

# The Sacred Liturgy

A Guide to Understanding the Mass in accordance with  
the revised General Instruction of the Roman Missal  
Effective April 23, 2006

Have you ever wondered when is the proper time to sit, stand, or kneel during certain parts of the Mass? Should the congregation hold hands while reciting the *Our Father* at Mass? What is the role of the 'Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion,' which is now the preferred term for what used to be called Eucharistic Ministers?

This booklet is a summary of the recent changes in the new *General Instruction for the Roman Missal*, a 127-page document published by the Roman Catholic Church for the first time in 40 years.

The goal of this publication is to give the reader the opportunity to:

- Understand the highlights/changes of the new *General Instruction for the Roman Missal*.
- Explore the various parts of the Holy Eucharist Celebration.
- Develop a deeper appreciation of the richness of our Sacred Liturgy.

## The Catholic Tradition

There are many characteristics of our Roman Catholic tradition that set it apart from other religious traditions.

These include areas of doctrine, moral teaching, history, tradition, and worship. One of the traditional 'marks' of the Church is its catholicity. We are the Body of Christ, the Church, that expresses its faith and worship in the diversity of cultures and languages that make up our world. Catholics are members of a Church that is recognized by its formal, structured, and ritualized form of worship. We are a 'liturgical' community of faith. We are not unique in this worship style, but it is clearly different from what many church communities in our area experience.



For many centuries this was externally obvious in the use of Latin in the Church's official worship. This may have been a clear sign of the universality of the Church, but it was not the most accessible form of worship for the vast majority of Catholics who did not know this ancient language. Reliance upon vernacular translations was the practical way the Catholic faithful 'participated' in the Mass and other celebrations.



## Second Vatican Council

There were many steps in the journey that led to our present experience of active participation and involvement in the Liturgy by the entire assembly gathered for liturgical celebrations. One of the pivotal events of recent church history was the convocation of the Second Vatican Council by Pope John XXIII. This Council was not in response to a doctrinal crisis or heresy. This gathering of more than 2000 bishops was given the mandate to renew the Church, reviewing and up-dating as needed, its theology and practice to better address the needs of the contemporary Church and society. The majority of the practical work of the Council was accomplished under the leadership of Pope Paul VI, who succeeded Pope John XXIII. Ultimately, the bishops, in full union with the Pope, promulgated 16 major documents.

## Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy

The first of these was the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy officially published for the universal Church more than 40 years ago. This extraordinary document had its antecedents in the initiatives of previous Popes, notably Pope Saint Pius X. In his encyclical *Mediator Dei* we find the groundwork for what became the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. Many of these earlier documents

established the keynote principle enunciated in the conciliar document: full, conscious, active participation by all in the celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgical rites. Clearly, the theological insights and directions incorporated in the Constitution did not take place in a vacuum.

### The Roman Missal

The practical aspects of the directions set forth in the Constitution were carried out in the revision of the various sacramental and non-sacramental rites. These were published in new Ritual Books, the most significant and far-reaching was the second edition of the Roman Missal. Promulgated in 1975, and revised in part in 1979, this became the norm for all celebrations of the Mass until the Third Edition of the Roman Missal replaced it in 2002. Upon its official publication in the Latin ‘typical’ or normative edition, it became the official liturgical book (*Missale Romanum*) for celebration of the Eucharist throughout the world by those who are members of the Roman Rite. In practical terms, until the official English translation is approved by the Holy See, there is no text available, except for celebrations in Latin. At this time no date has been announced for the full text of the English version of the Roman Missal.



### General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)

One of the unique features of this process of this new, third edition of the Missal is the official publication of the English translation of the Introduction to the Missal. This detailed document, 127 pages in length, is called the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*.

The title in English is somewhat misleading because it is far more than just an ‘instruction.’ It is Liturgical Law for the Dioceses of the United States. It provides many directives concerning the Eucharistic Celebration, as well

as a concise presentation of the theological principles and premises relating to the Mass. These give us a way to view the specific details of the new edition.

The third edition does not introduce much that would be called ‘new,’ except, perhaps from the point of emphasis. The following find expression in many parts of the *General Instruction*:



1. The Celebration of the Eucharist is first of all, Christ-centered.
2. Every Celebration of the Eucharist requires a bishop or a priest delegated by him.
3. Participation of the Faithful is the Goal to be considered before all others.
4. The Eucharist is the Source and Summit of Christian Life.

The *General Instruction* is the backbone of the Liturgy. Such introductions are included in the opening pages of each Ritual Book. Unfortunately, they are rarely read or studied. The result is a variety of practices that do not enhance the unity of the Church that is so essential for a Church that spans the globe as well as the centuries.

In practical terms, there are very few external changes introduced in this third edition. However, the occasion of the new edition provides an excellent opportunity to review our theology and tradition as we concretely experience it in each Mass.

In subsequent articles, the various parts of our Eucharistic Celebration will be explored with the hope that all will come to a deeper appreciation of the richness of our Liturgy.

For those who may wish a copy of the *General Instruction*, it is available from USCCB Publications, Publication # 5-543.

Call toll-free: 800-235-8722. Other resources are also available.



# General Instruction of the Roman Missal

## Summary of changes

### Before Mass

- A period of silence is encouraged. Therefore, please try to arrive at least five minutes before Mass is scheduled to begin in order to enter into the spirit of the celebration. All are urged to refrain from unnecessary conversation immediately before Mass.



- Nothing is placed on the Altar, except the Altar cloth and the Book of the Gospels, if used, until the Preparation of Gifts. The Lectionary is in place on the Ambo. The Lectionary and Sacramentary (Missal) are not carried in procession.

### Entrance and Procession

- The Lector(s), but not Communion Ministers, take part in the Procession. If no Deacon is present, the Lector may carry the Book of the Gospels.

### After the First and Second Reading

- The Lector should remain in place at the Ambo after each reading for a brief period of silence (e.g. 15 seconds) before moving. The Lectionary is not elevated when the Lector says “The Word of the Lord.” This allows each person to reflect on the readings without distraction.

### Responsorial Psalm & Gospel Acclamation

- The Psalm, since it, too, is the Word of God, may be sung at the Ambo or other suitable place. The Gospel Acclamation may not be sung from the Ambo.

### Creed

- All should make a *profound bow* (from the waist) at the words “by the power of the Holy Spirit...”



### Preparation of Gifts

- If there is a second collection it is more consistent with the liturgical action to take it up immediately following the regular collection. Because all offerings are gifts of the people, it is recommended that these offerings be brought to the altar at the same time as the bread and wine are carried in procession.

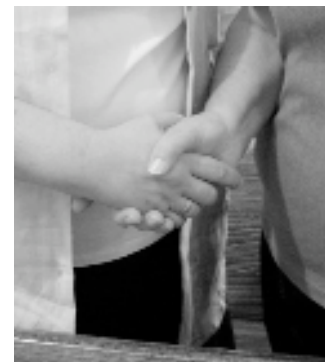
- All stand *before* the priest begins the invitation to pray. Rule of thumb: stand as the priest finishes washing his hands (if the song has ended and the collection(s) have been taken up), or as soon as the song has been completed. (Do not wait for a gesture.)

### The Lord’s Prayer

- No gesture is indicated for the people, but there are also none prohibited.

### Greeting of Peace

- Because this rite takes place immediately before Communion and the Body and Blood of Christ are present on the Altar, dignity and reverence are extremely important. Therefore, the greeting should be extended *only* to those near you. It is not appropriate to leave the pew to greet people in other parts of the church. (Parents are urged to help their children understand the meaning of this greeting.) The priest ordinarily only exchanges the greeting with those in the



sanctuary itself. The greeting should conclude as soon as the Lamb of God begins.

### Communion Reverence

- The Bishops of the United States have stated that the gesture of reverence before receiving Communion (under the form of bread and/or from the cup) is a simple *head bow*. No other gesture should be used before or after receiving Communion. This is another important sign of the unity of the people celebrating the sacred liturgy together. This means that profound bows, genuflections, signs of the cross, etc. are not needed, and are best avoided. The bow suffices. No gesture is indicated after receiving Communion.

- No provision concerning the receiving of a blessing by those who are not receiving Communion is mentioned. However, since this is not prohibited, it may be continued by those who desire to receive this blessing.

### After Communion

- The present practice of kneeling after returning to the pew after Communion is retained. After all have received Communion, and the consecrated species have been consumed or placed in the tabernacle, all may sit for the period of silence. Provision is made for an optional congregational hymn of praise instead of the period of silence, but solos and other ‘meditation’ song are not appropriate. No announcements are to be made and no second collections taken up during this period of silence. If brief announcements are necessary, they are made after the Prayer after Communion.



It is contrary to the nature of community worship to leave before the celebration is completed.



# General Instruction of the Roman Missal

## A Brief Look at the 127-Page Document

The Table of Contents for the General Instruction reveals a very comprehensive approach to the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy. The Preamble solidly grounds this third edition in the theology and practice of the centuries, emphasizing its dependence upon what has preceded it. Again, we are reminded that this new General Instruction cannot be viewed in isolation.

### **I. The Importance and Dignity of the Eucharistic Celebration**

The first chapter, The Importance and Dignity of the Eucharistic Celebration, is quite brief, but it contains statements of the key principles and underlying theology of our celebration of the Eucharist. Some of the guiding insights of the Conciliar Constitution are restated.

### **2. The Structure of The Mass, Its Elements, and Its Parts**

The Structure of the Mass, its Elements and its Parts, is the one that will probably receive the greatest attention because it describes the practical norms for the celebration. More attention will be devoted to this later.

### **3. The Duties and Ministries in the Mass**

The Duties and Ministries in the Mass, gives a much clearer explanation of the various duties of both ordained and non-ordained ministers. The emphasis on the duties of the People of God is a welcome enhancement.

### **4. The Different Forms of Celebrating Mass**

These ministerial roles are expanded in the fourth chapter, The Different Forms of Celebrating Mass. In addition to the detailed directives for Masses with a congregation, the General Instruction provides much more detail concerning Concelebrated Masses.

### **5. General Principles for the Arrangement and Use of Furnishings**

Chapter five provides the general principles for the arrangement and use of furnishings used in churches during the Mass. This would be especially important for

parishes contemplating the building or renovation of worship space.

### **6. Requisites for the Mass**

Chapter six describes the things required for the celebration of the Mass.

### **7 - 9: Choice of Mass Texts, Special Celebrations and Adaptations**

Chapters 7, 8, and 9 explain the norms for the choice of Mass texts, special celebrations, and the adaptations within the competence of the Bishop or the National Conference of Bishops.

### **Listening and Reverence**

Returning to Chapter Two, the General Instruction gives some general statements about key components of the celebration before examining the various parts of the Mass in detail. Strong emphasis is placed on the importance of ‘listening’ to God’s Word rather than following the text in a worship aid. The presiding role of the priest celebrant is detailed as well as specific instruction of liturgical role. The role of the gathered faithful is also explained, especially stressing the acclamations and responses proper to them; and the importance of appropriate vocal expression and singing.

### **Movements and Posture**

There is a series of paragraphs that deal with movements and posture. In addition to describing these as they occur in the various parts of the Sacred Liturgy, the General Instruction attributes common gestures as a “sign of unity” that expresses and fosters the intention and spiritual attitude of the participants.”

### **Silence**

Finally, there is a paragraph on silence. #45 not only describes when silence should be observed, but also the reason for it. Many people are uncomfortable with silence; words and actions are preferred. The General Instruction calls us to incorporate both in our celebrations.

# The Order of Mass

- **The Introductory Rites**
  - Entrance Rite
  - Act of Penitence (Penitential Rite)
  - The Collect (Opening Prayer)
- **The Word of the Lord**
  - Reading I
  - Reading II
  - Gospel
  - Responsorial Psalm
  - The Homily
  - Profession of Faith (The Creed)
  - Prayer of the Faithful
- **Liturgy of the Eucharist**
  - Preparation of the Gifts
    - Preparing the Altar
    - Offertory Procession
    - Second Collections
  - Eucharistic Prayer
    - Thanksgiving
    - Acclamation
    - Invocation
    - Institutional Narrative and Consecration
    - Memorial
    - Offering
    - Intercessions
    - Final Doxology
  - The Communion Rite
    - The Lord's Prayer
    - Rite of Peace
    - Breaking of Host (Fraction Rite)
- **Concluding Rites**
  - Final Greeting and Blessing



# The Introductory Rites

The very word ‘introductory’ seems to convey the idea that this part of the Mass is unimportant. Certainly, the two major parts of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, are the principle parts of the celebration. However, we should not overlook the importance of what we call Introductory Rites. In many ways, the different components of these rites set the tone for everything that follows. How a celebration of the Eucharist begins has a powerful influence on all that follows. The individual parts of this series serve to draw what is often a very diverse and fragmented community into a people who have gathered to celebrate their worship and identity as the Body of Christ.

## Entrance Rite

- The Entrance Rite is preceded by a period of silence. This is new in the third edition of the Roman Missal.

- There is also a reminder that nothing should be placed on the altar until it is needed.

- The order of those who take part in the procession begins with the incense bearer, if used, a cross bearer, flanked by two acolytes carrying candles, followed by the Lector or Reader, and then by the Deacon carrying the Book of Gospels, if one is used. Any Concelebrants precede the Principle Celebrant.



Ordinarily, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion do not take part in the procession. If there is no Deacon, the Lector may carry the Book of Gospels. The Lectionary, however, is never carried in procession.

- #47 clarifies the purpose of the Entrance chant or song as well as describing what types of music may be used. “The purpose of this chant is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have gathered, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical season or festivity, and accompany the procession of the priest and ministers.” That is an impressive list of goals that this one song is expected to accomplish.

- Notice that the accompanying of the procession of ministers is mentioned last. The Entrance chant is more than ‘traveling music’ and it need not end as soon as the celebrant arrives at the presiding chair. It is quite acceptable to sing all the verses in order to foster the formation of the celebrating community.



- When arriving at the entrance to the sanctuary, the ministers make a profound bow, or they genuflect if the tabernacle is located in the sanctuary. Those carrying the censer, cross, candles, or Book of Gospels do not ordinarily genuflect. If the Book of Gospels is carried by a deacon, he places the book on the altar without reverencing the sanctuary. If a Lector carries the book, the usual reverence mentioned above is made.

- The priest and deacon, if there is one, kiss the altar before going to their places. The altar may be incensed while the Entrance chant continues. The priest celebrant then takes his place at the presiding chair and greets the people. This is a formal extension of God’s blessing to those gathered. It is not a folksy dialogue or casual welcome. This is far more than a ‘Hi, how are you?’ This greeting in the name of Christ is solemn.

## Act of Penitence (Penitential Rite)

- After a brief introduction to the day’s celebration, if one is given, all are invited to take part in the Act of Penitence. This is a new term.

In the past this part of the Mass was called the Penitential Rite. The change in terminology reflects a better understanding of what is taking place. It is not truly a ‘rite’ because it essentially involves a prayer by the community followed by a prayer of absolution. This is



not the same 'absolution' as understood in the Sacrament of Penance. Depending on the form chosen for the Act of Penitence, the Kyrie concludes it unless, it has already been incorporated.

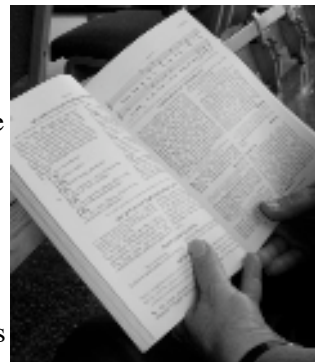
- Except during Advent and Lent the Gloria is said or sung. The new Instruction emphasizes that it is to be intoned by the priest (or cantor / choir). #53 presumes that the Gloria is ordinarily sung even though the provision for reciting it is given.

### **The Collect (Opening Prayer)**

The final action of the Introductory Rites is the

Collect, previously called the Opening Prayer. This change in terminology actually reflects a return to an earlier practice. The celebrant would conclude or 'collect' the intentions of the people in his prayer. The 'Amen' of the people unites them in this formal community prayer that begins and often sets the theme of the celebration.

In part three of this series, the first major part of the celebration, the Liturgy of the Word, will be the focus.





# The Word of the Lord

Having gathered as a community of God's people joining in the Introductory Rites, we are now prepared to prayerfully listen to God's Word, and ultimately respond to what has been proclaimed when we begin the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

## Prayful Preparation



Even though many publishers offer worship aids or other publications with the text of the Sunday readings, the ideal is to use these before the celebration begins, either at home or before Mass, rather than follow along while these are proclaimed in the Liturgy itself. There is a very good reason for this. Each person

who proclaims the Sacred Scriptures, lay person, deacon, or priest, is a person of faith who, presumably, has spent time in prayerful preparation before coming to church. The richness of God's Word means that each one who proclaims a passage will have his or her own insights.

When the readings for a particular liturgical celebration are proclaimed, we are enriched by the preparation and inspiration of the reader. If we read along, it is only our own understanding that we receive. It takes a conscious effort to set down the book and listen attentively, but, it is well worth the effort. This presumes that those who serve as Lectors and Gospel Readers are well-trained and well-prepared. The community deserves nothing less.

Obviously, some buildings and sound systems are not ideal and, therefore, even the best-trained and well-prepared reader cannot always be understood clearly and easily. That is a difficult problem, not always easily resolved.



## Importance of Silence

One of the areas that is given increased emphasis in this Third Edition is the importance of silence. There may be a period of silence before the readings begin to allow the assembly to get settled and become attentive. Until movement and noise ceases, it is almost impossible to attentively listen to the

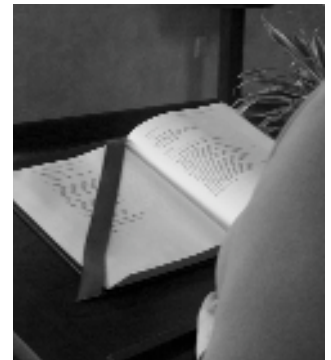


readings. The Lector who patiently and kindly waits for the attention of the assembly will experience a much more receptive and attentive group of listeners. The General Instruction also calls for a brief period of silence after the first and second readings, and after the homily. It is difficult to define 'brief' because even a few seconds seems long if we are not used to it. To foster this time of reflection and meditation on the Word that has been proclaimed, the Lector should remain quietly in place before leaving the ambo. Perhaps 15 to 30 seconds would be a starting point for this 'brief' period.

## Reading Selections

We have been enriched greatly in the restructuring of the Sunday and weekday readings since the revision of the Lectionary after the Council. In comparison to the pre-Vatican II Liturgy, we now draw readings from a 3-year cycle on Sundays and a partial 2-year cycle for weekdays.

On Sundays and major feasts we are blessed with four selections from Sacred Scripture, ordinarily taken from the Hebrew Scriptures, a setting from one of the Psalms, one of the letters of the New Testament, and, most important, a selection from one of the four Gospels.



During the Easter Season this pattern changes slightly. This is a rich banquet of God's Word. The General Instruction is very clear in emphasizing that non-biblical readings may never be substituted for those of the inspired authors. This is not new, but serves as an important reminder.

### The Lectionary

The Lectionary is the official text to be used for the readings at Mass. Other translations are not to be substituted. It is widely agreed that the new Lectionary is not perfect, and much improvement is needed. However, this is the approved text for our Liturgy and should be used, in spite of its shortcomings. This is yet another sign of the unity the Church desires in enabling all Catholics to participate in the same celebrations, using the same postures, words, prayers, and readings. Keeping this in mind may help offset some of the less than perfect passages readers encounter. The General Instruction also makes it clear that the readings from Sacred Scripture are to be proclaimed from the ambo. This is given added emphasis in the new Third Edition.



### Multiple Readers

The document also makes it clear that the readings from Scripture are not to be subdivided with several readers participating in the same selection. The only exception is the reading of the Passion during Holy Week. The use of three readers, one reading the words of Jesus, another the words spoken by all other speakers, and the third reader fulfilling the role of narrator, is still the standard for this solemn proclamation.

### Reading of the Gospel

The proclamation of the Gospel is clearly the high point of the biblical readings. Only a deacon or priest may proclaim it. The availability of the Book of the Gospels is another illustration of the Gospel's importance. Only the Book of



Gospels, if one is used, may be carried in the entrance procession, either by the Deacon, or, in his absence, the Lector. The Lectionary should be placed on the ambo before the Mass begins. It is never carried in procession. The fact that the Book of Gospels is placed in a prominent place on the altar during the entrance procession is yet another sign of the unique dignity of the Gospel reading.

### Responsorial Psalm

The General Instruction also gives increased attention to the Responsorial Psalm. It is described as an integral part of the Liturgy (#61), and at least the people's response should be sung, if possible. This is one part of the Instruction that includes some specific information for the dioceses of the United States. It expands the sources from which the Psalm may be taken and provides several illustrations of how this could be done. The possibility of 'metrical' settings is permitted. But, it also makes clear that "*songs or hymns may not be used in place of the responsorial Psalm.*" A change from the current Instruction now allows the Psalm to be sung from the ambo or another suitable place. This will make it easier for many parishes, because the location is no longer limited to the ambo.

Following the second reading on Sundays and major feasts, the Gospel acclamation is sung. Several options are mentioned. If there is only one reading before the Gospel, for example in weekday liturgies, the Gospel acclamation may be omitted if not sung. This is a change from the current practice that makes no exception on days when there is only one reading before the Gospel. This final section of #63 allows for the possibility of reciting the Gospel Verse, even the Alleluia, on weekdays although singing it is still the norm. Except for the season of Lent, the Alleluia is used. During Lent another text is substituted. #62 provides a fuller explanation than what was given in the previous edition. "*An acclamation of this kind constitutes a rite or act in itself, by which the assembly of the faithful welcomes and greets the Lord who is about to speak to them in the Gospel and professes their faith by means of the chant.*" The Gospel Acclamation may not be sung from the ambo.



## Sequences for Solemn Feasts

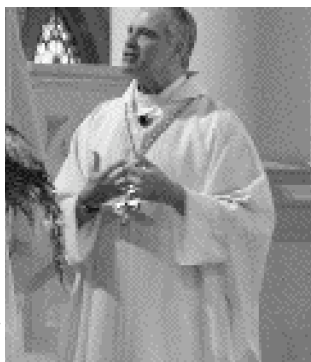


There are certain solemn feasts that have Sequences assigned to them. This is an ancient hymn-like composition that provides an elaboration on the feast for which it was written. Its proper place is after the second reading, but before the Gospel acclamation. In previous editions of the General Instruction, Sequences

were optional, and, if used, could be spoken or sung. #64 changes this significantly. The Sequences on Easter and Pentecost are no longer optional and are to be sung, not recited. This will certainly present a new challenge to music ministers. At this time there are relatively few musical settings available because few parishes used these texts, and the settings that are available are not always as accessible as musicians might prefer.

## The Homily

As with many liturgical documents, there are ambiguities. The General Instruction is not immune to this. A good illustration of this is the guidelines pertaining to the Homily. The opening sentence in #65 takes the form of a recommendation. “*The homily is part of the Liturgy and is strongly recommended.*”



However, the second paragraph in the next section (#66) is much stronger. “*There is to be a homily on Sundays and holy days of obligation at all Masses that are celebrated with the participation of a congregation; it may not be omitted without a serious reason.*” The first paragraph of this section says that the homily should ordinarily be given by the priest celebrant himself, but it does allow other ordained deacons or priests to fulfill this roll, if so designated by the celebrant. The final sentence calls to mind the brief period of silence mentioned earlier.

## Profession of Faith (The Creed)

The Profession of Faith and the Prayer of the Faithful complete the Liturgy of the Word. Several options are provided for the Creed.



- There is one gesture that will be new to most people, even though it is present in previous editions. At the words “by the power of the Holy Spirit...” all make *a profound bow*.

- A genuflection is called for on the feasts of the Annunciation and Christmas. Even though this is not new, it may be unfamiliar to many communities because it has not been common practice.

## Prayer of the Faithful

The title Prayer of the Faithful has been restored, replacing the commonly used term, General Intercessions. The celebrant introduces these petitions from the Chair. The intentions themselves may be announced from the ambo, or from another suitable place, by the deacon, cantor, lector, or another of the lay faithful.

- An interesting description has been included. “*The intentions announced should be sober, be composed freely but prudently, and be succinct, and they should express the prayer of the entire community.*”

While the Instruction does not explicitly provide for members of the assembly to add their own intentions, it does not prohibit it. After all, members of the assembly are included in the term ‘lay faithful.’

Having been nourished by the inspired Word of God in the Sacred Scriptures, we are now able and ready to take full, active and conscious part in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.





# Liturgy of the Eucharist:

## Preparation of the Gifts and the Eucharistic Prayer

The community of faith, gathered and formed in unity during the Introductory Rites, and instructed and nourished through prayerful, attentive, and active listening to God's Word in the Scriptures, is now prepared to offer gifts in thanksgiving and receive the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. This is the most solemn and sacred activity of the Church. The covenant is renewed and the pledge of eternal life is shared.

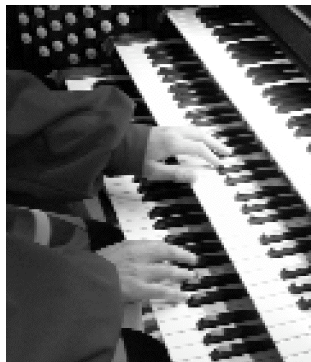
The Liturgy of the Eucharist consists of three distinct, but related parts:

- The Preparation of the Gifts
- The Eucharistic Prayer
- The Communion Rite

The first two parts will be examined in this article; the Communion Rite and the Concluding Rites will complete the series.

### PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

This first part of the Liturgy of the Eucharist is a practical preparation of the altar for what will follow. But, in spite of its practical aspects, it incorporates quite a number of small changes from current practice. The very first sentence of #139 mentions, almost in passing, something that is not available at present, an Offertory chant. It is modeled upon the Entrance chant and the Communion chant, but no examples are offered. The use of a congregation song may still be continued.



### Preparing the Altar

The new Instruction is very explicit concerning the preparation of the altar.

- Only one altar cloth is necessary and it must be white.
- If cloths of other liturgical colors are used,

highlighting, for example, the liturgical season, the topmost cloth must always be white.

- The altar cloth is the only item, except for the Book of the Gospels, that may be on the altar prior to the Preparation of the Gifts.

- The altar may be prepared by the Deacon, acolyte, and/or another lay minister.

- The items placed upon the altar are the corporal, purificator, chalice, pall, if used, and missal. This will involve a change for many communities because it is common practice for the corporal to be on the altar from the beginning of Mass. If additional chalices are needed for the distribution of communion to the faithful, they are placed on the corporal at this time. Flagons or decanters may be used to bring wine in procession, but the wine must then be poured into the chalices. The wine may not, under any circumstances, be consecrated in flagons or decanters. Chalices may also be prepared ahead of time with the wine already in them. These may remain on the credence table until placed on the corporal during the Preparation of the Gifts.

### Offertory Procession

Very specific directives are given concerning the offerings of the people and the procession.

- The Instruction emphasizes that it is 'praiseworthy' for the bread and wine to be presented by the faithful. These gifts are accepted by the priest or deacon and brought to the altar.

- Gifts of money for the poor or for the Church are also very appropriate but it is made clear that these are not placed on the altar. In fact, they are to put in a suitable place away



from the Eucharistic table. Nothing else is to be brought forward in this procession.

- Singing may always accompany the rite at the offertory, even when there is no procession with the gifts (#74).
- Incense may also be used when appropriate.

## Second Collections

Nothing is mentioned about the common practice of second collections for specific purposes. In many places such offerings are taken up after communion. While this may be a practical and efficient approach, it is quite inconsistent with the liturgical action. The period after communion is clearly described as a time of silence or a song of praise by the community. The time for accepting gifts from the people is at the Preparation of the Gifts. It is quite possible, and is actually done in many parishes, to take up the second collection immediately following the regular collection. This offering shall then be included in the procession of gifts.



## Posture of the Assembly

Another change in the new General Instruction relates to the posture of the assembly. The general practice in many places is for the people to remain seated until they complete their response to the invitation 'Pray, brethren...' spoken by the priest. There is some inconsistency concerning this in the new Instruction.



In the section concerning movements and postures (#43) the language seems to indicate that all stand before the priest begins or while his is speaking, but in #146 it states that the people rise after the invitation but before their response.

To avoid confusion, the congregation should stand before the priest begins the invitation. The people stand as soon as the priest completes the washing of his hands,

unless the song has not been concluded. In this case, all stand when the song has ended. If this is new to the congregation, a simple gesture indicating that the people should stand may be helpful.

The preparation rite concludes with the Prayer over the Gifts with the congregational response: 'Amen.'

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Eucharistic Prayer is the center and summit of the entire celebration (#78). It is a prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. Except for the specific responses and acclamations of the people, the prayer is proper to the priest alone. He prays with and in the name of the whole community, but the people do not say the prayer with the celebrant.



The final sentence in #147 may come as a surprise to many. 'It is very appropriate that the priest sing those parts of the Eucharistic Prayer for which musical notation is provided.' The acclamations of the people are also most appropriately sung rather than recited, especially on Sundays.

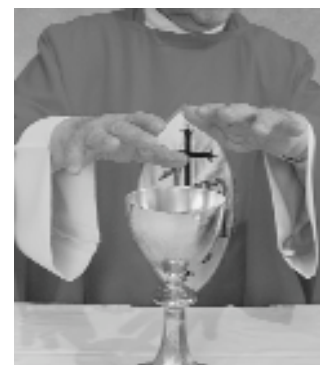
The Eucharistic Prayer should be viewed as one extended and unified prayer, all parts of which are consecratory. Each of the Prayers available for use in the liturgy contain common elements, even though some of the Prayers express this more clearly than others.

The chief elements that make up the Eucharistic Prayer include:

A. Thanksgiving -- expressed especially in the Preface, in which the priest glorifies God and gives thanks for the whole work of salvation, or for some special aspect of it that corresponds to the day, feast, or season.

B. Acclamation -- by the whole congregation, joining with the heavenly powers, proclaiming the holiness of God.

C. Invocation -- of the Holy Spirit, called the 'Epiclesis,' imploring that the



gifts of human hands become the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus that will be offered to the Father and received by the faithful. The ancient gesture of extending hands over the gifts highlights this invocation.

D. Institutional Narrative and Consecration -- during which the assembly recalls the experience of the Last Supper when Jesus took bread and wine, gave thanks, and gave it to his disciples, instructing them to do this in his memory.

E. Memorial -- called 'anamnesis,' during which we recall the passion, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord. The acclamation by the people brings this into focus. It is worth recalling that the biblical understanding of 'remembering' involved more than calling to mind past events. These events were made present to and for the community. For example, the language used at Passover often uses the first person pronoun 'we' in telling the story of the Lord's deliverance from the slavery of Egypt.

F. Offering -- of the Lord Jesus to the Father through the Holy Spirit is the great covenant renewal in which all



offer themselves with and through Christ. This is the great action of the Body of Christ, head and members.

G. Intercessions -- recalling that the entire Church is united in this sacred action, not just the Church on earth, but all who have gone before us as well.

H. Final Doxology -- or prayer of praise, which brings the Eucharistic Prayer to its conclusion as the great offering to the Father. It sums up all we are and all that we have just done. We give honor and praise to the Father through the Son in union with the Holy Spirit. The response is the solemn concluding acclamation: Amen. If we truly understand and believe what the priest has spoken on behalf of the entire gathered assembly, and the entire Body of Christ, this final acclamation should resound with confidence and conviction.



The Liturgy of the Eucharistic is completed through the Communion Rite in which the gift offered to the Father is returned for the life and nourishment of those who have offered it. The Communion Rite and Concluding Rites will be the topic of the final article exploring the General Instruction.



# Liturgy of the Eucharist:

## The Communion Rite

“Since the Eucharistic Celebration is the Paschal Banquet, it is desirable that, in keeping with the Lord’s command, his Body and Blood should be received by the faithful, who are properly disposed, as spiritual food.” (#80) The rites that precede the distribution of Holy Communion are designed to foster the sharing of this sacred gift.

Having presented simple gifts of bread and wine, offered the great prayer of thanksgiving in which they have become the Body and Blood of Christ, now the Lord offers the gift of himself as the food and drink that sustain us as disciples on our journey to the kingdom. It also nourishes us as we accept the mission of bringing Christ to those in our world.

### The Lord’s Prayer

In the Lord’s Prayer we unite with Jesus in acknowledging the sovereignty of the Father and ask for those things that will sustain us. We also ask for forgiveness and the willingness to forgive others. This prayer brings us together as a family of faith prepared to share the meal from the common table.



The General Instruction mentions nothing about the posture of the faithful. Nothing is suggested, nor is anything specifically excluded. It only states that the priest prays with his hands extended.

Current practice often includes joining hands with those nearby, extending hands in the *orans* gesture, or using no gesture at all. The danger here is that multiple gestures during the same celebration detract from the unity of those gathered for the celebration. Pastoral sensitivity should be exercised. If any gesture is used by the faithful, it should end when the priest, alone, begins the embolism following the prayer. All respond with the doxology.

### Rite of Peace

The Rite of Peace provides an opportunity for all to recognize that we gather as a community, not as isolated individuals, when we approach the table of the Eucharist. But, it is important that we not forget that the Body and Blood of the Lord is present on the altar. Therefore, the greeting should be done in reverence.



The Instruction explicitly states that the greeting should be offered to those nearby, not to people throughout the entire church. It is not a party time. Excessive movement and levity should be avoided.

The Instruction even specifies that the priest, except in special circumstances, does not leave the sanctuary, but offers the greeting to those in the sanctuary itself. The greeting should end when the fraction rite begins.

### Breaking of Host (Fraction Rite)

The breaking of the large host and the distribution of the consecrated hosts into additional vessels (the fraction rite) is carried out by the priest and/or deacon. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may not assist in this rite. If Extraordinary Ministers are needed, they may enter the sanctuary area at this time, but should remain at a discrete distance from the altar. The Lamb of God is sung throughout this rite. It may be repeated as long as necessary, always concluding with ‘grant us peace.’

After holding the host above the paten or chalice and inviting all to proclaim their unworthiness for this gift of the Body and Blood of the Lord, the priest receives communion.





• The communion song should begin as the priest receives. It should ordinarily continue until all have received. But, it is also important that provisions be made for the music ministers to be able to receive communion easily.



• The priest gives communion under both forms to the deacon, if one is present. Only then is communion given to the Extraordinary Ministers, and then to the congregation. The deacon ordinarily ministers one of the cups. Ministers may give communion to other ministers after they have received from the priest or deacon.

• Self-communication is not permitted.

• Intinction by the communicant is also prohibited.

### **Posture for Receiving Communion**

• The posture for receiving communion in the dioceses of the United States is standing.

• The gesture of reverence before receiving communion under either or both forms, as determined by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, with

the approval of the Holy See, is a simple bow of the head.

• No other gesture should be used (e.g. a profound bow, genuflection, sign of the cross, etc.).

• There is no gesture after receiving communion.

There is some ambiguity in the General Instruction concerning the posture of the assembly after receiving communion. For the present, kneeling after receiving communion will continue.

After all have received, and the remaining hosts have been consumed or placed in the tabernacle and any remaining consecrated wine consumed, all may sit. The sacred vessels may be purified at that time or after Mass.



### **Period of Sacred Silence**

A period of sacred silence is observed after communion before the Prayer after Communion. The General Instruction does make provision for a hymn or canticle of praise by the congregation at this time as an alternative to the sacred silence. However, solos and meditation songs are excluded. The Communion Rite concludes with the Prayer after Communion.



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# Concluding Rites

As might be expected the Concluding Rites are simple and concise.

- Brief announcements may be made.
- Second collections should ordinarily not be taken up at this time. It is preferable to take these up immediately following the regular collection so that they can be presented along with the other gifts.

## Final Greeting and Blessing

There is a final greeting by the priest. The deacon invites the people to bow their heads to receive the blessing. This blessing may take several forms. In place of the simple blessing, one of the Solemn Blessings or one of the Prayers over the People may be used, especially on more solemn occasions. The dismissal is given by the deacon, or, if there is no deacon, by the priest.



## Exit Processional

The deacon and the priest reverence the altar and all ministers bow (or genuflect if the tabernacle is in the sanctuary) as they prepare to leave in procession. Neither the Book of Gospels nor the Lectionary is carried out in the procession.

## Closing Hymn

There is no mention of a closing or recessional hymn. This is actually not new. The same omission is found in the previous editions. This does not mean that a hymn is prohibited. It is just not required. There is a logical reason for this. If the assembly has just been sent forth to bring Christ to the world beyond the doors of the church, there is an inconsistency in asking them to remain for a final hymn. While the practice of using a closing hymn will most likely remain the common experience in most communities, the possibility of omitting it, at least at times, might be worthy of consideration.



# Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at Mass

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should be familiar with both the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and the American bishops' document *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (USCCB).

## Entrance Procession

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion do not take part in the entrance procession with the other ministers. They are generally seated within the Assembly.

## Entering the Sanctuary and Approaching the Altar

The extraordinary ministers of communion enter the sanctuary area, but at a distance from the altar, during the 'Lamb of God.' They approach the altar after the priest had received communion. (GIRM #162) They do not assist in the distribution of the consecrated bread into additional vessels.



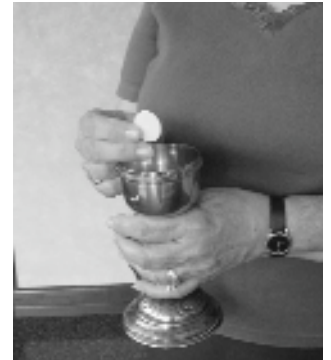
## Receiving Communion and the Vessels

After the priest has received Communion, he gives Communion to the deacon, if there is one. Then, assisted by the deacon, if one is present, the priest distributes Communion to the Communion Ministers. He then hands the sacred vessels to them for distribution of Communion to the people. (GIRM #162, Norms #38)

It is most desirable that the faithful receive the Lord's Body from hosts consecrated at that Mass. (GIRM #85)

## Distribution of the Body of Christ

The faithful approach the ministers in procession, standing, bow their heads in reverence, and receive the Body of Christ, either in the hand or on the tongue, as each prefers. (GIRM #160) The Lord's Body is offered to the communicant with the words, "The Body of Christ." (Norms #41) No names are used.



## Distribution of the Blood of Christ

Communion from the chalice is generally the preferred form in the Latin Church. (Norms #42) The chalice is offered to the communicant with the words, "The Blood of Christ" (Norms #43). After each communicant has received the Precious Blood, the minister carefully wipes both sides of the rim with a purificator and turns the chalice slightly (Norms #45). If any consecrated wine spills from the chalice, the affected area should be washed and the water poured into the sacrarium (Norms #29).



## Lector at Mass

Before Mass: The Lectionary is placed on the ambo (GIRM #118). Nothing (e.g., chalices, cruets, books, papers, etc.) may be on the altar at the beginning of Mass.

### The Entrance Procession

If there is no deacon, a lector may carry the Book of the Gospels and walk in front of the celebrant. The Book is slightly elevated—carried at shoulder height, not over the head. (GIRM #194) Upon reaching the altar, the lector carrying the book makes a profound bow with the others, then places the Book of the Gospels upon the altar and takes his place with the other ministers (GIRM #195). The Lectionary is never carried in the entrance procession.

### The Liturgy of the Word

The readings are always proclaimed from the ambo (GIRM #58). The lector goes to the ambo and reads the first reading from the Lectionary that is already in place. At the end of the reading, the lector says, “*The Word of the Lord.*” The Lectionary is not elevated. The conclusion refers to the Word proclaimed, not the Lectionary that contains the text. After the people’s response, there is a brief period of silence. (GIRM #128)



It is preferable that the Responsorial Psalm be sung (GIRM #61). If the Psalm is not sung, the lector may read it (GIRM #196) in a way that fosters meditation on the Word of God (GIRM #61).

If there is a second reading, it is also followed by a brief period of silence. (GIRM #130)

Everyone should stand and sing the acclamation before the Gospel together, led by a choir or a cantor. The cantor or choir may sing the verse. (GIRM #62) When there is only one reading before the Gospel, the Gospel Acclamation may be omitted if it is not sung. (GIRM #63)

### Division of Readings

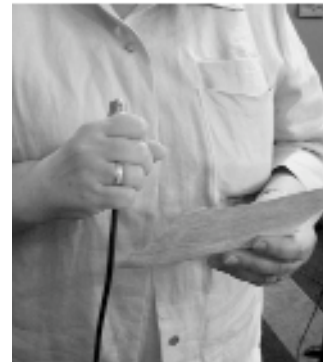
If there are several readings, it is well to distribute them among a number of lectors. An individual reading, however, should not be divided into sections to be read by different lectors except for the reading of the Passion of the Lord. (GIRM #109)

### The Prayer of the Faithful

The priest directs the prayer from his chair. The intentions are read or sung from the ambo or from another suitable place, by a deacon, lector, cantor, or one of the lay faithful (GIRM #71).

### Announcements

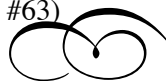
Announcements are not to be read from the Ambo. The Ambo is reserved for readings from Sacred Scripture and the Intercessions. These should be made from another appropriate place. (GIRM 105b)



### The Concluding Rites

The Lector (and Communion Ministers) do not ordinarily take part in the procession at the end of Mass. The Lectionary, Sacramentary, and the Book of the Gospels are not carried out in the procession.

After Communion the Body of Christ that remains is reserved in the tabernacle. (Norms #51) Whatever remains of the Precious Blood after the distribution of Communion is consumed immediately and completely at the altar. (GIRM #279) Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may consume what remains of the Precious Blood from the chalices. (Norms #52) The empty chalice(s) and other sacred vessels are taken to the credence table, where they are either purified or covered, to be purified immediately after Mass. (GIRM #183, Norms #53) The extraordinary ministers may assist with the purification of the sacred vessels at the direction of the priest (CDW & DS, Prot. 1383/01).



# Music

## The Importance of Singing

The Christian faithful who gather together as one to await the Lord's coming are instructed by the Apostle Paul to sing together psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Col 3:16). Great importance should be attached to the use of singing in the celebration of the Mass. Every care should be taken that singing by the ministers and the people is *not absent* in celebrations that occur on Sundays and Holy Days of obligation. (GIRM #39, 40)

There should be a cantor or choir director to lead and sustain the people in singing. When there is no choir, it is up to the cantor to lead the various songs, with the people taking part (GIRM #104).

### PARTS OF THE MASS

#### The Entrance Song

After the people have gathered, the opening song begins as the priest enters with the deacon and ministers. The purpose of this song is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have been gathered, lead their thoughts to the mystery of the season or feast, and accompany the entrance procession (GIRM #47). It is sung by the people and/or the choir (GIRM #48). It may continue after the celebrant takes his place at the Chair.



#### The Act of Penitence

If the *Kyrie eleison* ("Lord, Have Mercy") is sung, it is sung by all, people and choir/cantor (GIRM #52).

#### The Gloria

The Gloria is an ancient hymn of praise. It is sung or said on Sundays outside of Lent and Advent and on solemnities and feasts. The text of this hymn is not to be replaced by any other. It is intoned by the priest, or if appropriate, by a cantor or by the choir; it is sung either by everyone together, or by the people alternately with the choir, or by the choir alone. (GIRM #53)

#### The Responsorial Psalm

The Responsorial Psalm is an integral part of the **Liturgy of the Word** and holds great liturgical importance. It is preferable that the Responsorial Psalm be sung, or at least the people's response. The psalmist sings the verses from the ambo or another suitable place; the entire congregation sings the response. The Responsorial Psalm should, as a rule, be taken from the Lectionary, but a seasonal psalm may also be used, or another psalm approved by the Conference of Bishops. Songs or hymns may not be used in place of the responsorial psalm. (GIRM #61)



#### The Acclamation before the Gospel

The *Alleluia* (or another chant during Lent) is sung by all, led by a choir or cantor. The verse, taken from the lectionary, may be sung by the cantor or choir. (GIRM #62) The cantor leads from a suitable location, but not from the Ambo. When there is only one reading before the Gospel, the *alleluia* may be omitted when it is not sung (GIRM #63).

#### The Creed

If the Creed is sung, the people should participate in the singing (GIRM #68).



# LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

## The Preparation of the Gifts

The procession bringing the gifts is accompanied by the Offertory song which continues at least until the gifts have been placed on the altar. The Offertory song may be sung by the people and/or the choir. (GIRM #48) It may be sung even when there is no procession with the gifts. (GIRM #74)

## The Eucharistic Acclamations

The *Sanctus* (Holy, Holy, Holy), the Memorial acclamation, and the Amen are sung or said by all the people. (GIRM #79, 151)

## The Lord's Prayer

If the Lord's Prayer is sung, it should be sung by all. (GIRM #81, 38)

## The Lamb of God

The Lamb of God is usually sung by a cantor or choir with the congregation responding. It accompanies the fraction rite and may be repeated as many times as necessary until the rite is concluded, the last time ending with the words *grant us peace*. (GIRM #83)

## The Communion Song

The Communion Song begins while the priest is receiving Communion, immediately after the people say "Lord I am not worthy...." It is sung by the people and/or the choir. The singing continues for as long as the Sacrament is being administered to the faithful. (GIRM #86, 159)



Care should be taken that the musicians can receive Communion with ease. (GIRM #86)

## Song after Communion (*optional*)

If desired, a psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may be sung by the entire congregation after the distribution of Communion, before the Prayer after Communion (GIRM #88).

## Recessional Song

The Recessional Song has never been an official part of the rite. It is not mentioned in the GIRM.

**Ministers of Music should be familiar not only with the General Instruction of the Roman Missal but also with the American bishops' publications *Music in Catholic Worship* and *Liturgical Music Today*. These documents together set the norms for liturgical music in the United States.**



## Posture of the Assembly at Mass

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### At the Gospel Acclamation

All stand and turn toward the ambo as a sign of special reverence for the Gospel of Christ.

### During the Nicene Creed

All bow at the words “*by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary and became man.*” All genuflect at these words on the Solemnity of the Annunciation and the Nativity of the Lord. (GIRM #137)



### At the Words “Pray, brethren,....”

All Stand. This is a change from the present practice of remaining seated at this time. Before the priest says the invitation, “*Pray, brethren....*,” all stand. All remain standing for the Prayer over the Gifts. (GIRM #146)

### After the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy) Until After the Amen of the Eucharistic Prayer

All except the Deacon kneel, except when prevented on occasion by reasons of health, lack of space, the large number of people present, or some other good reason. Those who do not kneel at the consecration should make a profound bow while the priest is genuflecting after the consecration. (GIRM #43)

### After the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

All except the Deacon kneel. The practice of kneeling after the Lamb of God as described in the Instruction will continue to be observed. (GIRM #43).

### When Receiving the Body and Blood of Christ

All Stand. Uniformity in posture is to be observed by all for the sake of the common spiritual good of the people. (GIRM #42) For this reason, the Bishops of the United States have determined that the norm for the reception of Holy Communion in the dioceses of the United States is standing. (GIRM #160)



The sign of reverence before the reception of the Body of Christ and before the reception of the Blood of Christ is a simple bow of the head, not a profound bow, kneeling, genuflecting, sign of the cross, or other action. There is no gesture after receiving Communion. (GIRM #160)

The head bow takes place as the communicant approaches the Communion Minister. Then the communicant receives, either in the hand or on the tongue. A similar head bow takes place before receiving from the chalice.

After receiving Communion the faithful should kneel until all have received. Please note: Even though GIRM #43 could be interpreted that all remain standing throughout the entire Communion Rite, based on the ambiguity of the language and the interpretation given by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, (Prot. n. 855/031L), the posture after Communion will continue to be kneeling.

“The gestures and posture of the priest, the deacon, and the ministers, as well as those of the people, ought to contribute to making the entire celebration resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity, so that the true and full meaning of the different parts of the celebration is evident and that the participation of all is fostered. Therefore, attention should be paid to what is determined by this General Instruction and the traditional practice of the Roman Rite and to what serves the common spiritual good of the People of God, rather than private inclination or arbitrary choice.

*A common posture, to be observed by all participants, is a sign of the unity of the members of the Christian community gathered for the Sacred Liturgy: it both expresses and fosters the intention and spiritual attitude of the participants.* (GIRM #42)

# Active Participation Quiet Reflection

The revised General Instruction of the Roman Missal repeats the call of the Second Vatican Council for the conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful both in body and in mind in the celebration of the Mass.

At the same time, there are designated places in the liturgy where sacred silence is to be observed as part of the celebration.

The Mass is a blend of action and reflection. It is a tapestry composed of blocks of spoken group prayer, of congregational and/or choir singing, of common movement and gesture, of attentive listening—all examples of active participation accentuated by periods of quiet meditation and silent prayer.

## Silence

The revised General Instruction of the Roman Missal calls for a quiet church before Mass begins.

“Before the liturgy begins, it is commendable that silence be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to devoutly celebrate the sacred action” (GIRM #45).

At the beginning of Mass, there is also a brief pause for silence in the Act of Penitence and again at the Collect (Opening Prayer), so that we may be conscious of the fact that we are in God’s presence (GIRM #54).



## Singing

At most weekend liturgies, we break our silence before Mass by singing an Opening Song. Great importance is attached to singing in the celebration of the Mass (GIRM #40). When we sing, we call to mind that “One who sings well prays twice” (GIRM #39). Whenever possible, a choir or cantor leads us in singing the various songs and acclamations (GIRM #104).

We lift our voices together as we sing or say many parts of the Mass, including the “Lord, Have Mercy,” the Responsorial Psalm, the Gospel Acclamation, the Creed,

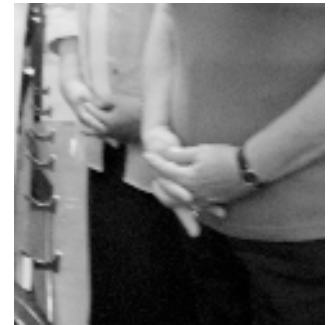
the Eucharistic Acclamations (the Holy, Holy, Holy, the Memorial Acclamation, and the Amen), the Lord’s Prayer, and the Lamb of God, and the Communion Song. The acclamations and the responses of the faithful to the priest’s greetings and prayers constitute that level of active participation that the gathered faithful are to contribute in every form of the Mass, so that the action of the entire community may be clearly expressed (GIRM #35).

## Active Participation

We also actively participate in the Mass through our common posture and gestures: we stand, sit, and kneel together; we all bow our heads when we receive Communion. These gestures and common posture contribute to making our celebration resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity, so that the participation of all is fostered (GIRM #42).

## Prayerful Listening

At other times in the liturgy we actively participate by prayerful listening. During the Liturgy of the Word, we listen with reverence to the readings from God’s Word, for they make up an element of greatest importance in the Liturgy. We also listen attentively to the homily, which gives us a fuller understanding of the Word (GIRM #29). In the Liturgy of the Word there are several periods of silent reflection: before the Liturgy of the Word itself begins, after the first reading and again after the second reading, and at the conclusion of the homily—so that the Word of God may be grasped by the heart, and a response through prayer may be prepared (GIRM #56).



## Reverence

The Eucharistic Prayer begins with the interactive Preface Dialog between the priest and the people. Then we all pray with reverence and in silence as the prayers are said by the priest. We break our silence to lift our voices together at the Holy, Holy, Holy; the Memorial Acclamation; and the great Amen (GIRM #78, #147). After we receive Communion, there is a period of silence before the Prayer after Communion for a time of quiet prayer, or we may sing a hymn or a canticle of praise (GIRM #88, #164).