

Generations of Faith
October 9 and 12, 2011

The Mass as a Prayer: What's Changing & Why (Part I)

Teaching Resources for the New Roman Missal:

1. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Website. Visit www.usccb.org/romanmissal/index.shtml.
2. Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions. Visit www.fdlc.org/roman_missal.htm . Two resources on this site to check out are “The Dialogues of the Mass” by Michael Kwatera, OSB and “Joining Together in Prayer” by Andrew Ciferni, O. Praem, and Melissa Musick Nussbaum.
3. Liturgy Training Publications. Visit www.ltp.org or www.revisedromanmissal.org. Two resources on this site to check out are “Understanding the Revised Mass Texts” by Rev.

Paul Turner and “Understanding the Revised Mass Texts”
(pamphlet).

4. Connections to the Catechism: CCC# 1123-24, CCC# 1129-30, CCC# 2031, and CCC# 362-68
5. THIS TAKE HOME KIT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Lex orandi
Lex credendi
Lex Vivendi

Lex orandi means the law of praying.

*Lex credenda means the law of
believing.*

Lex Vivendi means the law of living.

When the phrases are used together, they mean that the way we pray is the source of what we believe, and our praying and believing are the sources of how we live. If we pray well, we will believe well, which will lead us to live well.

Words worth memorizing: Pray well, believe well, live well!

Please notice that the foundation of a good life is good prayer. The most important thing a Christian can do is to pray and worship God faithfully.

(From Our Call to Worship: The Revised Roman Missal Copyright Center for Ministry Development 2010)

TABLE TALK for family, friends, & group discussion:

1. How does participating at Sunday Mass help you make good choices at home, work, socializing, and school?
2. How does the Mass help you remember and experience all that Jesus has done for us?
3. In what ways do you see St. John & St. Mary reaching out to others in the world?
4. How is St. John and St. Mary a community of faith?
5. When have you experienced the power of God's word in your life?
6. What Scripture, words, or story from today's Mass meant a lot to you?
7. What special gifts do you bring to your parish community?
8. What are some things for which you give God thanks?
9. Memories from Mass:
 - a. What color vestments were worn today?
 - b. What was one thing you noticed about the church today?
 - c. What was your favorite song or hymn that was sung today?
 - d. What is one thought about the Gospel reading or homily that is important to remember?

e. What can I do to live out the Gospel's message this week?

10. What about the revised Roman Missal are you least excited about? Why?
11. What about the revised Roman Missal are you most excited about? Why?
12. Which new saint in the revised Roman Missal sounds the most interesting to you? Why?

FAMILY, FRIEND, OR GROUP ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEKS OF:

Sunday, October 16 - 22:

- Attend the John Michael Talbot Mission with your family or friends (October 16, 17, & 18 at St. John at 7:00 p.m. all three evenings) or the St. John Parish Festival on October 22 (5:30 - 10:00 p.m.) and October 23 (11:00 - 4:00 p.m.)
- As a group, share something that came out of your quiet time with God. After all, it is in the quiet time that we can best hear God calling us.

Sunday, October 23 - 29:

- As a group, review the last 24 hours and share one thing that happened to you and how it challenged or encouraged your Catholic, Christian walk. You might even share those things you need to ask forgiveness for.
- Together prepare a meal for a person/family who is not able to do it for themselves.
- Make a beautiful family/group journal and keep it out in the open so that everyone can regularly date and jot down things they are thankful for that day/week.

Sunday, October 30 - November 5:

- Have a discussion about how you show respect for God at Mass. You might discuss the Scripture readings, the Eucharist, how you dress, your posture at Mass, or how you actually participate.
- Have a family/group gathering focused on family forgiveness. Each person can draw a picture about a time when one family member forgave another. Then, everyone can share pictures and the stories behind them.

Sunday, November 6 – 12:

- Plan a family/group visit to the Blessed Sacrament for quiet prayer – speaking to God and listening for Him to speak to us in our hearts.
- Decide/discuss one way your family/group can continue to live as a community of faith, such as going to Mass or sharing your time and talents with others.
- Look at your parish bulletin and choose one activity that the whole family can get involved in. After the event, discuss the experience and how it felt to love and serve others.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS & PHRASES

Consubstantial *replaces the expression "one in Being" in the Creed. Literally, the Latin word **consubstantialis** means having the same substance, which is a better translation than "one in Being."*

Born of the Father before all ages: *This phrase replaces the words "eternally begotten of the Father." It is more exact and reminds us that the Eternal Son of God,*

incarnate in Jesus in human history, was with the Father before time began. See John 1:1-2.

Incarnate: *This word replaces the word "born" in the previous translation. It has the sense of "being given flesh." The previous translation could be misunderstood to mean that the Word became flesh when Jesus was born. That is not our faith. We believe that Jesus was made flesh in Mary's womb.*

Suffered death: *This phrase replaces "suffered, died" in the previous translation. Literally, the Latin says, "he suffered and was buried." The point is that what gives Jesus' resurrection its full meaning is that he really died.*

I confess: *This phrase replaces "We acknowledge." Confess means to admit or to profess belief in. As it is used in the Creed it is not an admission of sin.*

I look forward to the resurrection: *At the end of the Creed, this phrase expresses a confidence and hope in our own resurrection. It is a clearer and more hope-filled translation of the Latin than the phrase "look for the resurrection," which it replaces.*

Lord God of hosts: *This very holy prayer is composed of words that all come from Scripture. "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts" are words that Isaiah the prophet heard the angels singing when they were in God's presence. "Lord God of hosts" was the title that David, as a young shepherd, called God when he was about to fight the giant Goliath. "Hosts" means "many."*

Poured out: *In the Institution Narrative, "poured out" replaces "shed." It is a much more active verb. It means that Jesus' death on the cross did not just happen to him, but he made the choice to do it because he wanted people to experience forgiveness of sins.*

The Mass in Scripture

Scripture tells the story of salvation history: God's plan to save us from our own sin. The Mass is the climax of Salvation history in which the sacrifice of Christ on the cross happens on our altar. So Scripture is filled with references to the Mass, both in the Old Testament and in the New.

Old Testament: Foreshadowing the Mass

Throughout the Old Testament, we see signs of the Mass to come. The Mass didn't just appear out of nowhere: it stands at the end of a long story we call Salvation History.

God's earliest people offered sacrifices to the Lord, both to atone for their sins and to give God thanks for his salvation.

Melchizedek, priest of God Most High, brought Abraham bread and wine. New Testament writers see Melchizedek as a foreshadowing of Christ (see Hebrews 7).

The Passover sacrifice foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ, which saves us from death and bondage to sin.

The Law of Moses prescribed sacrificial rites for all Israel, again foreshadowing the perfect sacrifice of our Christian Mass.

The Psalms brought the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving to the fore – a sacrifice that Greek-speaking Jews would know as "the thanksgiving" (**eucharistia**, from which we get "Eucharist").

The prophet Malachi foretold a time when a pure sacrifice would be offered to the Lord all over the earth (Malachi 1:11).

New Testament: The Apostles Celebrate the Mass

Jesus Christ told the disciples that they must eat his flesh and drink his blood (John 6:53-56).

At the Last Supper, Christ instituted the Mass when he said "This is my Body" and "This is my Blood" (see Matthew 26:26-28).

On the road to Emmaus, Jesus' followers recognized him in the breaking of the bread (Luke 24:13-35).

The Apostles celebrated the Mass with the very first Christians (Acts 2:42).

Before the Gospels were written down, St. Paul wrote an account of the Last Supper and gave the Corinthians instructions for celebrating the Mass (1 Corinthians 11:23-34).

The Letter to the Hebrews put the Mass in the context of salvation history.

Revelation showed how the Mass on earth is part of the worship that goes on constantly and forever in heaven.
(Taken from "The Mass At a Glance" by Mike Aquilina)

THE FOUR PARTS OF THE MASS INCLUDE:

- 1. The Introductory Rites**
- 2. The Liturgy of the Word**
- 3. The Liturgy of the Eucharist**
- 4. The Concluding Rites**

Focus in the month of OCTOBER: The Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word.

Focus in the month of NOVEMBER: The Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Concluding Rites.

The celebration of the Mass, which is also called the celebration of Eucharist, is very important. Why? Because we come to Mass:

- To praise God and give thanks for all of the blessings we have received.**
- To be nourished by God's word and by Eucharist.**
- To pray for ourselves and for all the needs of our world.**
- To leave Mass with renewed energy to love our brothers and sisters.**

At Mass we are all participants: there is no place for spectators! Everyone's participation is important. We all have our specific roles:

- We dialogue with the priest and pray aloud with the whole congregation.**
- We participate by listening attentively as the word of God is read aloud and explained.**

- We eat and drink of the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion.
- We sing psalms and hymns and songs.
- We minister as readers or as singers while others take part in the procession of gifts or help as altar servers. Some may assist the priest and deacon to distribute Holy Communion.

The following handouts come from Gerard Moore's (with additional material by Jean Marie Hiesberger) *We Learn About Mass* (Second Edition) and are for the purpose of helping you understand more about Mass, and how you participate in it. The more any of us know about this sacred tradition of Mass, the deeper we are able to enter into its celebration. Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. It is the sacrament to which we bring our life with its joys and sorrows, failures and accomplishments, and put it all in the hands of the Lord. In return, we receive nourishment and strength and are challenged to go forth to more fully love and serve the Lord.

INTRODUCTORY RITES (Part 1)

(Includes: The Sign of the Cross, the Greeting, the Penitential Act, the Gloria and the Collect)

The Mass begins with a number of steps. The first step occurs when we enter the church, gathering together as Christ's sisters and brothers. From the time we leave home we should be preparing our minds and hearts to come together to meet the Lord.

How we prepare for something tells us how important it is to us. Think about a significant event or occasion in your life. Perhaps it is a party or a graduation or a special meal, or maybe it is a gathering with friends. We remember the last occasion like this, who was there, and who might be there this time. Whatever the event, if it is important,

we think about it beforehand and we do whatever is necessary to see that we are prepared for it.

Recalling these things helps us reflect on how important Eucharist is for us. How does it compare with other gatherings in our life? Just as we prepare for other things, we need to pay attention to making the transition from our ordinary daily life to this most important time and place. Developing the habit of preparing for Mass is a valuable one for children to learn and develop at a young age. Helping them to see the celebration of Mass as important and worthy of preparation is a gift they can carry with them through life.

In our Catholic tradition we have many different kinds of prayer. Some are private prayers and some are community prayers. Mass is the supreme community prayer. We sing and say our prayers together. The priest includes us in the prayers he prays in the name of the community. In addition to participating fully, we can help make this a community celebration by including other people with simple human gestures as we enter the church. From the very beginning of entering the church, we can acknowledge others. We say "hello" to them as we enter the church. We want to especially notice people who may be there alone or who may be strangers or newcomers. A wave, a handshake, a smile - whatever is comfortable for us - is an important gesture that says, "We are here together. This is a community celebration, not my private prayer."

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS AND THE GREETING

As mass begins, we make the Sign of the Cross. We start and end our celebration with this important sign of our faith. The Sign of the Cross is laden with meaning and symbolism. We pray in the name of the Trinity, professing our faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is an act of faith as well as a reminder to ourselves that all we do

is grounded in the three persons in one God. The Sign of the Cross is a sign of the most perfect act of love, Christ's death on the cross for our salvation. There is no greater love than this. We also make the Sign of the Cross to ask God to bless us. We touch our head, remembering that we are blessed in our mind. We touch our shoulders and heart, remembering that we are blessed in all of our being, and in this gesture, we ask God to continue to bless us. Next, we offer the ancient blessing to each other. We respond to the priest's greeting and listen attentively to his invitation to enter into the most important celebration of our Catholic faith.

THE PENITENTIAL ACT

We have joined together with our brothers and sisters for this great prayer of worship - Eucharist, or Mass. To help us better prepare to receive all the gifts that come to us in Eucharist, we must first remember our failings. In the Penitential Act and the Lord, Have Mercy, we admit to ourselves, to God, and to our brothers and sisters gathered here that we have failed. We ask for prayers from Mary, the angels and saints, and from our community. Eucharist is a sacrament of forgiveness also, and in this part of Mass we ask for forgiveness and help to do better. So we pray to God, as Lord, as Christ, to have mercy on us. When we lay our failings down, we are able to participate fully by hearing the word and receiving the sacrament of Eucharist.

THE GLORIA

The ancient and joyful prayer called the Gloria, or *Gloria in excelsis*, begins with the words that the angels sang at the birth of Jesus. As we consider this ancient prayer, read Luke 2:13-14. There, you will see that the first lines of this prayer are almost exactly as those that the angels sang, as they proclaimed the birth of Christ to the shepherds. We hear this verse from the Bible as the priest or deacon reads the Gospel during the Mass during the Night on the Nativity of the Lord. As we sing the Gloria, we overflow with joy. Reflect on the

words, “We praise you, / we bless you / we glorify you, / we give you thanks for your great glory What could be more joyous? The basic forms of prayer are blessing, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, and praise (*Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC], 2644*). We can see each of these expressions in the Gloria. Examining the prayer, we see that we name some of the many wonderful things God has done, such as taking away the sins of the world. We describe who God is: heavenly King, Most High, and almighty Father. We ask God to receive our prayer and have mercy on us. We acknowledge that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In this hymn we give glory to God as we praise, bless, adore, and glorify God. We pray for peace to God’s people of good will. It is very appropriate to begin our celebration by praising God in this way and by reminding ourselves of who our wonderful God is. The Gloria in Mass is above all in proclaiming our praise of God.

THE COLLECT

After the Gloria the priest leads us in The Collect. This prayer begins with a few moments of quiet when the priest says, “Let us pray,” so that we can gather our prayers and petitions. Appropriately, this prayer is also called The Collect, because in it we use both the time of silence and the words of the prayer to “collect” our thoughts in order to better participate in Mass. Before the priest prays aloud, we silently remember why we are here. We remember, too, that God is present here, and we think of the people and the intentions to be mindful of during this liturgy.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (Part 2)

(Includes: The First Reading, Psalm, and Second Reading, the Gospel, the Homily, the Profession of Faith and the Prayer of the faithful)

The Liturgy of the Word begins with the first scripture reading and ends with the Prayer of the Faithful. On Sundays and weekdays the First Reading is followed by the Responsorial Psalm. On Sundays and special days there is also a Second Reading. Next is the Gospel Acclamation followed by the Gospel itself. After all of these scripture readings come the homily, the Creed, and the Prayer of the Faithful. This is a rich and important part of Mass. Christ comes to us in the consecrated bread and wine, and Christ also comes to us in the word. We need to take these readings in just as we consume the bread and wine. When we eat food, it becomes part of us. When we are equally open to taking in the word of the Lord, it too can become part of us, part of who we are and how we live out life. Some scripture readings are easier to understand and apply to our life more readily than other readings. This is why we must listen carefully and take time to think about what they can mean to us. This is also why the homily is important. The homily helps us to understand the meaning of God's word we heard proclaimed so that we can live according to that word.

THE FIRST READING, PSALM, AND SECOND READING

The scriptures are not just *read* at Mass. They are *proclaimed*. Good lectors practice them beforehand and proclaim them loudly and slowly enough to be heard and understood by everyone in church. The readings are that important. That is why our response to the readings is an important role for us to take. When we respond, "Thanks be to

God; or sing the Responsorial Psalm with enthusiasm, we are making an act of faith. The book of Psalms is from the Old Testament. The Psalms are prayers of praise we sing or say at each Mass. Sometimes a lit candle is placed near the ambo (the place where the scriptures are proclaimed) as a sign that these words give light to our life. After each scripture we have a brief silence to think about what we have just heard. At Sunday liturgy there are two readings before the Gospel and on weekdays, one reading followed by the Responsorial Psalm.

THE HOMILY

The Church takes us through the Gospel over the course of the three-year Lectionary cycle. The scriptures and our tradition come to us as the source of our inspiration and guidance. The homily helps us understand and apply this wisdom to the way we live. It is food for the journey of the week ahead of us. Like the scriptures, the homily is to both comfort and challenge us. The homily is not just for inspiration while we are listening to it. It is our guide as we face the routine times of our life as well as the challenges we may face during the week. Sometimes the homily is about a special solemnity or feast we are celebrating. Many homilists say they read the scriptures for the next Sunday on the preceding Monday and throughout the week. That way they can pray with them and think about them both consciously and unconsciously throughout the week before they preach their homily. Christ is present at Mass in the scriptures proclaimed, and the homily helps us experience Christ's presence in those readings. To the extent we are aware that Christ is with us, we can live according to the Gospel with confidence and with insight.

THE PROFESSION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed is both a prayer and a statement of belief. It originated in 325 AD at the Council of Nicea. When we pray this creed, we echo what Catholics have prayed and believed through all those centuries. What a wonderful reminder of what we hold as central to

our faith! Praying it is a kind of catechetical lesson. The Creed begins with the Trinity, specifying the role of the Father as Creator. It reviews what we believe about Jesus Christ, his role in the Trinity, his life, death, and Resurrection as well as the future in his eternal Kingdom. The Creed then states the important role of the Holy Spirit. Finally, we pray about our belief in the Catholic Church, the importance of Baptism, and our future bodily resurrection in eternity. This prayer is rich with meaning, history, and faith. It is to be prayed with conviction and one voice with the entire community. We can remember that people around the world are professing the same beliefs at Mass when they say the Creed. The word *creed* comes from the Latin word *credo*, meaning "I believe." Belief in Jesus means accepting what God has revealed and living our life according to this belief. For Christians it means to trust in Jesus, to believe that he is the Christ and to accept what he teaches about our relationship with God and especially what that means in our daily life.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

At this point during Mass, the Prayer of the Faithful (also called the Universal Prayer) is prayed by the baptized members of the assembly. These prayers are universal in nature because they are prayers offered for the salvation of all. The celebrant invites us to pray these prayers and we stand to do so. One person speaks the prayers in the name of the assembly. The community adds its voice to each intercession, either in spoken or sung response. This response makes these petitions to God in our name. Together we bring the needs of the human family to God - for the needs of the Church, the world, the oppressed, and the local community. In a real sense, these petitions are our response to the presence of God that has come to us in the Liturgy of the Word. This last action of the first part of Mass calls out to God the needs of the world in which we live and asks for God's help and blessing. It is the whole world that is prayed for here, not just us

and our personal needs. We bring the entire world with us to the liturgy and place it before God in this prayer.

Please take the time to read over these handouts carefully so that you can fully participate in the Mass each week. Understanding brings wisdom and rest.

In the November Generations of Faith Take Home Kit you will receive handouts on the second two parts of the Mass: The Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Concluding Rites.