

word on worship

CAUSES & COLLECTIONS

It's a beautiful Sunday morning in May. Catholics are gathering in their churches to celebrate the Third Sunday of Easter. John & Mary Doe have taken their usual seat in the third pew of Saint Mary's Church and await the beginning of Mass. Just as the church bells stop ringing, a pleasant young woman approaches the microphone and proclaims:

"Today is the Third Sunday of Easter, Mothers Day. At today's liturgy we will be joining with the other Catholic Churches of our nation in a Day of Prayer for Vocations. We are happy to welcome the new officers of the Rosary Society who will be presented with roses at mass today. We also welcome the Knights of Columbus for their annual communion breakfast.

Please remember with your generosity the usual monthly second collection for our parish school as well as the members of the Respect for Life Committee who will be at the doors of the Church seeking your support for their wonderful work. The parish is proud to announce that several of our young people will be making their first Eucharist at this mass. Please stand as we greet our celebrant, Father John, and sing our hymn honoring Mary in the month of May: Hail, Holy Queen!, found on page 106 of your missalette."

And so it begins. Mass continues. John and Mary hear a masterfully crafted "homily" which calls their attention to the obvious connection between Mothers Day, vocations, the symbolic meaning of roses, respect for life - all of which is summed up in making your first Eucharist. The homily concludes with words of gratitude for the wonderful work of the Knights of Columbus, and the sign of the cross.

As John and Mary Doe drive back to their home, their heads are filled with many good ideas; but, as they leave the church, they are unaware of the Paschal Mystery or of how the death and resurrection of the Lord is reflected in the lives they live today. The Third Sunday of Easter - a community's celebration of the resurrection and God's continuing saving action in our midst - has been buried under a flood of *causes and collections*.

Liturgy committees, pastors, and presiding celebrants are under a bewildering bombardment of ideas, announcements, causes, and collections which they are expected to incorporate into the Sunday Mass.

This problem becomes particularly evident when we realize that the Church has stated clearly that Sundays hold a special and sacred place in Catholic life.

"The Church celebrates the paschal mystery on the first day of the week known as the Lord's day. This follows a tradition handed down from the apostles and having its origin from the day of Christ's resurrection. Thus Sunday must be ranked as the first holyday of all."

General Norms for the Liturgical Year, No.4

Since the **paschal mystery** is the central theme of every Sunday Celebration, Christ's dying and rising and God's saving action must be the central experience and focus of every community Eucharist. However, all too often we find the community's attention being subtly drawn away from the paschal mystery to our ideas, causes and collections - away from what God is doing to what we are doing.

Instead of being an annual spiritual journey in which we can, more and more, conform our lives to the dying and rising of the Lord, the Liturgical Year becomes subordinate to an annual calendar of collections, causes and themes. We let Sundays be abused. Our altars become billboards

on which to hang the "theme of the week." These "themes" place Sunday at great risk. Often nothing is sacred before the special interests. The readings, feasts and the paschal mystery are ignored in favor of the special themes.

The Second Vatican Council's promotion of the use of the vernacular in worship has added much to our worship life. However, there may be a subtle, negative side effect of using English in our liturgy.

Because the liturgy is now in English, there appears to be a tendency for some to see the liturgy as primarily an opportunity to communicate their ideas to the assembled faithful; rather than seeing the liturgy as the assembled faithful's opportunity to praise and worship God.

It is becoming more and more difficult for John and Mary Doe to come to Sunday Mass just to praise and worship the Lord with no additional theme or cause vying for their attention and veiling the paschal mystery.

The growing tendency to view the liturgy as primarily for teaching our causes and themes often places liturgy committees and presiding celebrants under great pressure from the special interest group. Often there is the request to ignore the lectionary and change the readings to better illustrate the theme. The result is that the full gospel message, which is meant to challenge us, is often truncated in favor of the parts we choose to hear because they support the theme of the day.

Evangelization for non-catholics who might attend our worship and continuing formation in the gospel for already baptized catholics suffer because the gospel message is often veiled behind layer after layer of causes and collections which we are expected to integrate into our worship.

This pressure is not just limited to the lectionary but extends beyond the readings to include the sacramentary and our prayer. At times "newly composed" prayers are

suggested because they "better communicate" the theme. General intercessions cease to be prayer and become an opportunity for a commercial or a public service announcement. For example:

Parish Council Election Sunday
Peter's Pence
Mission Sunday
Confirmation Enrollment Sunday
Catechetical Sunday
Boy Scout Sunday
Holy Name Sunday
Campaign for Human Development
Indian and Negro Missions
Shrines of the Holy Land Collection
Catholic University
Fathers Day
Church in Latin America
American Board of Catholic Missions
Retired Religious Collection
Propagation of the Faith
Girl Scout Sunday
Mothers Day
Rosary Society Sunday
Second Collection for the School
Christmas Flower Collection
First Penance Enrollment Sunday
Winter Fuel Collection
Easter Flower Collection
Diocesan Annual Appeal
Operation Rice Bowl
Respect Life Sunday
Catholic Schools Week
Vocation Sunday
Diocesan Assessment Collection
World Day of Prayer for Peace
Family Life Sunday
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
First Eucharist Enrollment Sunday
Air Conditioning Collection
Catholic Relief Services
Building Fund Collection
etc, etc, etc.

"For the success of our week-long parish carnival with games and prizes for all, which begins this Wednesday night at 6:00pm in the parking lot behind the school, we pray to the Lord..."

or

"That next week's special second collection will allow us to buy new chairs for the school auditorium, we pray to the Lord...."

Nor is music in our worship exempt from the onslaught. Instead of choosing music which supports the paschal mystery and community prayer, there is often pressure to include music which is completely unrelated to the liturgical year, the paschal mystery or christian life.

This is particularly evident when there is an attempt to replace or combine the liturgical calendar with the civil calendar of national, local or ethnic celebrations. Civil feasts like Labor Day, Halloween, New Year's Day, Flag Day, Memorial Day, Mother's Day, Independence Day, Martin Luther King Day, Columbus Day, Father's Day, and President's Day are sometimes allowed to overshadow Sunday and the paschal mystery. Music is chosen which is patriotic, ethnic or sentimental even though the purported purpose of the gathering is to praise and worship God.

When these causes and collections are joined to the liturgy twenty, thirty, even forty or more Sundays a year a pattern is established. The pattern makes it easier to add "just one more" theme or cause next year. Instead of being the "source and summit of Christian life," the Sunday liturgy becomes weekly propaganda.

This is a familiar, but complex, multi-levelled problem. Causes and collections are generated at three levels: national, diocesan, and parish. Each level often sees its contributions to the yearly list as essential to Catholic life. The problem becomes most

serious when two or three of these levels choose the same or consecutive Sundays to expound their themes or promote their collections. The local pastor and liturgy committee is sometimes faced with periods of the year when there is not a single Sunday that does not have some additional message which must be attached to the gospel.

This would be an easy problem to solve if it were a simple choice between good and evil. However, the truth is that we are faced with causes and collections which are, for the most part, good and which address issues which are important to the life of the Church and the world. The choice is really between many "goods;" and that is far more difficult to resolve.

What are we to do? Should we ignore these causes and collections to "purify" our worship? Some probably should be ignored or at least greatly subdued. But the church faces an important *double* task:

1. It must preserve the centrality of the paschal mystery and the unity of the Christian feast; and,
2. It must not ignore the world, but rather serve it by being a "light to the nations."

The liturgy cannot and should not be celebrated in splendid isolation from the material world and the needs of real people.

For this double task to be achieved the Church - national, diocesan and parochial - must carefully evaluate its choices and options, causes and collections in the light of the paschal mystery. This will at times require difficult and even painful decisions and may require new creative ways of addressing old problems. When faced with an important cause or church need we must ask two questions:

1. What place does this issue or cause have in the basic christian mystery or tradition?
2. What place does this issue have in the lives, experience and concern of the people?

Once these questions are satisfactorily answered it still remains for the local liturgy committee, pastor and presiding celebrant to prepare the Sunday celebration with a sense of **balance** between the primary and secondary - always remembering that **the integrity of Sunday is primary**. The rhythm of the liturgical year, the liturgy of the word, its cycle of readings and wealth of scripture, the importance of the homily all take precedence. What is **secondary (the cause or collection)** should be experienced as secondary by those gathered for worship.

What can local churches do?

- First and foremost be faithful to the preaching of the full lectionary. As St. Paul reminds us "faith comes from hearing." The christian faithful deserve a chance to hear *what God has done and is doing for them* before we focus their attention on what we are doing for them or what we may want them to do.

- In preparing the Sunday celebration be sure your choices in decoration, prayers, and music reflect the liturgical season and focus attention on the paschal mystery before any secondary issue.
- Provide liturgical catechesis for priests, deacons, staff and liturgy committee members, school teachers and parish catechetists on the *primacy of Sunday*. We won't be effective if we approach the Sunday eucharist with contradictory visions and values.
- Be sure your General Intercessions are real prayer, incorporating real concerns of real people. Many important issues can be addressed in this way, but be careful to avoid excesses and the tendency to use the intercessions as announcements.
- Evaluate the causes and collections, issues and celebrations added to the liturgical calendar by your own parish organizations, school, and catechetical programs.
- Determine on what other occasions or in what other ways can special concerns be celebrated. Must it be at Sunday Mass? Why not at a votive mass or at special celebrations of liturgies of the word, or celebrations from the Book of Blessings or at the Liturgy of the Hours?
- Find other ways to communicate. Parish bulletins, special bulletin inserts, bulletin boards and careful but creative use of announcements at the proper time in Mass or at weekly parish organization meetings can reduce the pressure to make the Sunday liturgy the only parish vehicle for causes and collections.

What is needed on all levels is a greater sensitivity to the importance of a full celebration of Sunday in the life of the Catholic parish. John and Mary Doe need more than the "theme(s) of the week" when they leave the church on Sunday. They need to see how their own daily dyings and risings are linked to the Lord's dying and rising.

They need to join in the memorial sacrifice in a spirit of thanksgiving for God's presence and saving action in their ordinary lives. They need to be refreshed and nourished by their weekly meeting with the Lord's presence in word, bread and wine, their neighbor and each other. They need to leave the church empowered to bring the values and spirit of the Lord into their homes, community, and places where they work.

This is what the Lord does for John and Mary Doe at Sunday Eucharist. Christ touches their lives.

The task of Church leaders and liturgy preparers is to facilitate this weekly encounter with Christ and to prepare *his way*. The time has come for us to ask whether the multiplication of causes and collections prepares the Lord's way or places obstacles of our own making in it.

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PRAYING THE LITURGY

One day, when I was ordained about 3 years, I was walking from the rectory to the church for the 6:45 morning Mass, thinking as I did, about my day. I had Mass and two religion classes to teach in the parish grade school. After lunch I had some office work to do, then a school liturgy committee meeting at 3:30 PM, after that, an appointment before supper, and then another appointment in the evening, a youth meeting at 8 PM, then homily preparation for tomorrow's Mass. Those things were on my schedule and unexpected things were sure to pop up. As usual, it was too full a day. Where could I find time for the daily half hour of prayer that I had resolved to fit into my schedule? Suddenly, it struck me that here I was about to celebrate Mass, and I wasn't thinking of the Mass as prayer, it simply was another thing I had to do; a ritual I had to perform for the sake of the people. The Mass, the highest form of Christian prayer, was for me, something "to do" but not "to pray."

Whether we are priests, readers, eucharistic ministers, greeters, cantors, organists, choir members, servers or members of the assembly, there is always a danger of forgetting that Mass, that liturgy is prayer. For a priest, the liturgy can simply become something to say, something to "celebrate", something to go through for the sake of others. For a reader, the liturgy can simply become an opportunity to read in public. For the eucharistic minister, the liturgy can simply be a time to give out "the bread" or give out "the wine." For the greeter, the liturgy can simply become an occasion for passing collection baskets, or directing traffic, or handing out parish bulletins. For the altar server, the liturgy can simply mean acting as a go-fer for the man in charge. For the music minister, the liturgy can simply become a place to perform, a place to show one's talent, or even worse, a place to pick up a few extra dollars. For the assembly, the liturgy can simply become something to do in order to stay Catholic. "We have to go to Mass."

In each case, the Mass is not seen as a time of community prayer, a time to hear God's Word and share His Life, a time to offer Him thanks and praise for His bountiful gifts, a time to renew and recall our new relationship with God through Christ His Son. Rather, the

Mass is simply something we have to do, some religious ritual to play out for the sake of our relationship with God and to satisfy the requirements of the Church.

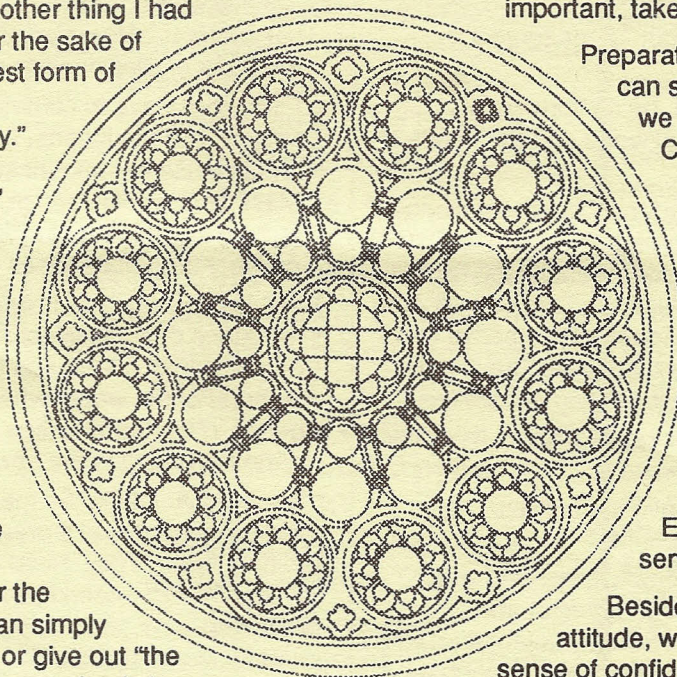
To see the liturgy as prayer and as the source and summit of the Christian life takes a change in attitude and a change in approach. In this article, I would like to offer some suggestions which may help us to approach the liturgy as prayer. For the sake of example, I will use the liturgy of the Mass.

A change in attitude is key. All too often we come to Mass without taking the time to place ourselves in the proper frame of mind, without taking the time to place ourselves in an attitude of prayer. Prayer, like anything else important, takes preparation.

Preparation for the prayer of the Mass can simply begin by realizing what we are about to do. We, the Church, the living Body of Christ on earth, are about to assemble in the name of our Lord to offer praise and worship to God through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are about to join the living Christ in prayer. Whether we are priest, reader, greeter, or member of any other ministry, we are primarily coming together for that reason. Everything we do must be in service to this common prayer.

Besides gathering with the proper attitude, we must also gather with a sense of confidence and recollection. Prayer cannot happen if we are distracted, or if we are confused or uncertain about our role at Mass or about some other aspect of the liturgy. We need to be well prepared for our ministry, so that we can serve the community's prayer with style and grace.

We also need to be physically present well before the start of the liturgy. This will give us time to see to any immediate tasks that may be our responsibility, and it will give us a few moments of peace to settle our spirits and place ourselves in the presence of God. If time permits we could also greet the other members of Christ's living body who are assembling to join us in prayer. In our increasingly hectic society, unless we learn to make time to quiet ourselves before Mass, we will simply rush into



church and rush into Mass. And Mass will simply be another thing to get over and get done.

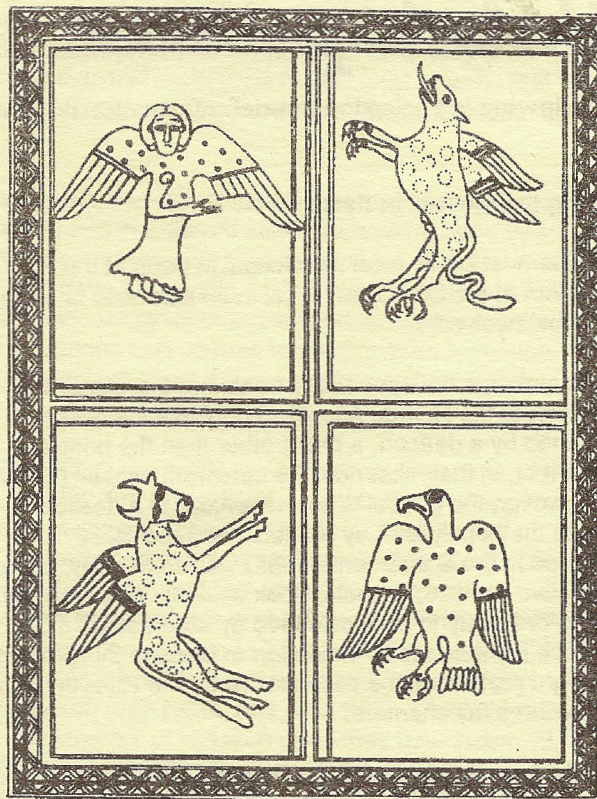
If we are to make the Mass our prayer, we also have to pay attention. We have to pay attention to the ministers who lead us in prayer, we have to pay attention to what is being said and what we are saying, and we have to pay attention to what is taking place in the liturgy.

Paying attention means listening to the presider when he calls us to prayer and when he prays in our name to the Father. It means doing what the presider asks. When he says "Let us pray," for example, we have to take advantage of the silence that is provided to do just that. We have to bring our personal prayers before the Lord, and not just wait for the action of the Mass to continue. This is true for the priest as well. He also has to pray in silence, and not just mark time before he continues.

Paying attention means listening attentively as the reader proclaims God's Word. It means realizing that God's Word is always living and active, God's Word always contains a message for those who hear it. But often our minds are somewhere else as the scriptures are proclaimed. How many of us pay so little attention to the readings that we would be unable to tell someone else what they were about? God's Word has to be attended to, if it is to change our lives, if it is to lift our minds and hearts to God. As the admonition of the Eastern Liturgy puts it "Wisdom! Be attentive!"

Paying attention means concentrating on the words we say at Mass. Words that seek God's mercy. Words that implore God to hear our petitions. Words that call upon God to transform bread and wine into the Body and Blood of His Son. Words that beg God to unite us as the living Body of Christ on earth. Words that urge God to come again in glory. Words that ask God to make us agents of peace. Words of prayer that ask God to do great and wonderful things and words of prayer that have the power of changing us. But since we have said those words so many times, at so many Masses, they can easily be words said by rote, unconnected to our thoughts and hearts.

That is especially true during the Eucharistic Prayer. We know those prayers so well, that as priests, we can say them almost automatically while thinking of something else. And as people, we can listen only halfheartedly, waiting for our acclamations, while our minds wander. Familiarity breeds not contempt in this case, but a lack of appreciation and a lack of attention. When that happens it helps if we make a renewed effort to direct our attention to the Eucharistic Prayer. We can do that by concentrating on the words and using our imagination to picture what the words are saying. It also helps if we try to approach the words of the Eucharistic Prayer as if we were hearing them for the first time, or for the last time before our death. Giving such attention to the Eucharistic Prayer can truly make it the high point of our prayer at Mass.



Paying attention means being aware of what is happening around us. It means being aware of those ministering in a special way to the needs of the assembly. Their ministry can remind us not only of our call to service, it can also remind of us God's special love and care for us. After all, God calls readers to read, presiders to preside, singers to sing, servers to serve, eucharistic ministers to wait at table, greeters to greet, etc., not for His sake, but for the sake of His people.

Paying attention also means being aware of all those members of the assembly who gather with us around God's altar. Their presence and participation can lead us to prayer and strengthen our faith. Their presence can also remind us that they, in turn, need us to pray with them, they need us to support their faith

Liturgy can easily just be one more thing we have to do, one more thing on our list of too many things to get over and get. But if we make the effort to change our attitude, if we make the effort to be prepared and to be at peace within ourselves, if we make the effort to pay attention, then liturgy can be transformed. It can change from just another thing to do, to the most important thing we can do. It can become prayer, it can become time with One who is Love Itself, it can truly become the source and summit of our Christian life.

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BCL Update • • • • •

The following is a selection of brief informational articles from the Newsletter of the Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy

Reading the Gospel in Parts

Q. Is it permissible to read the Gospel in parts at the celebration of the Eucharist? If so, must a deacon or a priest always be involved?

R. This matter is not specifically treated in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. In principle the gospel is proclaimed by a deacon, a priest other than the principal celebrant or, in their absence, the celebrant himself (GIRM 34). However, the gospel is not "reserved" to a deacon or priest as the homily is. Lay readers are specifically mentioned in the Sacramentary for *Passion Sunday, Liturgy of the Word* (p. 126, Catholic Book edition). While the part of Christ is ordinarily to be proclaimed by an ordained minister, allowance is made for an exception at times to this practice. This might particularly be called for when the Passion is to be sung by three lay chanters.

The *Directory for Masses with Children* provides for proclamation in parts (no. 47) when a reading lends itself to this. It follows that, at a Sunday Eucharist at which a large number of children participate, this norm might be applied at times. One must be careful, however, that this manner of proclamation not be overdone or abused. Often times those who prepare Masses with children actually hinder effective proclamation by using inadequately prepared children as readers or by reducing proclamation in parts to mere play-acting.

The proclamation of the gospel by several readers might be used effectively on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays or Lent (Year A) and on other occasions when the gospel lends itself to this manner of proclamation because of the dialogue between Jesus and other persons. However, such manner of proclamation should be used judiciously, and its use at "adult" Masses must be regarded as beyond the present norms, although not specifically contrary to them.

Shorter Book of Blessings

The *Shorter Book of Blessings*, an abridged edition of the *Book of Blessings*, has recently been published by The Catholic Book Publishing Company, New York. Containing 576 pages, this 4 1/2 by 6 7/8 inches book with flexible cover contains all the blessings from the complete *Book of Blessings* except for those celebrated during Mass or within a church, or ones celebrated with greater solemnity apart for a church (such as the blessings of new seminaries, universities, libraries, etc.). For ease of use, the reference numbers to the complete *Book of Blessings* are given for those blessings which may also be celebrated within Mass. The *Shorter Book of Blessings* is available at local religious

supply houses and bookstores. For information write: The Catholic Book Publishing Company, 257 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011.

Emendation of No. 5 of the GNLYC

The March-April 1990 issue of *Notitiae*, the journal published by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, contains a decree of the congregation emending no. 5 of the *General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar*, promulgated by the Sacred Congregation of Rites (Consilium) on March 21, 1969. The practical effects of this emended norm for the General Roman Calendar are that in the future when December 8 occurs on a Sunday, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception will be celebrated on *Monday*, December 9 [instead of Saturday, December 7], and when either the solemnity of Saint Joseph (March 19) or the Annunciation of the Lord (March 25) occur on a Sunday of Lent, they will be celebrated on the following Monday, except when either occurs on Passion (Palm) Sunday or Easter Sunday, in which case they will be transferred to the Monday after the Second Sunday of Easter. [As conceded by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, this emended form will not be observed in the Dioceses of the United States in 1991, since calendars have already been prepared. Thus, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception will be observed on Saturday, December 7, 1991.]

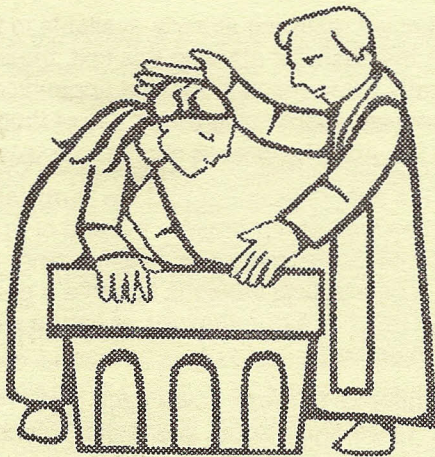
New Musical Resources

Flor y Canto, a hymnal for monolingual Spanish and bilingual Spanish/English communities, contains traditional and contemporary music from several Spanish speaking countries, including Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Spain, and the United States. The collection is arranged according to the liturgical seasons and, in addition to nearly 500 hymns, contains 75 psalm settings, 6 Mass settings, and 40 bilingual compositions. A total of 711 musical selections is included in the collection.

Oregon Catholic Press publishes *Flor y Canto* in two perfect-bound formats: the People's Edition (text and music, 692 pages) at \$6.95, and the People's Edition (text only, 548 pages) at \$2.95. The cost of the Accompaniment Edition (Guitar/Vocal) is \$29.95. Quantity discounts are also available. For further information contact: Oregon Catholic Press, P. O. Box 18030, Portland, OR 97218-0030. Telephone: 800/547-8992 (in Oregon, 800/422-3011).

Hymnal for the Hours is a collection of 316 hymns with organ accompaniment for Morning and Evening Prayer and general use arranged for use throughout the liturgical year. It was prepared by a committee of poets, liturgists, and musicians

from various religious communities. Its cost is \$12.95 per copy. Available from: GIA Publication, Inc., 7404 South Mason Avenue, Chicago, IL 60638.



the catechumenate and, after the necessary period of formation, will receive all three sacraments of initiation at the same time. Unbaptized infants and small children will be baptized and then will participate in the usual catechetical and sacramental formation programs for those baptized in infancy.

Thus, within the same family individuals may be initiated at different times and in different ways, depending upon their age, whether or not they have been baptized, and the extent to which they have previously been formed in the Christian life. Those responsible for catechesis must clearly explain to families the various approaches to the Christian formation and sacramental initiation of their family members which correspond to these different factors.

The NCCB/USCC Committees on Pastoral Research and Practice, Liturgy, and Education recognize the challenge which these varying situations present for pastors and religious educators. Nevertheless, the initiation of unbaptized children who have reached the age of discretion must always conform to the requirements of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. These persons are to be admitted into a form of the catechumenate which has been adapted to the particular needs of children (see RCIA, nos. 252-259). They will receive the three sacraments of initiation once they have been suitably formed in the Christian way of life and have established that they are ready for the sacraments (see RCIA, no. 256). The confirmation of such children should not be separated from the other sacraments of initiation to which it is integrally related.

Because the members of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops have not set a uniform age for confirmation of those who were baptized as infants, it will be necessary for pastors and religious educators to explain that varying practices regarding the age of those to be confirmed and the sequence of the reception of confirmation and eucharist exist in our country. They should provide the appropriate catechesis and rites of initiation necessary for the initiation of individuals into the sacramental life of the Church in conformity to diocesan regulations.

The Committees on Pastoral Research and Practices, Liturgy, and Education also recognize the need for new instructional materials, methods, and models to compensate for the lack of published sacramental preparation materials for older children preparing for confirmation and for lectionary-based catechesis. The Department of Education's Task Force preparing guidelines for catechetical materials will keep this in mind and share these needs with the publishers of catechetical materials.

The Committees on Pastoral Research and Practices, Liturgy, and Education express their appreciation for all that religious educators are striving to do in the face of these pastoral challenges, and encourage them to continue informing the NCCB/USCC Committees of their pastoral experiences so that the Church may provide for the faith formation of our people. ■

RCIA for Children of Catechetical Age

On March 20, 1990, the members of the Administrative Committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the publication of the joint statement of the NCCB Committee on the Liturgy and on Pastoral Research and Practices and the USCC Committee on education entitled Statement on the Pastoral Challenge of Implementing the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for Children Who Have Reached Catechetical Age. That statement follows:

With the implementation of the final translation of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA) on September 1, 1988, and the increased understanding that has been gained of this rite during the past few years, there has arisen the pastoral challenge of implementing that portion of the RCIA (Part 2, Chapter I) which applies to the "particular circumstances" of children who have reached catechetical age and who have not yet been initiated.

There are now many families whose adult members are being initiated, or are returning to the practice of the faith, and who have children of varying ages who have not received one or more of the sacraments of initiation. There are often, in the same family, older baptized but uncatechized children, and younger children who have been neither baptized nor catechized. According to the requirements of the RCIA, these family members are to be initiated in diverse ways. Unbaptized adults will be enrolled in the catechumenate and ultimately will receive all the sacraments of initiation at the same time. Baptized but uncatechized adults will be given the necessary catechetical formation and, if circumstances warrant, may be enrolled in an adapted form of the catechumenate for the already baptized; at the appropriate time they will receive the eucharist and/or confirmation. Baptized but uncatechized children will receive the necessary catechesis for confirmation and the eucharist and will receive these sacraments, insofar as possible, at the same time as their classmates. Unbaptized children of catechetical age will participate in a suitably adapted form of

HYMNAL FOR CATHOLIC STUDENTS

For all of us in parish ministry there is an ongoing search for ways to effect meaningful worship. As a parish priest for ten years it is my contention that each worshipping community must be approached with sensitivity to its needs. There is no group for which this is more important than children.

Many times as celebrant at Mass or presider of prayer with a very young congregation, I have looked into the eyes of disinterested youngsters. I wondered what could be done to make this prayer time a meaningful encounter with God. That is why I read with great interest the *Hymnal for Catholic Students: Leader's Manual*. What I found was a very useful tool for all involved in leading children in prayer.

A great deal of the book outlines specific Mass and prayer suggestions for liturgical seasons, holidays, holy days and the other special times that we usually gather with our young to pray. Many of the ideas in this section will be helpful to those assigned to planning these prayer times.

One particularly helpful feature in this section is that ideas are divided into three age groups: primary, intermediate and junior high. This is key since trying to relate to first and eighth graders with the same approach is simply ridiculous, although I have seen it tried on a number of occasions — all with disastrous results. Of course, as with all source books, several ideas are somewhat impractical, especially those listed for the junior highers, yet, there are more than enough suggestions to make it worthwhile.

However, what really makes the *Leader's Manual* appealing and different from other works are its other focuses. For instance, before you can prepare an effective liturgy there are several operating principles which are key. Without these, all the clever liturgy suggestions in the world cannot create effective prayer.

First and foremost among these principles is that liturgy is participatory. The book consistently fosters ways of getting young people fully involved. Too many times we try to entertain instead of involving the children. This work stresses that liturgy cannot apologize for the fact that it is ritual and there is a great deal of repetition. It should be filled with processions with a good amount of singing and wherever possible the whole body should become involved. What we do with our young should merely be an outgrowth of what we do in our parish.

That we do not want to recreate the wheel each time we do liturgy is well documented in this book which lists and

describes every known resource already available to the liturgist. Used as the basis for creating this text, these resources are neatly categorized in several appendices which teach us how we might make better use of them.

Another important practical feature of this book is how well it integrates the school calendar and the liturgical calendar as the backdrop of our prayer. Instead of prayer being forced or contrived we gather as seasons and holidays dictate. The liturgical seasons become a part of our students' lives much like our seasons of nature when we celebrate them properly.

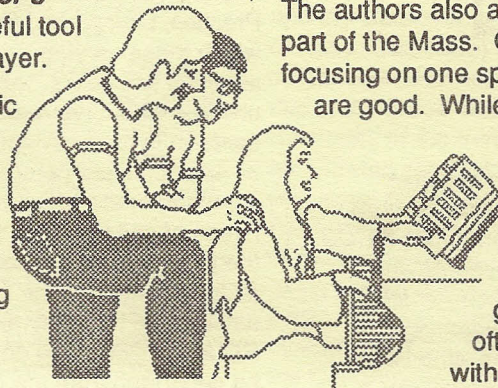
The authors also attempt to break down each and every part of the Mass. Once again some suggestions such as focusing on one specific part of Mass each time we gather are good. While some of the ideas in this section are either impractical or at least not where many children are at, there is always an attempt at relevancy.

As to the priority of music, I fully understand the importance of trying to get everyone to sing. In fact, I have often been about that with some success with teens. But I would suggest that more attention must be paid to instilling this as a value on an almost daily basis in the youngest grades. In order to get a self-conscious junior higher to sing we must begin early.

That brings me to the final, and in my opinion, most important point the *Leader's Manual* makes: we must pray with our students daily in a variety of ways so that they can see and experience how prayer will serve them in life.

For all people, but especially the young, if anything is going to become part of their lives, it has to be real, make sense, and speak to their needs. Which of us with students under our care doesn't see the need for prayer in their everyday lives? So this book is not just a hymnal for students at Mass and it is much more than another aid in preparing children's liturgy. Rather it gives suggestions to the school administrator, teacher, parish priest or staff person on how to effect a life of prayer within our students. My congratulations to all who help make that happen by creating this worthwhile work.

Rev. Thomas Wisniewski
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Church of the Annunciation
Paramus, New Jersey



NOTEWORTHY: UPDATE

Since the review of hymnals and other participation aids that appeared in our May-June 1987 issue, a number of new resources are now on the market. Two of them seem especially worthy of mention: the *Gather* hymnal by GIA, and the *Hymnal for Catholic Students* by GIA and Liturgy Training Publications. The latter hymnal is accompanied by a *Leader's Guide* which is also reviewed in this issue.

Gather includes an impressive number of contemporary pieces by Haugen, Haas, the Thomas More Centre, the St. Louis Jesuits, the Dameans, and other sources. Seasonal and thematic selections are amply provided. Mass settings appear in a separate section, as do the psalms, canticles, and other components of the Liturgy of the Hours. GIA is especially to be congratulated for this latter accomplishment, since it allows the Hours to be translated into an idiom that will appeal to those with contemporary taste.

Gather has the usual advantage of a hymnal: a handsomely bound, permanent resource that adds a dignified touch to hymnal racks and pews formerly inhabited by paper-bound songbooks. Conversely, it has the disadvantage of being just a little *too* permanent; unless supplemented by some sort of periodic resource like *Music Issue*, it prevents the assembly and the music ministry from having access to the most current liturgical music.

Nevertheless, in terms of collections of contemporary music, *Gather* has the most varied, the most challenging, and the most liturgically and artistically sensitive resources.

The *Hymnal for Catholic Students*, published jointly by GIA and LTP, has many pluses. Its inclusion of a simple form of

Morning and Evening Prayer, its stress on the positive value of memorization, and its highlighting of the sacrament of Reconciliation are all to be applauded. The selection of songs is varied in genre and in ethnicity, surely a timely development in the multi-cultural learning situations in which our students find themselves. Seasonal music, language sensitive to the inclusion issue, and a prayer section are added bonuses in this hymnal. And, mercifully, the music is not "kid stuff"; adults working with groups of young folk will enjoy singing the music in this book.

A few minuses are to be observed, however. The illustrations seem somehow inappropriate for the mindset and emotional experience of young people. I suspect that they will not be appealing and may even cause some giggles in a classroom or church setting. The Eucharistic catechesis is disappointingly weak. While I do not believe that grade school children need to be taught the term "transubstantiation", I do believe that our catechesis must not hedge in its acknowledgement of the personal presence of the Risen Lord under the forms of bread and wine. Sacramentality is a mystery which none of us, from the most learned theologian to the simplest preschooler, can ever fully understand in cognitive terms, but this does not excuse us from proclaiming the mystery of faith. Finally, the setting of the *Benedictus* seems to depart rather widely from the sense of the text.

Overall, however, the *Hymnal for Catholic Students* is a fine resource for parish and school programs.

Sr. Marlene Milasus OSB

From the Editor

The best way to start is to introduce myself as the new editor of *Word on Worship*. I am Fr. Bob Laferrera from St. Michael's Church in Palisades Park. Before the close of 1990, Fr. Charlie Miller from the Worship Office asked me if I would assume the position of editor of *Word on Worship*. I accepted and I sincerely hope that my time as editor will be effective and helpful with all associated with *Word on Worship*.

By this time, you probably realize that it has been some time since you received *Word on Worship*. I will simply say that there have been some problems and I hope that we have cleared them at this point. In meeting with the editorial board, we decided that we would "catch up" by combining some past issues without sacrificing articles. Therefore, the next two issues of *Word on Worship* will be for

the months of May, June, July and August, September, October.

Word on Worship will also be changing its schedule. Beginning with Volume 10, we will be publishing seasonally, i.e., a fall issue, one in the winter, one in spring and an issue for the summer. The decrease in two issues will not necessarily decrease the articles, but rather facilitate the publishing.

I would be remiss in this column if I did not recognize two women who have been associated with *Word on Worship*. I would like to thank my predecessor, Carol Willis, for all the time and insight she offered to *Word on Worship*. She truly is an asset to all we try to do through *Word on Worship*. I also want to offer a sincere word of thanks on behalf of the editorial board to Sr. Judy Mertz who, after ten years of being a member of the board, has decided to step down. What she offered to *Word*

on Worship can never be said in these few words. Her guidance, her reflection and the generous contribution of her talents has been instrumental in making *Word on Worship* what it is today. We thank her for all she brought in the years she gave to *Word on Worship*.

In the near future, we are going to be offering our readers a survey, asking for your input on *Word on Worship*. We ask your help and your time so that we can make *Word on Worship* an even more effective instrument for you in your particular ministry.

I know I speak for the board when I express our wish to you and all in your ministry for all God's blessings throughout the year. May your work bear fruit for the building up of the kingdom here on earth.

Fr. Bob Laferrera
Editor

Word on Worship

Newsletter

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