), by a group or a cantor. As a last resort the antiphon should be said by the priest after his own communion but before he distributes to the people.

156. When feasible there should be a pause after the distribution of communion. During this the priest and people pray for a while in silence. As an alternative the whole community may sing a hymn or psalm of praise during the pause.

⁸⁸ *Tres abhinc annos*, no. 7.

THANKSGIVING

157. “When the distribution of Communion is finished, as circumstances suggest, the priest and faithful spend some time praying privately. If desired, a psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may also be sung by the entire congregation.”⁸⁹

CONCLUDING PRAYER

158. “To bring to completion the prayer of the People of God, and also to conclude the entire Communion Rite, the priest says the Prayer after Communion, in which he prays for the fruits of the mystery just celebrated.”⁹⁰

159. Once again it is to be noted that there is one concluding prayer for each Mass.⁹¹

⁸⁹ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 88.

⁹⁰ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 89.

⁹¹ *General Instruction 2002*, no. 89.

CONCLUDING RITES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 160.** The concluding rites consist of
- a. Brief announcements, if they are necessary;
 - b. The priest's greeting and blessing, which on certain days and occasions is enriched and expressed in the Prayer over the People or another more solemn formula;
 - c. The dismissal of the people by the deacon or the priest, so that each may go out to do good works, praising and blessing God;
 - d. The kissing of the altar by the priest⁹² and the deacon, followed by a profound bow to the altar by the priest, the deacon, and the other ministers.

161. The concluding rite which follows below is omitted if a liturgical ceremony such as Eucharistic Benediction is to follow immediately after, or during a funeral Mass where the Final Commendation follows the Eucharistic celebration.

162. If there are announcements they are placed after the prayer after communion and before the final blessing. The use of a parish bulletin, where affordable, helps reduce the number of announcements to be made. It also has the advantage of reminding those who cannot retain all the announcements in the head, particularly those that include dates and figures.

163. Ideally the announcements should be after the Concluding Prayer since they are not part of the act of worship.

⁹² *General Instruction 2002*, no. 90.

164. Preferably the announcements should not be made at the ambo, as this is reserved for the proclamation of the Word. There could be a smaller lectern for this purpose. But again audibility must not be sacrificed for liturgical correctness. If the only available microphone is to be found at the lectern, announcements might have to be made there.

165. Speeches should as much as possible be minimized at liturgical function. But if they must be made, it is better to give them at the time of announcements, either before or after. As far as possible the one in charge must avoid making the celebration of the Eucharist a forum for political propaganda.

166. Care must be taken specially to pay attention to the feelings of members of the congregation who do not espouse the political inclination of the speaker.

167. The pastor has always to remember that, he guides God's people – all God's people – also in political matters by pointing to the basic values of the gospel which should guide the conduct of society; but that he does not publicly take one political stand against another, to the alienation of part of the flock.

MASS STIPENDS AND INTENTIONS

168. For a just pastoral need, priests may celebrate twice or even three times a day, especially on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation. However, priests who say more than one Mass a day may accept or retain only one Mass offering or stipend except on Christmas day.⁹³

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

169. The faculty of distributing Holy Communion to the faithful conferred on some members of the lay faithful is granted

⁹³ *Guidelines for Priests (Draft) in Jinja Diocese, p. 7.*

and its exercise is based on the pastoral need. This faculty, therefore, is not to be understood as a promotion or an honour.

170. The parish priest makes a formal request to the bishop for the person to receive this faculty and the bishop at an appropriate occasion installs the extra-ordinary minister of the Eucharist.

171. It is only the parish priest who can request that this faculty is given and he can also revoke it when need be and will inform the bishop accordingly.

172. Before requesting the bishop to grant this faculty the parish priest must ensure that the aspiring minister has received the appropriate training according to the preparation approved by the diocese.

173. Except for serious reasons, the ordinary minister of the Eucharist (priest) may not leave the distribution of Holy Communion only to the extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist.



SOME SELECTED SACRAMENTS

RECONCILIATION

174. The competent minister of the sacrament of penance is a priest who has the faculty to absolve in accordance with canon law.⁹⁴ All priests, however, even though not approved to hear confession, absolve validly and licitly all penitents who are in danger of death, and in the absence of a priest with the faculty.

175. Priests should always be willing and ready and make themselves available for those of the faithful who make a reasonable request to give them the sacrament of penance. Parish priests should let people know the times when priests will be available for confession.⁹⁵

176. The duties of the pastors in the ministry of reconciliation also include availing confessors, as well as regular time for the sacrament of reconciliation,⁹⁶ informing people of the obligation

⁹⁴ This faculty must be received from his bishop, for “Only the local Ordinary is competent to give to any priests whomsoever the faculty to hear the confessions of any whomsoever of the faithful...” Can. 969 §1.

⁹⁵ Cf. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 13: [Priests] are united with the intention and charity of Christ when they administer the sacraments. They do this in a special way when they show themselves to be always available to administer the sacrament of Penance whenever it is reasonably requested by the faithful.”

⁹⁶ “Local Ordinaries and priests, to the extent that it applies to them, have a serious obligation in conscience to make sure that there is not a scarcity of confessors because some priests neglect this important ministry, involving themselves rather in secular concerns or in less

to confess mortal sins before communion,⁹⁷ organisation and celebration of penitential services⁹⁸ and not restricting confession to grave sins only.⁹⁹

177. As the minister of God, the confessor comes to know the secrets of another's conscience, and he is bound to keep the sacramental seal of confession absolutely inviolate. "The sacramental seal is inviolable. Accordingly, it is absolutely wrong for a confessor in any way to betray the penitent, for any reason whatsoever, whether by word or in any other fashion."¹⁰⁰

178. The confessor is wholly forbidden to use knowledge acquired in confession to the detriment of the penitent, even when all danger of disclosure is excluded.¹⁰¹

important ministries, especially when these could be provided by deacons or qualified lay people. DOL, p. 950 no. IV

⁹⁷ "Priests are to instruct the faithful that they are forbidden, if they are burdened with mortal sin and there are sufficient confessors available, to put off by design or neglect fulfilling the obligation of individual confession in expectation of an occasion when a general absolution will be given. DOL, p. 950 no. VIII

⁹⁸ "The faithful should receive thorough instruction that liturgical celebrations and communal penitential services are extremely useful as a preparation for a more beneficial confession and for amending their life. But care must be taken against confusing such celebrations or services with sacramental confession and absolution." DOL, p. 950 no. X

⁹⁹ "On the subject of frequent, "devotional" confession, priests are not to dare to discourage the faithful from this practice. On the contrary, they are to extol its great benefits for the Christian life, and to make it clear that they are always ready to hear such confessions whenever the faithful reasonably request. What must be absolutely avoided is the restriction of individual confession to mortal sin alone. That would deprive the faithful of an important effect of confession and would injure the good name of those who receive the sacrament individually. DOL, p. 950 no. XII

¹⁰⁰ Can. 983 §1.

¹⁰¹ Can. 984 §1.

179. The faithful should be encouraged to approach the sacrament of penance at times when Mass is not being celebrated and especially during the scheduled periods.¹⁰²

180. The season of Lent is most appropriate for celebrating the sacrament of penance. Already on Ash Wednesday the people of God has heard the solemn invitation “Turn away from sin and believe the good news”. It is therefore fitting to have several penitential celebrations during Lent.

181. Priests should seek to be informed about any regulations concerning the sacrament of Reconciliation appertaining to their diocese.

182. General absolution is allowed only in the cases stipulated in canon 961.¹⁰³ Beyond that priests ought to follow the directives of the particular Ordinary or inform him of situations that demanded extra-ordinary decisions.

¹⁰² *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, 35, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 86.

¹⁰³ “General absolution, without prior individual confession, cannot be given to a number of penitents together, unless: 1) danger of death threatens and there is not time for the priest or priests to hear the confessions of the individual penitents; 2) there exists a grave necessity, that is, given the number of penitents, there are not enough confessors available properly to hear the individual confessions within an appropriate time, so that without fault of their own the penitents are deprived of the sacramental grace or of holy communion for a lengthy period of time. Sufficient necessity is not, however, considered to exist when confessors cannot be available merely because of a great gathering of penitents, such as can occur on some major feast day or pilgrimage.”

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

183. Priests that have a pastoral responsibility towards the sick ought to make visitation part of their regular program.¹⁰⁴

184. The World Day of the Sick is celebrated on the 11th February each year in the entire Catholic Church as a day of solidarity with the sick. Parishes should follow the customary celebration of this day in the diocese if there is any, or make individual arrangements for celebration.

185. Sick people who are unable to receive communion under the form of bread may receive it under the form of wine alone. If the wine is consecrated at Mass not celebrated in the presence of the sick person, the blood of the Lord is kept in a properly covered vessel and is placed in the tabernacle after communion.

186. The precious blood should be carried to the sick in a vessel which is closed in such a way as to eliminate all danger of spilling. If some of the precious blood remains, it should be consumed by the minister, who should also see to it that the vessel is properly purified.

187. Any member of the faithful who, having reached the age of reason begins to be in danger of death by reason of sickness or old age is eligible for the sacrament of anointing.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ The negligence of the sick is a grave matter on the part of a pastor. Many members of different sects take advantage of this and attend to the sick while at the same time drawing them to their own doctrine.

¹⁰⁵ Can. 1004.

188. The sacrament may also be given if one recovers from a sickness in which he was anointed and falls sick again by the same sickness,¹⁰⁶ or if the same sickness becomes worse.

189. It is given before one undergoes a dangerous surgery. It is also conferred to the elderly people who are notably weak, as well as to people who have lost reason but could have asked for the sacrament while in their full senses.¹⁰⁷

190. It is given to people in comma who could have asked for the sacrament in their senses.¹⁰⁸

191. Finally it is given to people about whom it is doubtful whether: a) they have reached the age of reason or not, b) they are dangerously ill or not and c) they are dead or not.

192. The sacrament may not be given to those who persist in a manifestly grave sin.¹⁰⁹ Nor may it be given to those who are not seriously sick.¹¹⁰ Those who have died may not receive the

¹⁰⁶ Can. 1004 §2. For further information on the frequency of anointing cf. “Sick, Anointing of, Frequency of” in *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Theology*, p. 1161f.

¹⁰⁷ *Pastoral Care of the Sick*, 14.

¹⁰⁸ Can. 1005.

¹⁰⁹ (can 1007) The anointing of the sick is not to be conferred upon those who obstinately persist in a manifestly grave sin.

¹¹⁰ PCS 99 states: “The priest should ensure that the abuse of delaying the reception of the sacrament does not occur, and that the celebration takes place while the sick person is capable of active participation. However, the intent of the Conciliar reform (Constitution on the Liturgy, art. 73) that those needing the sacrament should seek it at the beginning of a serious illness should not be used to anoint those who are not proper subjects for the sacrament. The sacrament of the anointing of the sick should be celebrated only when a Christian’s health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age.” Article 73 of SC referred to above states: ““extreme unction,” which may also and more fittingly be called “anointing of the Sick”, is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death. Hence, as soon as anyone of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the

sacrament either. Another form of prayers is offered for those who have just expired.¹¹¹

193. The faithful should be catechised to ask for the sacrament as soon as the right time comes, as well as to participate in its celebration.

194. The priest is the only minister of the anointing of the sick. This office is ordinarily exercised by bishops, parish priests (pastors) and their assistants, priests who are responsible for the sick or aged in hospitals, and superiors of clerical religious institutes. These ministers have the pastoral responsibility both of preparing and helping the sick and others who are present, with the assistance of religious and laity, and of celebrating the sacrament.

195. Other priests also confer the sacrament of anointing with the consent of the ministers mentioned above. Presuming such consent in a case of necessity, a priest need only inform the parish priest or pastor or hospital chaplain later.

196. When two or more priests are present for the anointing of a sick person, one of them may say the prayers and carry out the anointing, saying the sacramental form. The others may take the remaining parts, such as the introductory rites, readings, invocations, or instructions. Each priest may lay hands on the sick person.

fitting time for him to receive this sacrament has certainly already arrived.' PCS, 108 further adds: "...if the Ordinary decides that many people are to be anointed in the same celebration, either he or his delegate should ensure that all disciplinary norms concerning anointing are observed, as well as the norms for pastoral preparation and liturgical celebration. In particular, the practice of indiscriminately anointing numbers of people on these occasions simply because they are ill or have reached an advanced age is to be avoided. Only those whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age are proper subjects for the sacrament."

¹¹¹ *Pastoral Care of the Sick*, 15.

197. The matter proper for the sacrament is olive oil blessed by a bishop at the previous Chrism Mass within that year.

198. The oil used for anointing the sick must be blessed for this purpose by the bishop or by a priest who has this faculty, either from the law or by special concession of the Apostolic See.

199. In case of necessity oil derived from other plants apart from olives and blessed by a priest at the occasion of anointing may be used.

200. If a priest is to bless the oil during the rite, he may bring the unblessed oil with him, or the family of the sick person may prepare the oil in a suitable vessel. If any of the oil is left after the celebration of the sacrament, it should be absorbed in cotton and burned.

201. The sick person is anointed on the forehead and on the hands. Depending on the culture and traditions of different peoples, the number of anointings may be increased and the place of anointing may be changed. Directives on this should be included in the preparation of particular rituals.

202. All baptised Christians who are able to receive communion are bound to receive viaticum by reason of the precept to receive communion when in danger of death from any cause.

203. The prayers said for a Christian who is close to death are traditionally called the Commendation of the Dying to God and are to be used according to the circumstances of each case. In viaticum the dying person is united with Christ in his passage out of this world to the Father. Through the prayers for the commendation of the dying, the Church helps to sustain this union until it is brought to fulfilment after death.

MARRIAGE

204. Whenever marriage is celebrated during Mass, white vestments are worn and the wedding Mass is used. If the marriage is celebrated on a Sunday or solemnity, the Mass of the Sunday or solemnity is used with the nuptial blessing and, where appropriate, the special final blessing.

205. The liturgy of the word is extremely helpful in emphasising the meaning of the sacrament and the obligations of marriage. When the wedding Mass may not be used, one of the readings in numbers 67-105 of the ritual should be chosen, except from Holy Thursday to Easter and on the feasts of Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, and other holidays of obligation.

206. When a marriage is celebrated during Advent or Lent or other days of penance, the parish priest should advise the couple to take into consideration the special nature of these times.

207. In welcoming polygamists who wish to become monogamous, care must be taken that the [discarded] wives and [their] children are provided for in a fair and just manner.¹¹²

208. For couples who wish to straighten their traditional type of union: i) If the partner is not baptized and would like to become Catholic, he/she should go through the proper stages of Christian initiation as prescribed by Canon 851 and 865 par. 1. ii). It is preferable that Baptism (using the adult baptism rite), Confirmation and Holy Communion take place before the day of marriage.

209. In order to contract a valid Church marriage, in case of marriage with a non-Catholic Christian, application for

¹¹² Diocese of Jinja, *Parish Pastoral Policies and Guidelines*, no. 4.6.a.

permission to marry a non-Catholic is to be sought from the bishop.

210. Permission is to be sought from the Bishop if a Catholic is entering a mixed marriage and it is to be celebrated in a Protestant Church.

211. It is the duty of the Parish Priest to ensure that the necessary inquiries and preparations are made, and that the bans are proclaimed.

FUNERALS

212. When burial cannot be postponed beyond a day of which funeral Masses are forbidden in the *Ordo*, the minister carries out a funeral service and then arranges to have a requiem Mass on an acceptable day. Care should be taken to explain to the people the reason for this action.

213. Baptized children who have not yet reached the age of reason are entitled to a Christian funeral. However, the focus is not on praying for the child, for, being innocent, it does not require God's forgiveness. The focus is on consolation of the bereaved family and all those in sorrow.

214. As far as funeral rites are concerned, catechumens are to be reckoned among Christ's faithful.¹¹³

215. Non-baptized children of Catholic may be allowed a Christian funeral by the bishop with the appropriate prayers given in the *Order of Christian Funerals*, provided their parents had intended to have them baptized.¹¹⁴

216. All Christians have the right to Christian burial except those who during their life have clearly opposed the faith in which they were baptized.

217. Since it is not possible that all those who die in a parish can receive a funeral Mass conducted by the priest(s) of the parish on the day of burial, it is helpful to have further diocesan regulations regarding who have a prerogative for a funeral Mass. Criteria that might be put into consideration include reception of

¹¹³ Canon 1183 par. 1.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Canon 1183, par. 2.

sacraments, activity in the Church, and contribution of transportation of the priest.

RÉSUMÉ

Question Box

Prayer

Procedure

- We follow same procedure as indicated in booklets
- There are three things to consider
 - Answer questions in the box and other questions
 - Discussion of selected topics
 - Input on selected topics
- This time not all the input will be given in the class
 - Because it is too extensive
 - Basics on Mass
 - Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - Matrimony
 - Funerals
 - Past groups have valued discussion more
 - So we shall allow more time for discussion

Question box

1. Is it possible for an unbaptised adult to receive the sacrament of Penance before receiving Baptism and First Holy Communion?

It is possible but not necessary

- Baptism takes away all sin, original and personal
- It is the gateway to the Church
- As such it is prior to any other sacrament
- However, counselling can be given to the candidate

2. Why don't we place the cross on the altar here when saying Mass?

There is already a crucifix behind the altar

This is sufficient to serve the purpose

- Reminder of Christ's sacrifice
- Sacramentals must not be unduly multiplied

Outdoors and in churches with no crosses it is needed
A procession cross can be an additional crucifix at the altar

3. What is the right liturgical posture for the praying of the “Our Father?”

None that is fixed

{ In the General Introduction the gesture of the priest is given
This is not denial or affirmation
Better to talk of the customary rather than the right gesture
{ Gestures are what we make them to mean
Example of nodding and shaking of heads
In some areas it is not used
The customary gesture is of hands raised
{ In expresses supplication
In the past it was a gesture of the congregation
Now all are invited to pray with confidence to the Father

4. This year the feast of the Uganda Martyrs (3rd June) coincided with the solemnity of the Holy Trinity. The Church in Uganda celebrated Martyrs’ Day instead of Trinity Sunday. Why?

In the general calendar it is a memorial

In the particular calendar it is a solemnity

{ This is normal practice in the Church
Example is also the feast of St. Patrick
Episcopal Conference have prerogative to make particular decisions
{ They normally receive special permission
In Namugongo permission was assumed
The decision must be for pastoral good
It is possible to make the occasion not contradictory
{ e.g. harmony between Martyrs and the Holy Spirit
Also harmony between Trinity Sunday and the Martyrs

5. Here at the institute we have to set time aside for a singing practice in preparation for daily and Sunday liturgy, if we are to have a vivid and lively praise of the Lord.

{ Preparation for liturgy is always commendable
However, here the participants are given freedom to initiate

6. Both the staff and participant priests should be allocated time in the rota to act as main celebrants during the celebration of the Eucharist. This will enhance a better spirit of unity and a sense of family in the praise and service of the Lord of the Lord.

{ They are indeed allocated time
 { This usually comes in the last week

Input

Introduction

Theme: "The Eucharist in the life of a priest"

Meaning of the theme

{ Not academic exposé on the Eucharist
 { You learnt that in the seminary
 { Many have celebrated Mass for years
 { You teach others about the sacrament
 { Rather
 { How our fervor can increase
 { How we can inspire parishioners
 { How the Eucharist can transform our life

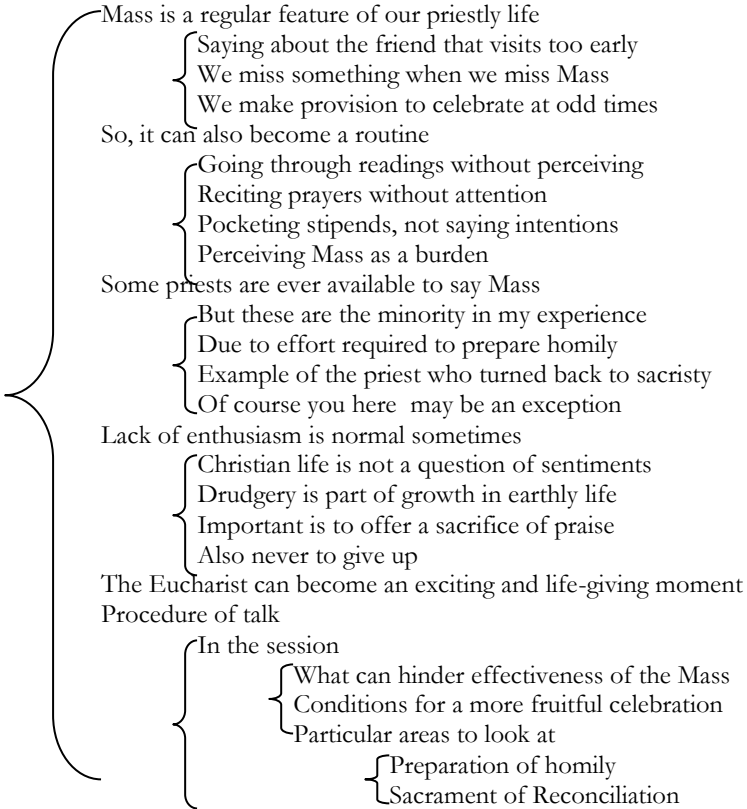
The theme was inspired by *Sacramentum Caritatis*

{ Latest Apostolic Letter of Benedict XVI
 { Promulgated 22nd February 2007
 { Summary of prior documents
 { Sacrosanctum Concilium
 { Year of the Eucharist
 { Eucharistic celebration is all about love
 { Divine love for mankind
 { Love within the Church
 { Love challenges all to love
 { The three divisions of the Apostolic Letter
 { Eucharist: mystery to be believed
 { Eucharist mystery to be celebrated
 { Eucharist mystery to be lived:

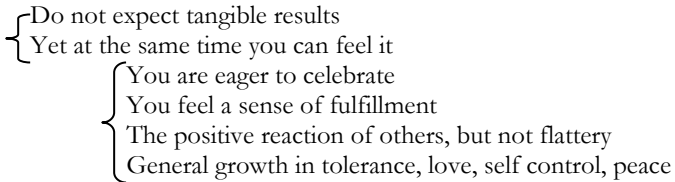
Triacca's oral exam

{ Summary of theology of the Eucharist in 3 words
 { Mystery, Action, Life

Our attitude to celebration of Mass



How do I know that the Eucharist is effective in my life?



What hinders fruitful celebration of the Eucharist?

- Ranking it low in my scale of values
- Pressure of other duties
 - Parish administration
 - Social activities
 - Various meetings
 - Diocesan tasks
 - Personal projects
 - What is not urgent becomes less important
- Fatigue
 - Particularly when we prepare for it late in the day
 - We need to know the rhythm of our bodies
 - Then locate it at an appropriate time
- State of our soul
 - Unless checked, small faults erode our resolve
 - They gradually lead to bigger faults
 - Compare them to a small leakage in a water tank
 - Grave sin burdens our conscience with guilt
 - Correspondingly we lose taste of holy things
 - We also lose a sense of reverence
- Degenerate personal prayer life
- Lack of necessary tools, e.g.
 - Ordo
 - Missal, lectionary, breviary

Aids to the fruitful celebration of Mass

- Always take time to prepare the liturgy
 - Consult the Ordo
 - Go through the readings
 - Read about the saint of feast of the day
 - Personal experience of not looking at Ordo
 - I have learnt always to have a personal Ordo
- Prepare the Homily
 - Read passage of Reverend Cameli
 - Point of emphasis not *how* but *that* we prepare
 - The faithful evaluate us
 - How we behave
 - How you relate in our communities
 - How you preach
 - One who prepares worries less about censorship
- Concentrate on what you say
 - Focus on meaning of the words during celebration
 - Have in mind to whom you are speaking
 - God the Father
 - Jesus Christ
 - The Congregation
- Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation when you need it
 - Experience the joy of being forgiven
 - Do not allow your conscience to be used to sin
 - The Eucharist works best in hearts free from sin
 - Read John 1:8-9
 - Read Canon 916 Duty to confess grave sin
- Pray in the church before and after Mass
 - Avoid coming in at the very last minute
 - Read canon 909
 - Reflect on the mystery you are about to handle
 - Do not sneak in Mass that has already started
- Pray the Liturgy of the Hours
 - It may prove hard at first when we are not used
 - But slowly we gain taste for it
 - We find reminders on what we celebrated at Mass
 - We turn our mind to God
 - Read General Instruction 2002 no. 12
 - Avail time for all the hours

Let go of the sin that clings so easily

Read Hebrews 12: 1-2

- We have gifts and talents, things others admire us for
- We have weaknesses that are no problems to others
- Some weaknesses we need to learn to bear
 - They are indications of our frailty
 - They teach us humility
 - Others are imagined
- Some are actual sins that hinder grace
 - These have to be overcome
 - The pain involved is inevitable part of growth
 - Set eyes on Jesus, like one following in a crowd

“Bingi byolemedde, sitani kwaima akuswaze”
Mbwega about the little hole on the lamp

What are you going to do?

This is for you to decide

- Whether to continue as before
- Whether to make some resolution

Important to remember

- The key issue is to allow God to act
- It is not so much doing things for him
- Resolutions that work must be realistic
- Progress is a series of failures and starting again
- To bear fruit you must remain attached to the vine

Discussion Questions

1. *Share your experience of listening to a good preacher and listening to a bad preacher. Share your experience of the joys and difficulties of preaching at Mass. How to you prepare your homily? What do you consider to be good preaching? How can this be achieved?*

2. *How is confession for you as a penitent? As a confessor? How is the situation of confession in your area of work? How can things be improved?*

INDEX

A

- Acolyte
 - Helps in distribution of communion when necessary, no. 145.....69
- Agnus Dei67
 - Meaning of, no. 13667
- Altar
 - Veneration of, no. 16.....39
- Announcements
 - Location During Mass, no. 162.....73
 - Where to give them from, no. 164.....74
- Anointing of the sick
 - Parts to anoint, no. 201 ..82
 - Proper matter for the, no. 19782
 - Those who may not receive, no. 280.....80
- Anointing of the Sick
 - Blessing of oils for, no. 198.....82
- Catechising the faithful
 - about, no. 19381
- Celebration on world day of the sick, no. 184 ...79
- Communion in form of wine, no. 18579

- Concelebrants at, no. 19581
- Conditions for, no. 187 .79
- Matter for, no. 19782
- Minister for, no. 19481
- Those eligible for, no. 274-18880
- Those not eligible for, no. 19280
- Transporting of precious blood for the sick, no. 18679
- Visit to the sick, no. 183 79

B

- Bans*See* Marriage bans
- Blessed Sacrament
 - Not to be preserved as wine, except for the sick, no. 186.....79
- Bread, Eucharistic
 - Condition, no. 11162
- Breaking of Bread
 - Meaning of, no. 130.....66

C

- Catechumenate
 - For those squaring up marriage, no. 20883

Christian Funerals	<i>See</i>	
Funerals		
Collect		
Only one to be used at		
each Mass, no. 36	44	
Commendation of the dying,		
no. 203.....	82	
Commentator		
At beginning of Mass, no.		
44.....	41	
On readings, no. 43	46	
Commingling	66	
Communion		
Of the sick in form of		
wine, no. 185	79	
Communion Rite		
Communicating more than		
once, no. 153	70	
Communication from fresh		
hosts, no. 144.....	68	
Communication of the		
minister at every Mass,		
no. 138.....	67	
Difference from common		
meal, no. 142	68	
Eucharistic ministers at,		
no. 146.....	69	
Exclusive communication		
of Catholics, no. 149.	69	
Genuflection after, no. 154		
.....	70	
Non-use of non-		
consecrated hosts, no.		
148.....	69	
Reception of communion		
in the hand, no. 151 ..	70	
Silence during, no. 156..	71	
Singing during, no. 153.	71	
Wiping of chalice during,		
no. 139	67	
Concluding Prayer		
After communion, no. 158		
.....	72	
Concluding Rites		
Announcements, no. 160		
.....	73	
Confession.....	<i>See</i>	
Reconciliation, no. 179		
Confession Seal		
Inviolable, no. 262	77	
Confessors		
Pastors have the duty to		
avail, no. 176.....	76	
Creed . <i>See</i> Profession of Faith		
E		
Embolism		
Recitation of, no. 126....	65	
Entrance procession		
Typical form of, no. 5 ...	36	
Entrance Procession.....	36	
Order in, no. 5	36	
Singing in an, no. 8.....	37	
Entrance Rites....	<i>See</i> Opening	
Rites, no. 2		
Entroit. <i>See</i> Introductory Rite,		
no. 22		
Eucharistic Ministers		
Function, no. 169	75	
Revocation of duties of,		
no. 188	75	
Training of, no. 172	75	
Eucharistic Prayer		
Conclusion of, no. 121 ..	64	
How to choose the, no.		
114	63	
Meaning, no. 113	63	

Parts for concelebrants, no. 122.....	64	Not to be proclaimed by lay faithful, no. 76....	55
Use of only approved, no. 120.....	64	Obligatory of Sundays and feast days, no. 73.....	54
F		Proclamation of, on Sunday, no. 73.....	54
Funerals		Silence after, no. 81	56
For Catechumens, no. 214	85	I	
For non-baptised children, no. 215	85	iconography	12
Of baptized children below age of reason, no. 213	85	Introductory Rite	
Right of all Catholics to have church, no. 216.85		Commentator's Role, no. 24	41
When funeral masses are prohibited, no. 212....	85	Gloria.....	42
		Greeting, no. 22	40
		Introduction, no. 23.....	41
		Opening Prayer, no. 32 ..	43
		Penitential Rite, no. 26..	41
		Silence during, no. 28 ...	42
		Sprinkling of Holy Water, no. 29	42
G		L	
General Absolution		Lamb of God ..See Agnus Dei	
Conditions for, no. 181..	78	Lector	
General Intercessions	<i>See</i>	Articulation and pronunciation	49
Prayers of the Faithful		Dress of the, no. 63	50
Gloria		Dressing etiquette, no. 63	50
Meaning, no. 30.....	42	Introducing Readings by, no. 66	51
Gospel		Posture of, no. 62	50
Ritual honour accorded to, no. 71	53	Posture, gait and dress of the	50
Greeting		Preparation by, no. 64 ...	51
At the beginning of Mass, no. 20.....	40	Proper pronunciation by, no. 58	49
		Qualities of a, no. 51.....	48
H			
Homily			
Beginning and ending of, no. 78.....	55		
Content of a, no. 72	54		

Reading speed of the	49	Readers, no. 49	48
Role of a, no. 49	48	Readings and their	
Use of microphones by,		explanation, no. 40 ...	46
no. 80	50	Responsorial Psalm, no. 46	
Use of public address		47
system by the	50	Silence during, no. 80 ...	56
Voice of the	48		
Voice of, no. 52	48		
Lent		M	
As a favourable time to		Marriage	
receive penance, no.		Celebration during the	
180	78	major seasons, no. 206	
Liturgy of the eucharist		83
Main parts of the	61	Celebration in a Protestant	
Liturgy of the Eucharist		Church, of, no. 210 ..	84
Agnus Dei, no. 136	67	Inquiries before, no. 211	84
Breaking of Bread, no. 130		Squaring up of, no. 207.	83
.....	66	Vestments at, no. 204....	83
Communion Rite, no. 138		Marriage Bans, no. 211	84
.....	67	Mass	
Concluding Prayer, no.		And the liturgy of the	
158	72	hours.....	32
Eucharistic Prayer, no. 113		Constituent parts of, no. 21	
.....	63	34
Main parts of, no. 103 ...	61	Introduction of the	40
Presentation of Gifts, no.		Mass Stipends	
127	62	Regulation of, no. 168 ..	74
Thanksgiving, no. 157 ...	72	Matrimony	
The Lord's Prayer, no. 123		Vestments to be used at	
.....	65	the celebration of.....	83
Liturgy of the Word		Microphones	
During nuptial Masses, no.		Proper use of, no. 59	50
205	83	Mixed Marriage	
Homily, no. 72	54	Permission of bishop for,	
Main parts of, no. 37	45	no. 209	83
Prayers of the Faithful, no.			
89	58	N	
Profession of faith, no. 83		Nuptial Masses	
.....	56	Vestments to be used at,	
		no. 204	83

O

Oils

- Blessing of during
anointing of the sick,
no. 200 82
- Opening hymn..... 38
- Opening Hymn
Function of, no. 12 38
- Opening Prayer
Conclusion of, no. 35 43
Meaning, no. 32..... 43
Number of in one Mass,
no. 36 43
- Opening Rites
What they are, no. 2, 3 ... 34

P

- Penitential rite 41
- Penitential Rite
Function, no. 26..... 41
- Prayers of the faithful
In different languages, no.
101 60
- Prayers of the Faithful
And intercession of Our
Lady, no. 94..... 59
Began and ended by a
priest, no. 90 58
Manner of proclamation
of, no. 96..... 59
Response to the, no. 100 60
Universal nature of, no. 92
..... 58
Who presents them, no. 95
..... 59
- Presentation of Gifts
Meaning of, no. 108 61
Qualities of the bread, no.
110..... 62

- Quality of hosts to be
prepared, no. 111..... 62
- Quality of the wine, no.
112 62
- Role of the Choir during,
no. 109 62

Priest

- As minister for anointing
of the sick, no. 194... 81
- Not to take political sides,
no. 167 74

Procession

- At beginning of Liturgy of
the Word, no. 44..... 47
- One during the Liturgy of
the Word, no. 45..... 47

Procession Dance

- Moments in liturgy for, no.
11 38
- Purpose of, no. 9..... 37*
- Profession of Faith
Recitation of, no. 85..... 57

R

- Readers *See* Lectors, no. 51
- Readings
Blessing before taking, no.
69 52
Commentary on, no. 43. 46
Not to be omitted, no. 41
..... 46
Who proclaims them, no.
42 46
- Reconciliation
Competent minister for,
no. 174 76
- Reconciliation
And confession seal, no.
177 77

Confessor not to use knowledge gained in, 178.....	77
During Lent, no. 180	78
General Absolution, no. 181	78
Priests should be ready to give, no. 175	76
Responsorial Psalm Role of, no. 47	47
Responsorial Psalm Substitution of, no. 48 ...	47
Rite of peace	65
Rite of Peace Exchange of sign of peace, no. 128.....	65
Meaning of, no. 127	65
S	
Sign of the Cross Before and after Homily, no. 79.....	55
Sign of the Cross Meaning, no. 18.....	39
Silence Before Opening Prayer, no. 28.....	42
Silent prayers of the priest Recitation of, no. 137	67
Speeches And politics, no. 166	74
Length of, no. 165.....	74
Sprinkling At beginning of Mass, no. 29	42
T	
Tabernacle Veneration of, no. 17	39
Thanksgiving After communion, no. 157	72
The Lord's Prayer Function, no. 123	65
Participation of all in, no. 124	65
Singing of, no. 125.....	65
V	
Vestments To be used during Nuptial Masses, no. 204.....	83
Viaticum Those to receive, no. 202	82
W	
World Day of the Sick Celebration in Jinja diocese, no. 184.....	79

