

Word on Worship

Newsletter of the Office of Divine Worship, Archdiocese of Newark, Volume 31, No. 1, 2014



Universal Call to Holiness, Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF *SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM*

Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people" (1 Pt 2:9; cf. 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, SC 14

Solemnly promulgated by His Holiness Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963

www.rcan.org/worship

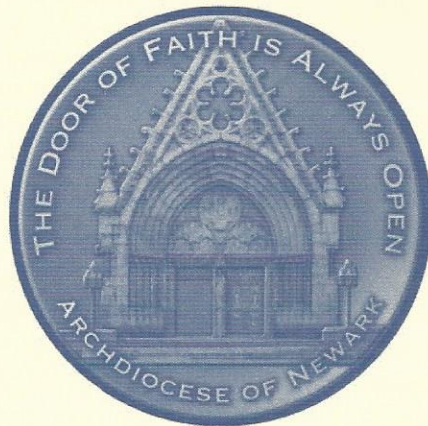


In this issue: Looking Back at the Year of Faith: A Personal Reflection • The Herald of the Second Vatican Council • The Servant of the Council • Scheduling Reminders for Lent—Triduum 2014 • Stewards of the Tradition: Fifty Years after Sacrosanctum Concilium

LOOKING BACK AT THE YEAR OF FAITH: A PERSONAL REFLECTION

Rev. Thomas A. Dente

Director of the Office of Divine Worship
Archdiocese of Newark



One of the hallmarks of Pope Benedict XVI's pontificate was "commemorative years." During his reign, the Church celebrated the "Pauline Year," the "Year for Priests," the Sesquicentennial of the apparitions at Lourdes, and, of course, the "Year of Faith" which commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council.

Pope Benedict's encyclical (*Porta Fidei*) announcing the Year of Faith was promulgated in October of 2011. It began by quoting the Acts of the Apostles as its overall theme: "The 'Door of Faith' (Acts 14:27) is always open." The letter proclaimed a Year of Faith beginning on October 11, 2012, the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Council, and ending on November 24, 2013, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. The pope's encyclical was accompanied by a lengthy list of suggestions for events and activities to celebrate this special year.

At the time, Archbishop John J. Myers sent me a memo with the suggestions attached and asked for my thoughts. I responded that this looked a little bigger than the other Years, and I thought there should be a committee to carry it out. He responded essentially saying, "Great idea – you're in charge!" Now how did I let myself fall for that old trick? But it turned out to be quite a year, and now, as the Year of Faith ship sails off into the sunset, I thought it would be worth a look back at where we have been.

On October 11, 2012, at the Vatican, the Year of Faith opened with a lengthy procession of bishops followed by Pope Benedict through St. Peter's Square. Led by the *Book of the Gospels*, it commemorated the great procession of bishops who opened Vatican II. In the Archdiocese of Newark, the year began locally in parishes with special announcements, prayers and song.

Many parishes took up the Year of Faith banner by having spiritual and educational opportunities added to their busy schedules for adults and youth alike. They made use of programs like "Discovering Christ" (ChristLife Publications) and resources like "Catholicism" (Word on Fire

Publications), the video series by Fr. Robert Barron.

As chair of the Year of Faith taskforce I was personally invited to many parishes throughout the year to speak on the topic of faith. The highlight of each visit was when I would ask participants to name a saint who inspired their faith and then to name someone they personally knew who inspired their faith.

Without fail, at each venue, someone would point to another person in the room, often with emotion in their voice, and say "Her!" or "Him!" "She has inspired my faith" or "He brought me closer to God." It was a great time for parishioners to reflect on how they have received faith and how they also play a role in passing it on.

Pilgrimages were called for during the Year of Faith, and the Archdiocese of Newark stepped up to the plate. The Archdiocese, as well as several parishes, sponsored pilgrimages to Rome for the canonizations of Kateri Tekakwitha and Marianne Cope, American women of great faith.

On a much larger scale, in October of 2013, the Archdiocese of Newark made a pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC. With noteworthy attendance of more than 3,500 people, we shook the walls of the shrine with our music and prayers. On that day our Archdiocese was literally a pilgrim people witnessing to our faith in Christ and our devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary through our journey to the National Shrine.

Our Year of Faith did not only include physical journeys but spiritual and intellectual ones as well. During Lent of 2013, to bring spiritual healing to the hearts of many, the Archdiocese took part in "The Light is on for You." At a designated hour each Wednesday night, a priest was available to celebrate reconciliation in every church of the Archdiocese. It opened the "door of faith" for those who had not been to this sacrament in a long time or for those fallen away Catholics seeking an opportunity to return home.

At the heart of the Year of Faith was the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Vatican II. Pope Benedict made specific mention of familiarizing ourselves with the documents of the Council. To that end, *Word on Worship* did its part by reaching out to several authors, clergy and lay, many of them university professors, to write articles summarizing and reviewing the major Council documents.¹

Readers were reminded of some of the significant shifts in ecclesiology which occurred as a result of the Council. Fr. John Chadwick reasserted the heart of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: all present must participate, fully and consciously, both externally and internally, in the Church's liturgical celebrations. Dr. Zeni Fox's analysis of *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the document on the laity, was clear that lay people do not merely share in the apostolate of the hierarchy but have their own genuine apostolate as disciples of Christ. According to Fr. Lawrence Porter's revisit of the documents on the clergy, the role of the priest was expanded beyond the cultic: "the Christian priest presides not just over an altar but also over a people."

The wisdom of Fr. Lawrence Frizzell and Msgr. John Radano was much appreciated as they reinvestigated *Nostra Aetate* and *Unitatis Redintegratio*, respectively. The first decried hatred toward the Jews and repudiated anti-Semitic misinterpretations of the New Testament; the second stressed the importance of unity with fellow Christians, seeking common ground rather than accentuating differences, and looked forward to the day when "all Christians will be gathered, in a common celebration of the Eucharist, into the unity of the one and only Church..."

Fr. Thomas Guarino's article stressed the importance of both Scripture and Tradition in *Dei Verbum*, balancing the Church's "perpetual task of preserving the deposit of the faith while fostering its proper maturation over time."

Through the words of Dr. Mary Beth Walsh, *Lumen Gentium* illuminated for readers the magnanimity of the Church as the mystical body of Christ, expanding our understanding of the "People of God" and stressing the "Universal Call to Holiness" of all God's people. Dr. Dugan

"Faith is not a light which scatters all our darkness, but a lamp which guides our steps in the night."

Pope Francis, *Lumen Fidei*, 57

McGinley took us on an insightful journey courtesy of *Gaudium et Spes* in which the Church sees the need to keep pace with a rapidly changing world. Yet despite the nature of our dynamic, changing world, God still resides deep in the conscience of each person, and it is a fundamental right of each person to be free to follow the dictates of one's own conscience. To these and all of the Year of Faith contributors, gratitude is extended.

Despite the great work of the Council, further reflection reveals that there is more work to be done. Still there are those authorities, both civil and religious, who feel that conscience should be dictated rather than discerned. Too often clericalism rears its ugly head, and some laity prefer the comfort of complacency over the responsibility of participation. Too often, religious and civil politics supersede genuine ecumenism, and while the Church asked for dialogue with the world's global religions, not all were ready to respond. Most heartbreaking of all are the virulent attacks on the post-Conciliar Mass by those who fail to see the work of the Holy Spirit in the Council and wish to turn back the clock to a memory that is more nostalgia than reality. Clearly the work of the Council is not complete.

No one anticipated many surprises during the Year of Faith, so the world was quite shocked when the Vatican announced the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI. Perhaps even more surprising to many was his successor, Pope Francis, who, when he stepped out onto the balcony, led the people in simple prayers and then bowed in silence asking his flock for prayers before imparting his blessing.

On the topic of faith, Pope Francis has upped the ante on Pope Benedict's theme of opening the door of faith. In his homily to bishops and priests in Rio de

Janeiro (July 27, 2013), he declared, "It is not enough simply to open the door in welcome because they come, but we must go out through that door to seek and meet the people!" Pope Francis also said that being with Christ does not mean being apart from others. In other words, being a person of faith means being *with* the faithful. As Pope Francis has given witness to his own faith by reaching out especially to the poor. He has illustrated that "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the (people) of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ." (*Gaudium et Spes*, 1)

On November 24, 2013, in the Cathedral Basilica, Newark, Archbishop Myers presided over the closing Mass for the Year of Faith. In attendance were Coadjutor Archbishop Bernard Hebda, several auxiliary bishops, dozens of priests, deacons, and nearly 1,000 people. A special medallion to commemorate the year was struck for the event and given to each parish. It was a festive ending to a long year of spiritual growth.

The Year of Faith has ended, but belief is not something one *accomplishes*. It is something one *sustains*. "I believe Lord! Help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24) The door of faith is, indeed, always open. We enter through it to grow in our belief, but only by exiting the door of faith can we hope to reach out to others and draw them closer to Christ.

¹ All referenced articles appear in the following issues of *Word on Worship*: Volume 29, Nos. 2 and 3; Volume 30, Nos. 1 and 2.

THE HERALD OF THE COUNCIL

This is an excerpt from the Address of Pope Francis to the pilgrims of Bergamo given at the Vatican on June 3, 2013 marking the 50th anniversary of the death of Blessed John Paul XXIII.

Exactly 50 years ago, at this very time, Blessed John XXIII departed this world. Those who, like myself, have reached a certain age have vivid memories of the emotion that spread everywhere in those days... The whole world had recognized Pope John as a pastor and father; a pastor because he was a father. What had made him one? How had he been able to reach the heart of people so different from each other and even many non-Christians? To answer this question we may refer to his episcopal motto, *Oboedientia et Pax*: obedience and peace. "These words", Monsignor Roncalli noted on the eve of his episcopal ordination, "in a certain way sum up my story and my life."

Angelo Roncalli was a man who could communicate peace; natural, serene and cordial peace; a peace which, with his election to the Pontificate, was manifested to the whole world and was described as "goodness".

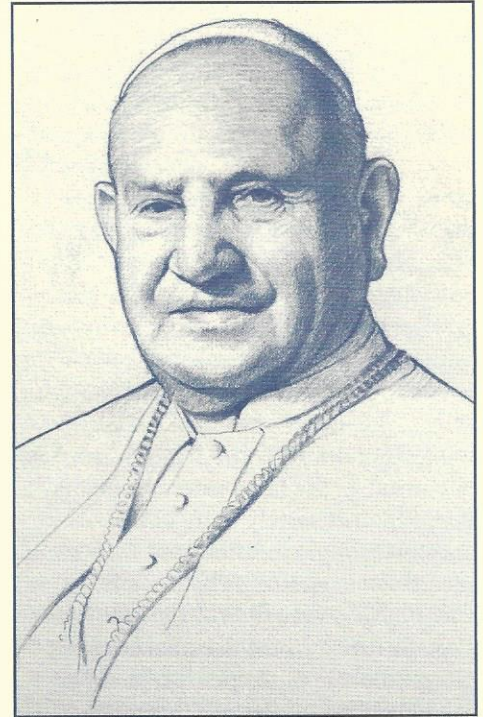
It is so beautiful to find a priest, a good priest, filled with goodness. And this reminds me of something that St Ignatius of Loyola said to the Jesuits when he was talking about the qualities a superior should have. And he said: he must have this and that... a long list of qualities. Lastly, however, he says this: "and if he does not possess these virtues, he must at least have great goodness." It is the essential. He is a father. A priest with goodness.

This was undoubtedly a distinctive trait of his personality which enabled him to make firm friendships everywhere, as was particularly evident in his ministry as Papal Representative. He served in this capacity for almost three decades, frequently in touch with environments and worlds far removed from the Catholic universe in which he had been born and raised. In those very milieus he proved an effective weaver of relationships and a solid champion of unity, both in the ecclesiastical community and outside it. Moreover he was open to dialogue with the Christians of other Churches, with

representatives of the Jewish and Muslim worlds and with many other people of good will.

Indeed Pope John conveyed peace because his mind was profoundly at peace: he had let the Holy Spirit create peace within him. And this mind filled with peace was the result of long and challenging work on himself, abundant traces of which have been left in the *Journal of a Soul*. In it we can see Roncalli — the seminarian, the priest, the bishop — coming to grips with the gradual process of purification of the heart. We see him, day by day, taking pains to recognize and mortify the desires that stemmed from his own selfishness and to discern the inspirations of the Lord, letting himself be guided by wise spiritual directors and be inspired by teachers such as St. Francis de Sales and St. Charles Borromeo. In reading these writings we truly see a soul being formed under the action of the Holy Spirit who works in his Church, in souls: it was the Spirit himself who, with these good inclinations, brought peace to Roncalli's soul.

Here we come to the second and crucial word: "obedience." Although peacefulness was his external feature, Roncalli's inner disposition consisted of obedience. Obedience, in fact, was his means for attaining peace. First of all it had a very simple and practical meaning: carrying out in the Church the service that his superiors asked of him, seeking nothing for himself, not shrinking from anything requested of him, even when it meant leaving his homeland to face worlds unknown to him and staying long years in places where Catholics were few and far between. It was his willingness to be led like a child that forged his career as a priest, with which you are well acquainted; secretary to Bishop Radini Tedeschi and at the same time teacher and spiritual director at the diocesan seminary; Papal Representative in Bulgaria, in Turkey and Greece, and in France; Pastor of the Venetian Church, and, finally, Bishop of Rome. Yet through this obedience, Roncalli — as a priest and as a bishop —



also lived a deeper faithfulness, which we could describe, as he might have said, as abandonment to Divine Providence. He constantly recognized in faith that through living in this way, seemingly led by others and not by his own preferences or on the basis of his own spiritual sensibility, God was designing a project of his own. He was a man of governance, he was a leader. But he was a leader led by the Holy Spirit, out of obedience...

This is a lesson for each one of us, but also for the Church of our time: if we let ourselves be led by the Holy Spirit, if we are able to mortify our selfishness to make room for the Lord's love and for his will, we will find peace, we will be builders of peace and will spread peace around us. Fifty years after his death the wise and fatherly guidance of Pope John, his love for the Church's Tradition and his awareness of the constant need for renewal, his prophetic intuition of the convocation of the Second Vatican Council and his offering of his life for its success stand as milestones in the history of the Church in the 20th century; and as a bright beacon for the journey that lies ahead.

THE SERVANT OF THE COUNCIL

This is an excerpt from the Homily of Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone at the Mass of Thanksgiving for the Beatification of John Paul II at St. Peter's Square on May 2, 2011.

“Simon, son of John, do you love me?... “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” (Jn 21:17). The dialogue between the Risen One and Peter is the dialogue that precedes the mandate: “Feed my sheep.” but it is also a dialogue that first scrutinizes the whole of man’s life. Might not these be the question and answer that marked the life and mission of Bl. John Paul II? He himself said so in Krakow in 1999:

Today I feel called in a particular way to give thanks for this 1,000-year old community of Christ’s pastors, clerics and lay people, because their witness to holiness thanks to the environment of faith which they formed and continued to form for 10 centuries in Krakow, have made it possible at the end of this millennium, on the very banks of the Vistola River at the foot of the Wawel Cathedral for Christ’s exhortation: “Peter, feed my lambs” (Jn 21:15) to be heard. It became possible for one man’s weakness to find support in the power of the perennial faith, hope and charity of this land, and to give the response: “In the obedience of faith before Christ my Lord, entrusting myself to the Mother of Christ and of the Church, conscious of the great difficulty, I accept.”

Yes, it was this dialogue of love between Christ and man that marked Karol Wojtyła’s entire life and led him not only to faithful service to the Church but also to the unreserved personal dedication to God and to men and women which characterized his journey of holiness.

I think we all remember that on the day of the funeral, during the celebration, at a certain moment the wind gently closed the pages of the Gospel Book that lay open on his coffin. It was as if the breath of the Spirit had wished to mark the end of Karol Wojtyła’s human and spiritual adventure, illumined throughout by Christ’s Gospel. In this Book, he discovered God’s plan for humanity and for himself but it was from it in particular that

Karol learned Christ, his face and his love, which for him were always a call to responsibility...

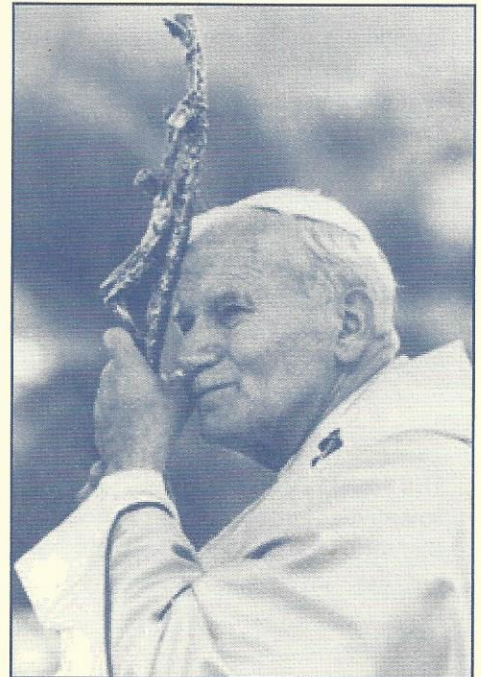
He was a man of faith, a man of God, a man who lived of God. His life was a ceaseless, constant prayer, a prayer that lovingly embraced every individual inhabitant of our planet, created in the image and likeness of God and for this reason deserving of respect; redeemed by Christ’s death and Resurrection, and for this reason truly the living glory of God (*Gloria Dei vivens homo* [the glory of God is a living man] — St. Irenaeus).

Today let us thank the Lord for having given us a Pastor like him. A Pastor who could read the signs of God’s presence in human history and who subsequently proclaimed his great works in all the world, in all the languages. A Pastor who had rooted within him a sense of mission, of the commitment to evangelize, to proclaim God’s word everywhere, to shout it from the rooftops...

Today let us give thanks to the Lord for a witness like him, so credible, so transparent, who taught us how we should experience faith and defend the Christian values, starting with life, without complexes or fear; and how we should witness to faith courageously and consistently, living the Beatitudes in our daily experience.

Let us thank the Lord for giving us a Pope who was not only able to give the Catholic Church a universal outreach and a moral authority at an unprecedented global level, but also, especially with the celebration of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, a vision that was more spiritual, more biblical, and more focused on the word of God. A Church which knew how to renew herself, how to structure a “new evangelization,” how to intensify ecumenical and interreligious relations and rediscover ways to fruitful dialogue with the new generations.

Lastly, let us thank the Lord for giving us a man as Holy as him. We were all able to perceive — some from close at hand,



others from afar — how consistent his humanity, his words and his life were. He was a true man because he was inseparably bound to the One who is Truth. In following the One who is the Way, he was a man constantly on the move, ever striving for the greatest good of every person, of the Church and of the world, and for the destination which for every believer is the glory of the Father. He was truly alive for he was a man full of the Life, which is Christ, ever open to his grace and to all the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Staff

Editor: Kathy Skrupskis
Design/Layout: Rev. Michael C. Santoro

Editorial Board: Joan Conroy, Kristin Dabaghian, Rev. Thomas A. Dente, Rev. Peter K. Funesti, Rev. Msgr. Richard Groncki, Rev. Thomas B. Iwanowski, Patricia Krema, Susan Zaremba Malone, Rev. Charles Pinyan, Rev. Michael C. Santoro, Kathy Skrupskis.

Pope John XXIII art: Bronna Butler

Contributors: Rev. Thomas A. Dente, and the staff of the Office of Divine Worship

SCHEDULING REMINDERS FOR LENT – TRIDUUM 2014

THE APOSTLES' CREED DURING LENT AND EASTER

The rubric found in the Roman Missal for the Order of Mass 19 stipulates that:

Instead of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, especially during Lent and Easter Time, the baptismal Symbol of the Roman Church, known as the Apostles' Creed may be used.

The reason this option is recommended particularly for Lent/Easter Time is because of its close relationship with Baptism. The Apostles' Creed is the basis for the baptismal promises made by the elect before they are baptized. It is also used for the renewal of baptismal promises at Easter and by parents and godparents when bringing a child for baptism.

THE SAINTS DURING LENT

Solemnities and feasts are celebrated as usual. Memorials of the saints are not celebrated during Lent, but they may be commemorated as follows:

AT MASS

- The opening prayer of the saint may replace the opening prayer of the Lenten weekday.
- The Scripture readings are always those of the Lenten weekday.
- The prayer over the gifts and prayer after communion are always the prayers of the Lenten weekday.
- The Lenten Preface is always used. (They may be used with the Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation).
- The color is always violet.

IN THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

AT THE OFFICE OF READINGS

After the second reading (with its responsory) from the Lenten weekday the readings of the saint (with its responsory) may be added with the concluding prayer of the saint.

AT MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER

The ending of the concluding prayer may be omitted and the antiphon and the prayer of the saint may be added.

LENTEN COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICES

Every effort should be made to schedule communal celebrations of the sacrament of Penance during the season of Lent. Additional opportunities for individual confessions may be scheduled in the parishes according to pastoral need. Lenten Communal Penance Services should not be scheduled during the days of the Triduum, nor on the Monday of Holy Week, April 14, 2014, to allow priests and people to attend the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral Basilica.

A sample communal Penance service is available at <http://www.rcan.org/worship/LentComPen04.pdf>

EASTER VIGIL

Sunset will take place at 7:40 pm on Saturday, April 19, 2014. This means that the Easter Vigil is not to begin before 8:15 pm at the earliest. No other Masses may be celebrated on Holy Saturday before the Easter Vigil is completed. Once the Vigil is completed, Masses for Easter may be celebrated even if it is still Saturday evening.

RCIA LENTEN REMINDERS

March 5, 2014	Ash Wednesday
March 8, 2014	Call to Continuing Conversion Cathedral Basilica, Newark
March 9, 2014	First Sunday of Lent Rite of Election Cathedral Basilica, Newark
March 16, 2014	Second Sunday of Lent Celebration of the Penitential Rite for the Candidates for Full Communion
March 23, 2014	Third Sunday of Lent Celebration of the First Scrutiny
March 30, 2014	Fourth Sunday of Lent Celebration of the Second Scrutiny
April 6, 2014	Fifth Sunday of Lent Celebration of the Third Scrutiny
April 12, 2014	Day of Reflection
April 19, 2014	Easter Vigil

STEWARDS OF THE TRADITION: FIFTY YEARS AFTER SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM

This is an excerpt from *Stewards of the Tradition—Fifty Years after Sacrosanctum Concilium* which was developed by the Committee on Divine Worship of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The article in its entirety can be found at <http://www.usccb.org/about/divine-worship/stewards-of-the-tradition.cfm>

FUNDAMENTAL AND FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Fully half of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* underscored important theological and liturgical principles “for the promotion and reform of the liturgy” (no. 3). In this light, we see the continued importance of the *Constitution’s* principles for promotion and reform (SC 5-46) in connection with the revised translation of the *Roman Missal* in 2011 and the ongoing work of the translation of other liturgical books. It is important to reread the entire *Constitution* through the following four theological and liturgical principles; indeed, they should be kept in mind when studying and celebrating the liturgy:

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE LITURGY (SC 5-13)

First and foremost, these paragraphs present Christ as the unique mediator and instrument of our salvation (SC 5-6). The classical adage from St. Leo the Great is relevant here: “[W]hat was visible in our Savior has passed over into his mysteries” (Sermon 74, 2: *PL* 54, 398). The following paragraph (no. 7) on the manifold presence of Christ and his priestly action in the liturgy lays a theological foundation for liturgical ministry, namely, that it is Christ himself who is present and active in the liturgy: in the priest who acts *in persona Christi capitis*; in the proclaimed Word (the Scriptures); in the song and prayer of the gathered assembly; and, above all, in the Eucharistic species itself, the Body and Blood of the risen Lord Jesus.

This reality of Christ acting in and through us in the liturgical act is a consolation and a grace because it is Christ’s work, not ours. It is also a challenge, reminding us that we need to celebrate the liturgy with care and reverence, so that our ministry reflects Christ himself through the gifts and talents he has given to each of us. At the same time, however, the Church continues to await Christ’s return in glory. Even as we encounter Christ present in the liturgy, indeed because of that, we also look forward to the fulfillment of his Paschal Mystery in the world to come, as we cry out, “*Maranatha*, Come, Lord Jesus.”

LITURGICAL PARTICIPATION (SC 14-20)

One of the *Constitution’s* most influential propositions was its statement that “the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy” (SC 14). The liturgy always has been and always will be about our taking part, our experiencing again and again, through rites and prayers, the central events of our redemption and sanctification in Jesus Christ.

At various moments in the history of the liturgy, this participation has taken on different forms, some more visible than others. From as far back as St. Justin Martyr (mid-second century), this interior level of participation has been enacted in the liturgy through the contribution of a variety of ministries carried on by a variety of ministers. The liturgical reform had as its aim the “full, conscious, and active participation” of the faithful at an interior level that would be manifest in outward signs and tangible expressions.

We commend the great strides that have been taken to invite such engagement over the past fifty years: catechesis on the liturgy that has shaped the role of the liturgical assembly, the service of the faithful in a great variety of liturgical ministries, and the devotion of so many to the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. These are but a few of the many signs expressive of our interior renewal and participation. The great care taken in the catechetical preparation for the implementation of the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*, demonstrates that the faithful take their participation seriously as a means to draw closer to Jesus Christ. We encourage continued zeal in fostering such participation in the mysteries we celebrate. Just as Jesus invited the disciples to “put out into deep water” (Lk. 5:4), so each of us is invited to be more “deeply imbued with the spirit of the liturgy” (SC 29).

In order to enable more readily the participation of the faithful, the *Constitution* also proposed the simplification of the rites when necessary. Part of the reason for this is to underscore the “noble simplicity” of the Roman rite, which had been encumbered by what were judged to be unnecessary duplications and



Office of Divine Worship
171 Clifton Avenue
Newark, NJ 07104-0500

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 5406
NEWARK, NJ

accretions over the centuries. Because the various signs and symbols are able to speak more clearly, the faithful are able to participate more deeply.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD (SC 51)

One of the greatest graces of the conciliar reform has been the expansion of the biblical texts in the post-conciliar liturgy. Because the Word of God is truly inspired and, like Christ, both human and divine (cf. *Dei Verbum*, no. 13), the Church rightly understands it as the soul of theology (cf. *Dei Verbum*, no. 24). When the Sacred Scripture is proclaimed within the liturgy, it becomes an ecclesial event of the risen Christ addressing his people. Indeed, the liturgy “brings about the most perfect actualization of the biblical texts, for the liturgy places the proclamation in the midst of the community of believers, gathered around Christ so as to draw near to God” (Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, Section IV, C, 1). With the reform of the liturgy, the rituals of the sacraments have been enriched by the Liturgy of the Word, which was not

previously a regular part of the sacraments. This turn to the Word within the liturgy has been a key factor in the growth of biblical literacy among Catholics in the past fifty years.

The foundational and essential character of Scripture drives us to continue “to promote that warm and living love for Scripture” called for by the *Constitution* (no. 24). The 2012 USCCB document *Preaching the Mystery of Faith: The Sunday Homily* is one recent effort for promoting this love, especially among the clergy. We are grateful for all the ways, great and small, that you have worked to encourage the Word, through bible studies, prayer groups, and personal *lectio divina*. To paraphrase St. Jerome, to know Scripture is to know Christ, and, therefore, to be well prepared for celebrating the liturgy more fully and more deeply.

INCULTURATION AND THE LITURGY (SC 37-40)

One of the many ways in which God’s grace in the liturgy has been made more accessible to the faithful is through various means of inculturation. The *Constitution* suggested adaptation of the liturgy to various cultural circumstances in order to foster the participation of the people.

Translation of liturgical texts into vernacular languages, for example, has been a monumental success, making the words of the liturgy more understandable to those present. We should continue to consider ways in which the liturgy can be legitimately adapted to the various cultures of our people. We also recognize that the liturgy has a culture all its own, which can have a great influence for good upon society, and each of us must be open to the power of the liturgy to shape and form our hearts and our lives to be more like Jesus Christ.