

For the Sunday bulletin from the Liturgy Commission:

4-15-07

Week 1:

Question: What is the purpose of the Introductory Rites (Entrance Hymn/Chant, Greeting, Act of Penitence, Kyrie, Gloria, and Collect)?

Answer: The purpose of the Introductory Rites 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.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #46

Question: Why does our Liturgy open with an entrance hymn or chant?

Answer: The purpose of the entrance hymn or chant is to open the celebration, foster the unity of the gathered faithful, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgy, and accompany the procession of the priest and ministers.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #47

4-22-07

Week 2:

Question: How is the mystery of the Church gathered together manifested at the celebration of Mass?

Answer: When the entrance hymn is concluded, the priest stands at the chair and, together with the whole gathering, makes the Sign of the Cross signifying the presence of the Lord to the community gathered as Christians. The priest reveals the presence of the Lord with the Greeting, "The Lord be with you." When the congregation responds "And also with you," *the mystery of the Church gathered together is manifested*. We are not just a crowd, but the **Body of Christ**.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #50

Understanding the Mass, Praying the Mass. Vol. 3 No. 1, Iwanowski, Thomas

4-29-07

Week 3:

Question: If the priest forgives our sins during the Penitential Rite, why do we still have to go to confession?

Answer: In the Penitential Rite, we are asked to call to mind our sins. The purpose of the Penitential Rite is to prepare the community for a worthy celebration of Eucharist, but "the priest's absolution ... lacks the efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance." The Catholic Church still asks us to participate in the Sacrament of Penance at least once a year.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #51

Question: Why do we substitute the blessing and sprinkling of water for the Penitential Rite during the Easter Season?

Answer:: This substitution is permitted at the discretion of the priest “on Sundays, especially in the Season of Easter, in place of the customary Act of Penitence.” The sprinkling of water reminds us of our Baptism and that we, by virtue of that Baptism, are a community called to be the Body of Christ here on Earth. Similar to the Penitential Rite, it is a ritual washing away of sins.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #51

5-6-07

Week 4:

Question: What is the purpose for the Gloria? Why is it sometimes sung and other times recited?

Answer: 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 with any other text. The Gloria is intoned by the priest or, if appropriate by a cantor or by the choir, but it is sung either by everyone together, or by the people alternately with the choir, or by the choir alone. If not sung, it is to be recited either by all together or by two parts of the congregation responding one to the other.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #53

Question: There are times when I have noticed that the Gloria is omitted from the mass. When is it not included?

Answer: The Gloria is sung or said on Sundays outside the Seasons of Advent and Lent, on solemnities and feasts, and at special celebrations of a more solemn character.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #53

5-13-07

Week 5:

Question: During the opening prayer (after the Gloria) the priest always pauses after saying, “Let us pray”. Is there a reason for doing that? Also what exactly is the purpose for this prayer?

Answer: The people together with the priest observe a brief silence so that they may be conscious of God’s presence and may formulate their petitions mentally. Then the priest says the prayer which is customarily known as the Collect and through which the character of the celebration is expressed.

The people, uniting themselves to the entreaty, make the prayer their own with the acclamation, Amen. There is always only one collect used in a Mass.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #54

Week 6: 5-20-07

Question: What is meant by the Liturgy of the Word?

Answer: This is the part of the Mass that contains the readings from Sacred Scripture and the Responsorial Psalm. The Gospel is the most important part of the Liturgy of the Word. The Homily, the Creed, and the Prayer of the Faithful develop and conclude this part of the Mass.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #55

Question: Who is speaking to us in the scriptures? And are we listening???

Answer: It is God who speaks when the Scriptures are being proclaimed. He is telling us about redemption, salvation, and offering us spiritual nourishment. We make God's word our own in the responsorial psalm. The highpoint of the Liturgy of the Word is the Gospel-- the words and deeds of Christ himself! We are called to listen attentively, with reverence, so that we do not miss the message that the Holy Spirit may have for us. We must recognize that we are not hearing "old news" that happened to people a long time ago, but "good news" about what God is doing in our world and in our lives today!

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #55

Question: Why do we have periods of silence during the Liturgy of the Word?

Answer: Silence provides us with the opportunity for meditation and personal reflection. It gives us a few minutes to grasp the meaning of the readings, the homily, and to prepare a response through prayer.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #56

Week 7: 5-27-07

Question: Is the Church placing more importance on the readings than they used to?

Answer: "In the readings, the table of God's word is prepared for the faithful and the riches of the Bible opened to them." Before Vatican II, the same set of readings was proclaimed each year. Vatican II changed our rotation of readings to a three-year cycle opening up a wealth of Scripture to us. The choice of readings (the first reading is usually from the Old Testament, the second reading is usually from the Letters or Acts of the Apostles, and the Gospel is usually linked to the first reading) is intended to shed light "on the unity of both Testaments and of salvation history." We are now encouraged to read and study the Bible and to familiarize ourselves with the readings before Mass so that we can listen with better understanding. We believe that we are nourished and fed by God's word, just as we are nourished and fed by His Body and Blood in Eucharist, making both parts of the Mass important to the whole.

General Instructions of the Roman Missal, #57

Question: Why do we stand for the Gospel?

Answer: "The reading of the Gospel is the highpoint of the Liturgy of the Word." Only the priest or deacon may proclaim it and, before they read, they prepare themselves by a blessing or prayer. Special reverence is shown to the *Book of the Gospels* by carrying it in the entrance procession, by giving it a special place on the altar, by elevating it as the faithful sing the *Alleluia* or the *Gloria to You*,

Oh Word of God, and by the priest or deacon kissing it when the proclamation is finished. By standing as we listen to the Gospel being read and responding with “Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ,” we acknowledge and confess that Christ Himself is present and speaking to us through His word.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #60

Week 8: 6-3-07

Question: Why is the Responsorial Psalm an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word?

Answer: The Responsorial Psalm comes after the first reading. It corresponds to each reading and as a rule is taken from the Lectionary. It is important because it is another way that God speaks to us so that we can understand his message better. For this reason, it should be proclaimed from the ambo. The psalm is preferably sung and led by a cantor. It fosters meditation on the word as well as a response by the congregation to the word of God.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #61

Question: Why do we sing the Alleluia before the Gospel?

Answer: The Alleluia is an acclamation by the assembly to welcome and greet the Lord who is to speak to us. We also profess the faith by means of the chant. The Alleluia is sung in every season other than Lent. The verses are taken from the Lectionary.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #62

Question: May the Alleluia be omitted?

Answer: The Alleluia or verse before the Gospel may be omitted if they are not sung.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #63

Question: What is the Sequence?

Answer: Over 5000 of these compositions existed in the Middle Ages. They were independent musical compositions with rhymed text that were easily sung by the people. Today, a Sequence is optional except on Easter Sunday and on Pentecost. It is sung before the Alleluia.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #64

The Mystery of Faith, p. 38 (FDLC, Lawrence J. Johnson)

Week 9: 6-10-07

Question: Who is permitted to give the Homily?

Answer: The Homily may be given by the Priest Celebrant, Concelebrating Priest, or Deacon. If a Bishop or Priest is present at the Mass but not concelebrating, for a just cause, he may give the homily. A lay person may not give the Homily.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #66

Question: What is the purpose of the Homily?

Answer: During the Homily the “Word of God” is broken open allowing His message to be taken in and nourish the congregation.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #65

Question: Why is there a period of silence after the Homily?

Answer: This period of silence allows the congregation time to meditate so that the word may reach their heart.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #66

Week 10: 6-17-07

Question: What is the purpose of the Profession of Faith (Creed)?

Answer: It is so that the whole people of God may respond to the scriptures that have just been proclaimed and so that they may call to mind and profess their belief in the great mystery of our faith.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #67

Question: What is included in the Prayer of the Faithful?

Answer: The needs of the Church, the needs of the world, the needs of those who are burdened with any kind of difficulty, and the needs of the local community are some of the prayers that are offered by the gathered assembly.

G I R M, #70

Week 11: 6-24-07

Question: Whose words and actions are celebrated in the Liturgy of the Eucharist?

Answer: The Church has arranged the entire celebration of the Liturgy of the Eucharist in parts that correspond to precisely the words and actions of Christ at the Last Supper when he instituted the Paschal Sacrifice and banquet. Christ took the bread and the chalice and gave thanks, he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, and drink: this is my Body; this is the cup of my Blood. Do this in memory of me." Whenever the priest, representing Christ, carries this out in Christ' memory, the Sacrifice of the Cross is continuously made present.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #72

Question: When does the Liturgy of the Eucharist begin?

Answer: The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins when the altar is prepared with the corporal (the white cloth on which the Communion bread and wine are placed), a purificator (cloth used to wipe chalice after each person drinks), missal (the book containing complete service for Mass), and chalice (the cup). The beginning of the Liturgy of the Eucharist is marked by the bringing forward of the gifts of bread and wine which will become the Body and Blood of Christ.

G I R M, # 73

Week 12: 7-1-07

Question: Why do members of the congregation carry the gifts to the altar?

Answer: In the early days of the church, the faithful would bring their own bread and wine to be consecrated for and shared in Communion. The rite of having the gifts carried by members of the congregation retains the force and spiritual significance of this earlier practice. We are giving of ourselves in this sacrificial part of the Mass. This is further signified by the offering of our monetary gifts at this time.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, # 73

Question: Why does the priest wash his hands?

Answer: This symbolic cleansing expresses the priest's desire for interior purification before embarking on the great Eucharistic Prayer.

G I R M, # 76

Question: What is the purpose of the prayer that is said at the end of the preparation of the gifts (the Prayer over the Offerings)?

Answer: We are invited by the priest to unit as a celebrating community and ask God to accept our gifts and our prayers that we are offering to Him.

G I R M, #77

Week 13: 7-8-07

Question: What is the Eucharistic Prayer?

Answer: The Eucharistic Prayer is the summit of the entire celebration of the liturgy. The priest unites the congregation with himself in proclaiming the great deeds of God and in the offering of Sacrifice.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #78

Question: What are the main parts of the Eucharistic Prayer?

Answer:

1. *Thanksgiving:* this prayer glorifies God and gives thanks for the whole work of salvation.
2. *Acclamation:* the whole congregation sings the *Sanctus* (Holy, Holy) together with the priest.
3. *Epiclesis:* the Church implores the Holy Spirit to consecrate the gifts of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.
4. *Institution narrative and consecration:* words that Christ used at the Last Supper when he offered himself as Body and Blood and commanded that we continue to offer this same mystery through him.
5. *Anamnesis:* the Church, keeping the command of Christ, keeps the memorial of Christ recalling his passion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven.
6. *Offering:* the Church offers in the Holy Spirit the spotless Victim to the Father. The faithful also offer themselves through Christ into unity with God and with each other.
7. *Intercessions:* the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the entire Church, of heaven as well as of earth, and the offering is made for her and for all of her members, living and dead.
8. *Final doxology:* the glorification of God is expressed and is confirmed and concluded by the people's acclamation of the great Amen.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #79

Week 14: 7-15-07

Question: What is the Catholic Church's teaching on the preferred form of Holy Communion?

Answer: Although the Eucharist Banquet is most powerfully celebrated when we share of both the bread and wine, the Catholic faith teaches that Christ, whole and entire, and the true Sacrament, is received even under only one species.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #80, 282

Question: What is the significance of The Lord's Prayer?

Answer: The Lord's Prayer is a petition for daily food, which for Christians means above all the Eucharistic bread; and a plea for purification from sin so that what is holy may, in fact, be given to those who are holy.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #81

Question: Why are members of the congregation asked to share a sign of peace with each other when often the people around us are people we don't even know?

Answer: In the Rite of Peace the Church asks for peace and unity for herself and for the whole human family. Sharing a sign of peace allows the faithful to express to each other their ecclesial (pertaining to a church and its functions, teachings or organization) communion and mutual charity before communication in the Sacrament.

The manner in which the sign of peace is to be given is established by Conferences of Bishops in accordance with the culture and customs of the people.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #82

Week 15: 7-22-07

Question: What is the purpose of the priest's reenactment of Jesus' breaking of the bread at the Last Supper during the mass?

Answer: The fraction or breaking of the bread by the priest reenacts Christ's gesture of breaking bread at the Last Supper because it signifies that the many faithful are made one body by receiving Communion from the one Bread of Life which is Christ who died and rose for the salvation of the world. The fraction or breaking of the bread is begun after the sign of peace and is carried out with proper reverence, though it should not be unnecessarily prolonged or accorded undue importance.

The priest breaks the Bread and puts a piece of the host into the chalice to signify the unity of the Body and Blood of the Lord in the work of salvation. The prayer *Agnus Dei*, (Lamb of God) is, as a rule, sung by the choir or cantor with the congregation responding, or it is, at least, recited aloud. This invocation accompanies the fraction and, for this reason may be repeated as many times as necessary until the rite has reached its conclusion, the last time ending with the words *dona nobis pacem* (grant us peace).

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #83

Week 16: 7/29/07

In what same way do the congregation and the priest prepare to receive Communion?

The priest and the faithful prepare to receive Christ's Body and Blood by engaging in silent, private prayer.

When are we invited to Communion?

The priest shows us the Eucharistic Bread, holding it above the paten or above the chalice, and invites us to the banquet of Christ. Along with us, he then makes an act of humility using the prescribed words taken from the Gospels, "Lord I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed."

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #84

Week 17: 8/5/07

At Communion, do we receive hosts that have been consecrated at other Masses?

Just as the priest himself is bound to do, we generally receive the Lord's Body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass. This, along with partaking of the chalice is so that "Communion will stand more clearly as a participation in the sacrifice **actually** being celebrated."

GIRM, #85

What is the purpose of the Communion hymn (or antiphon)?

The Communion hymn (or antiphon) is an expression of our unity of spirit, as well as our joy of heart, as we celebrate Communion together. We rejoice in each others' Communion.

GIRM, #86

Week 18: 8/12/07

What was the criterion adopted by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in November 1969 regarding the Communion song?

The Communion Song should foster a sense of unity. It should be simple and not demand great effort. It gives expression to the joy of unity in the Body of Christ and the fulfillment of the mystery being celebrated.

What are 4 options for the Communion Song?

- 1) the antiphon from Roman Missal or the Psalm from the Roman Gradual as set to music;
- 2) the seasonal antiphon and Psalm of the Simple Gradual;
- 3) a song from another collections of psalms and antiphons, approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop, including psalms arranged in responsorial or metrical forms;
- 4) a suitable liturgical song chosen in relation to the season, feast or occasion, for example, Easter time, Lent, Christmas and Advent.

Antiphon: A response which is sung or simply recited.

Gradual: A responsorial chant derived from early Christian traditions of singing choral refrains. Gradual can also refer to the book collecting all musical items of the Mass – in Latin *Graduale Romanum*.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #87

Week 19: 8/19/07

Since they are still singing when I get back from Communion, when can I pray?

“When the distribution of Communion is finished...the priest and faithful spend some time praying privately.” This is a good time to give thanks for the gift of the Eucharist and pray that we may open our hearts to become what we have received.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #88

What is the purpose of the Prayer after Communion?

In the Prayer after Communion the priest prays for the fruits of the mystery just celebrated. Only one prayer after Communion is said, however, the conclusion of the prayer may vary. If the prayer is directed to the Father it concludes with the words *Through Christ our Lord*. If the prayer is directed to the Father, but the Son is mentioned, it ends with the words *Who lives and reigns forever and ever*. And if the prayer is directed to the Son it ends with *You live and reign forever and ever*.

The people in the congregation make the prayer their own by responding *Amen*.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #89

Week 20: 8/26/07

What is the purpose of the concluding rites of the Mass?

We are dismissed from Mass so that each of us may go out to do good works, praising and blessing God.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #90