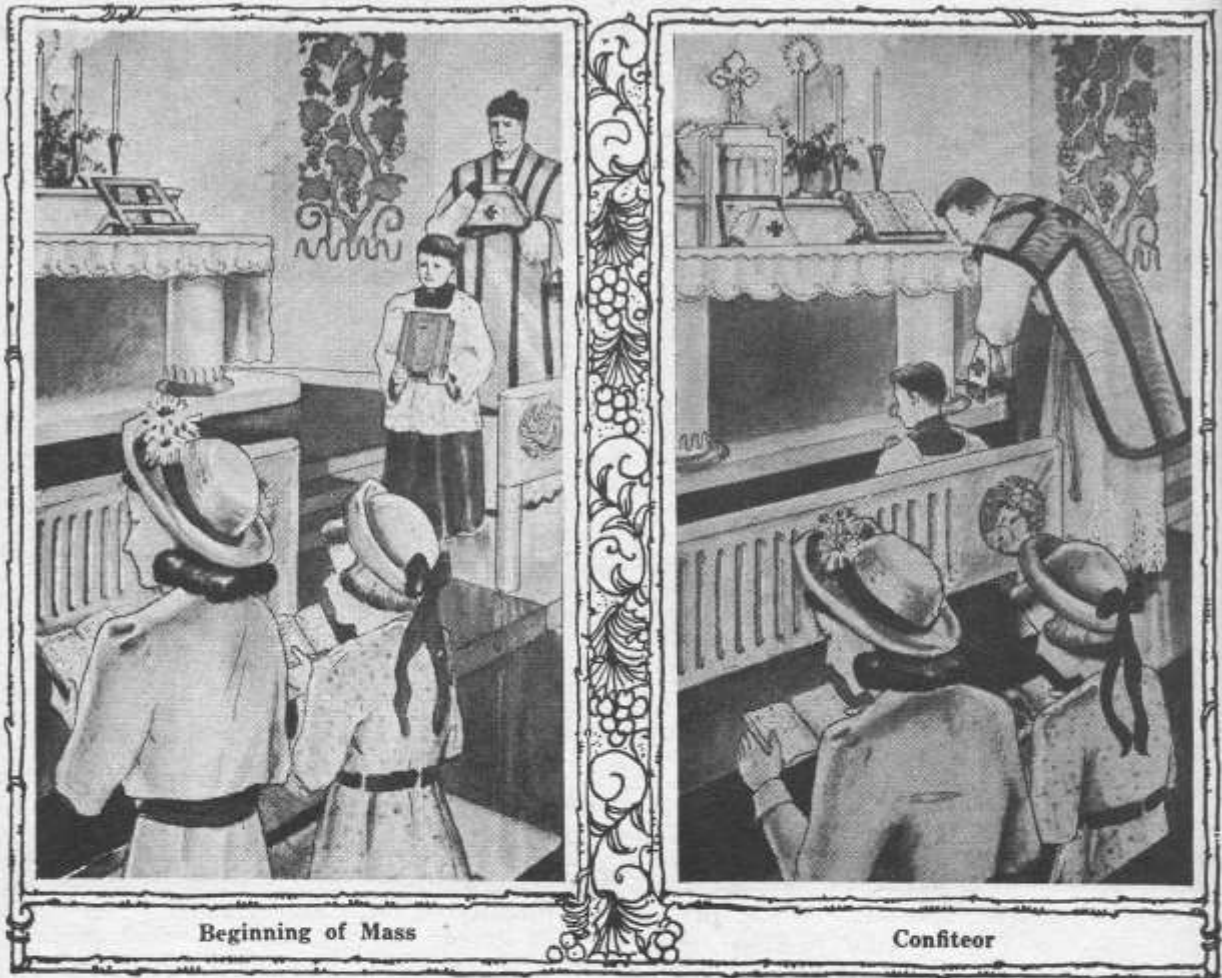


MY CATHOLIC FAITH

– The Mass, from Various Editions

(Assembled from the original editions by Griff Ruby)

1949-1954 Editions.....	1
1955-1956 Editions.....	9
1958-1960 Editions.....	17
1961 Edition.....	25
1963 Edition.....	33
1965-1966 Editions.....	41
2004 Edition.....	49
Epilogue.....	57



140. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The Beginning of Mass

As the priest enters the sanctuary, the people *stand*, out of respect for the representative of Christ. They then *kneel* for the beginning of Mass.

The priest places the covered chalice in the center of the altar, having first spread the corporal. He opens the Missal. He then goes to the foot of the altar, and *begins Mass* by making the sign of the cross.

The people should make the sign of the cross with the priest. They should direct their intention for hearing Mass. Those who come after this point are *late for Mass*.

The priest says an introductory psalm, to express his trust in God, and his awareness of his own unworthiness. The prayers said at the foot of the altar symbolize the thousands of years during which man was far from God, and longing for the Redeemer.

In Masses for the dead, and from Passion Sunday to Holy Saturday exclusively, the psalm is omitted.

The Confiteor

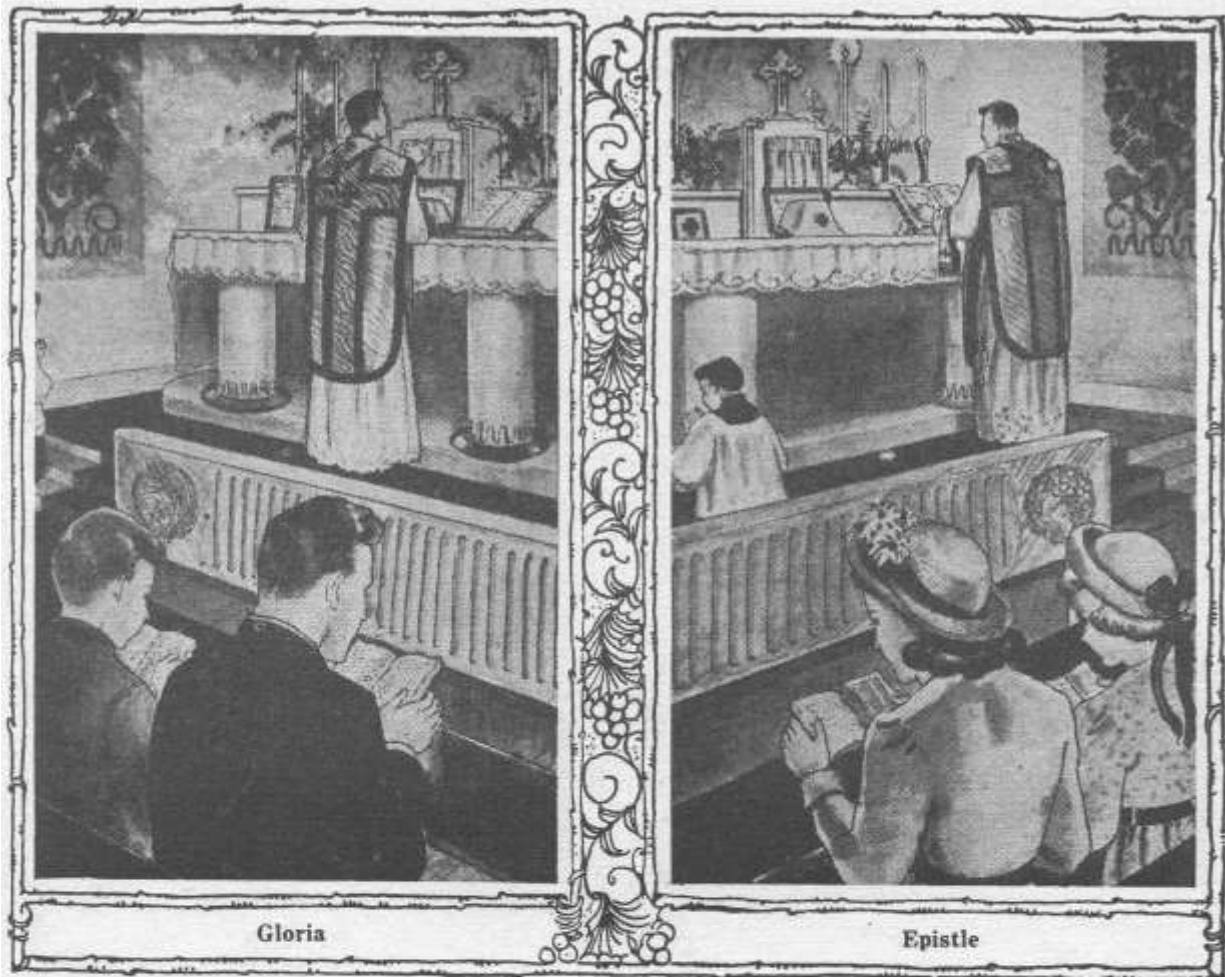
After the psalm, the priest bows and says the *Confiteor*, a confession of sin, as a preparation, an expression of humility before God. The Confiteor is repeated by the server in behalf of the people.

The priest then goes up the altar and kisses it in the place beneath which relics of some Saints are cemented in the altar stone. He goes to the right or epistle side, and reads the opening prayer. In solemn Masses, the altar is incensed.

The Introit

Originally the *Introit* was a psalm chanted by the priest and his assistants when they entered the sanctuary. Today it is reduced to a verse, the first to be read at Mass.

The Introit varies each day, as do certain other parts of the Mass, like the Collects, Epistle, Gradual, Gospel, Offertory, Secrets, Communion, and Post-communions.



Gloria

Epistle

The Kyrie

The priest goes to the center and recites the *Kyrie eleison* alternately with the server, imploring God's mercy. The prayer is repeated nine times: three in honor of God the Father, three in honor of God the Son, and three in honor of God the Holy Ghost.

The Gloria

After the Kyrie, the *Gloria* is said when the Mass requires it. It is sometimes omitted, especially during the penitential seasons, and in the Masses for the dead. At the end the priest kisses the altar.

The Gloria repeats the songs of praise of the angels on Christmas night. In high Masses the most beautiful music is heard from the choir.

The Collect

The priest goes to the epistle side and reads certain prayers, called the *Collect*. There may be more than one Collect. These prayers are recited in honor of the saint or mystery of the day, or for the intention of

the Mass. They express man's subjection to God.

At the Collect we should pray for the intention we have in hearing the Mass.

The Epistle

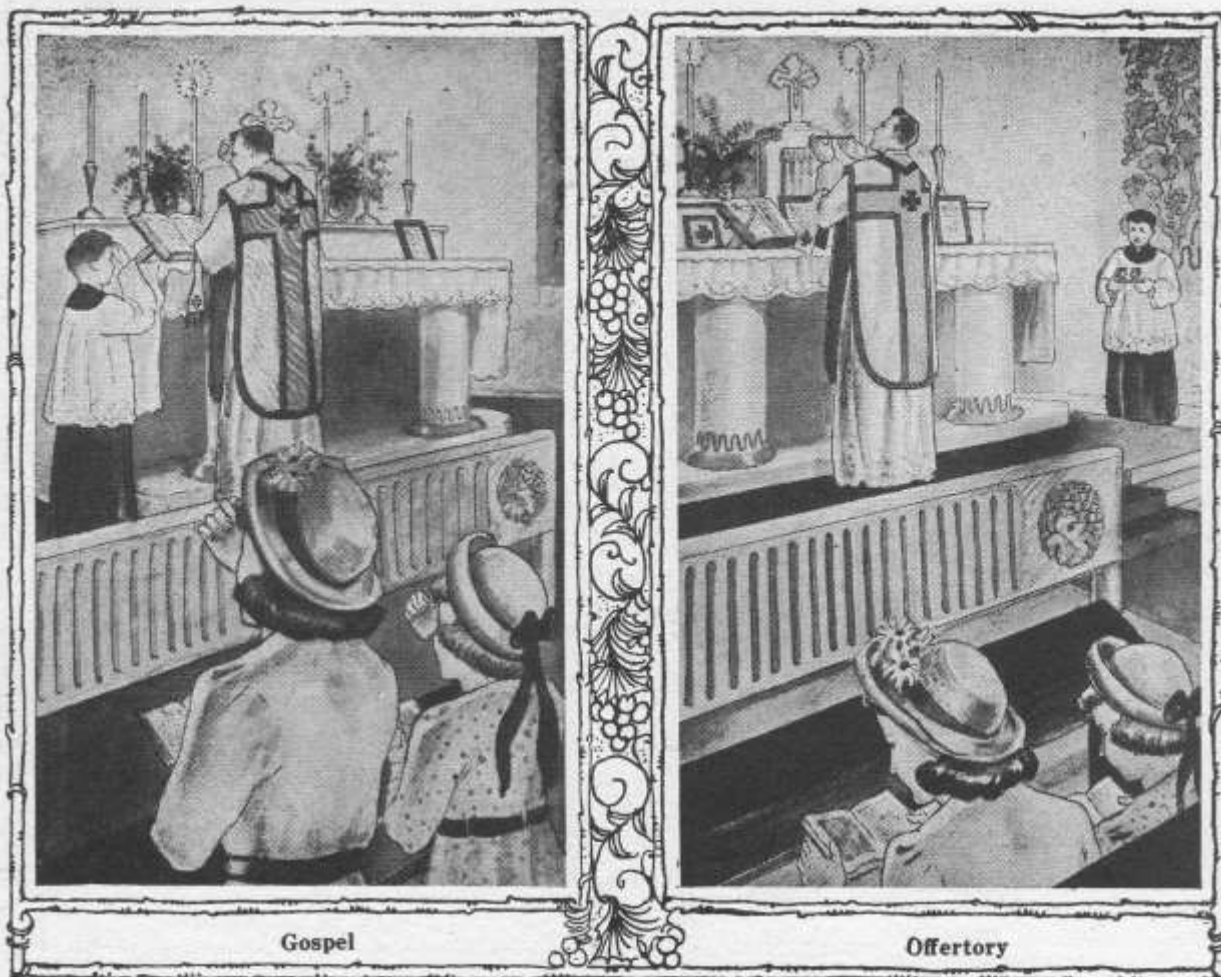
The *Epistle* or Lesson follows. It is a reading from Scripture, usually from one of St. Paul's letters. At High Mass the subdeacon sings the Epistle.

Often the Epistle is taken from the Acts of the Apostles, from Exodus, Wisdom, etc. At the end of the Epistle the server says, "*Deo Gratias*" (Thanks be to God).

The Gradual

Here follow the Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, and Sequence, all varying in accordance with the season of the ecclesiastical year. Tract and Sequence are not often said.

The Missal is then carried to the left or gospel side of the altar. This act symbolizes the passing of the faith from the Jews to the Gentiles.



Gospel

Offertory

The Gospel

The *Gospel* is taken from one of the four Evangelists. During the reading, the *people stand*, out of reverence for the word of God. The priest begins the reading by crossing himself on the forehead, lips, and breast.

The *people do the same*, to show they believe the Gospel, will always profess it, and will ever love it. At High Mass the Deacon sings the Gospel.

The Credo

After the Gospel the priest on Sundays and holydays of obligation usually preaches a sermon. Often it is an explanation of the Gospel read.

The priest goes to the middle of the altar and recites the *Nicene Creed* or *Credo*. This is not said at all Masses.

At the words, "*Et incarnatus est* (And was made man)", the people genuflect with the priest, in memory of Our Lord's Incarnation. The people may sit down after the Credo.

The Offertory

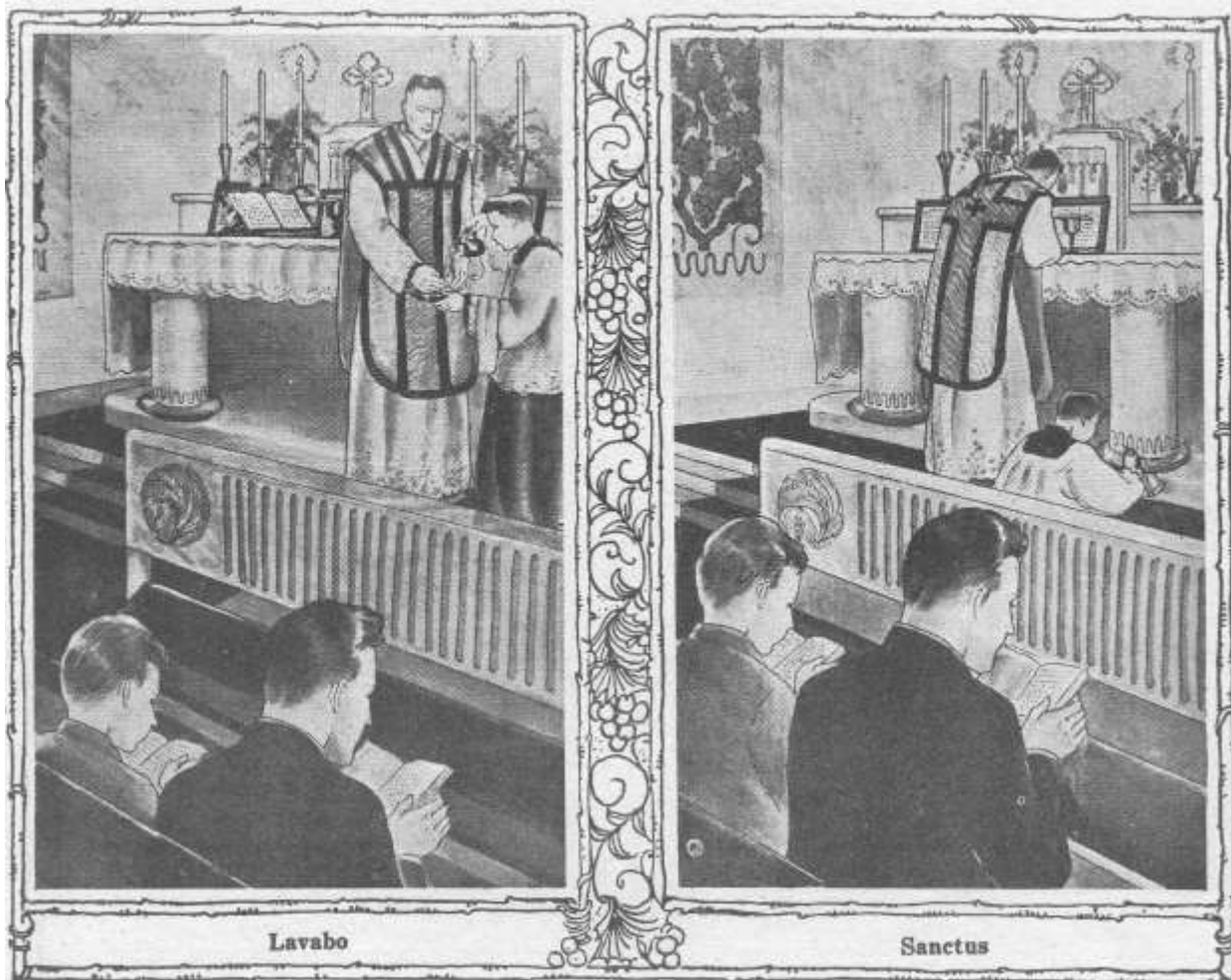
The *Offertory* begins with the Offertory prayer; then the priest uncovers the chalice.

The Offertory is the first of the *three principal* parts of the Mass. It represents Our Lord's preparation for His Passion, and His willingness to surrender His life. The people should *unite themselves* with the priest in making this offering. They should also *offer themselves* and all they have to God. Those who come after this point have *missed Mass*, and must stay to hear another.

The Offertory consists of two parts: the *offering of the bread* and the *offering of the wine*. The priest offers the bread on the paten, and the wine in the chalice.

Water is mixed with the wine because Christ did so at the Last Supper.

In offering the chalice, the priest says: "We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, beseeching Thy clemency, that it may ascend before Thy divine Majesty as a sweet savor for our salvation and for that of the whole world. Amen."



Lavabo

Sanctus

The Lavabo and Orate Fratres

After the Offertory, the priest washes his fingers, as a mark of the purity of body and soul that is required for the Holy Sacrifice. This is the *Lavabo*.

The priest turns towards the people, extends and joins his hands, and audibly invites them to pray, saying: "*Orate fratres*" (Pray, brethren). The server makes the reply for the people.

The Secret

The priest recites one or more prayers forming the Secret. They are prayers of petition, similar to the Collect.

At the end is said or sung in audible tones: "*Per omnia saecula saeculorum*" (forever and ever).

The Preface and Sanctus

The Preface is a prayer of thanksgiving, varying with the day and season.

The prayer ends with the *Sanctus*. This part is indicated by the ringing of the bell three times. The people *kneel*. The priest joins his hands and bows as he says the Sanctus.

The Sanctus represents the entry of Christ in Jerusalem. The people ought to unite themselves with the angels who hail with praises the coming of the Son of God, soon to descend on the altar.

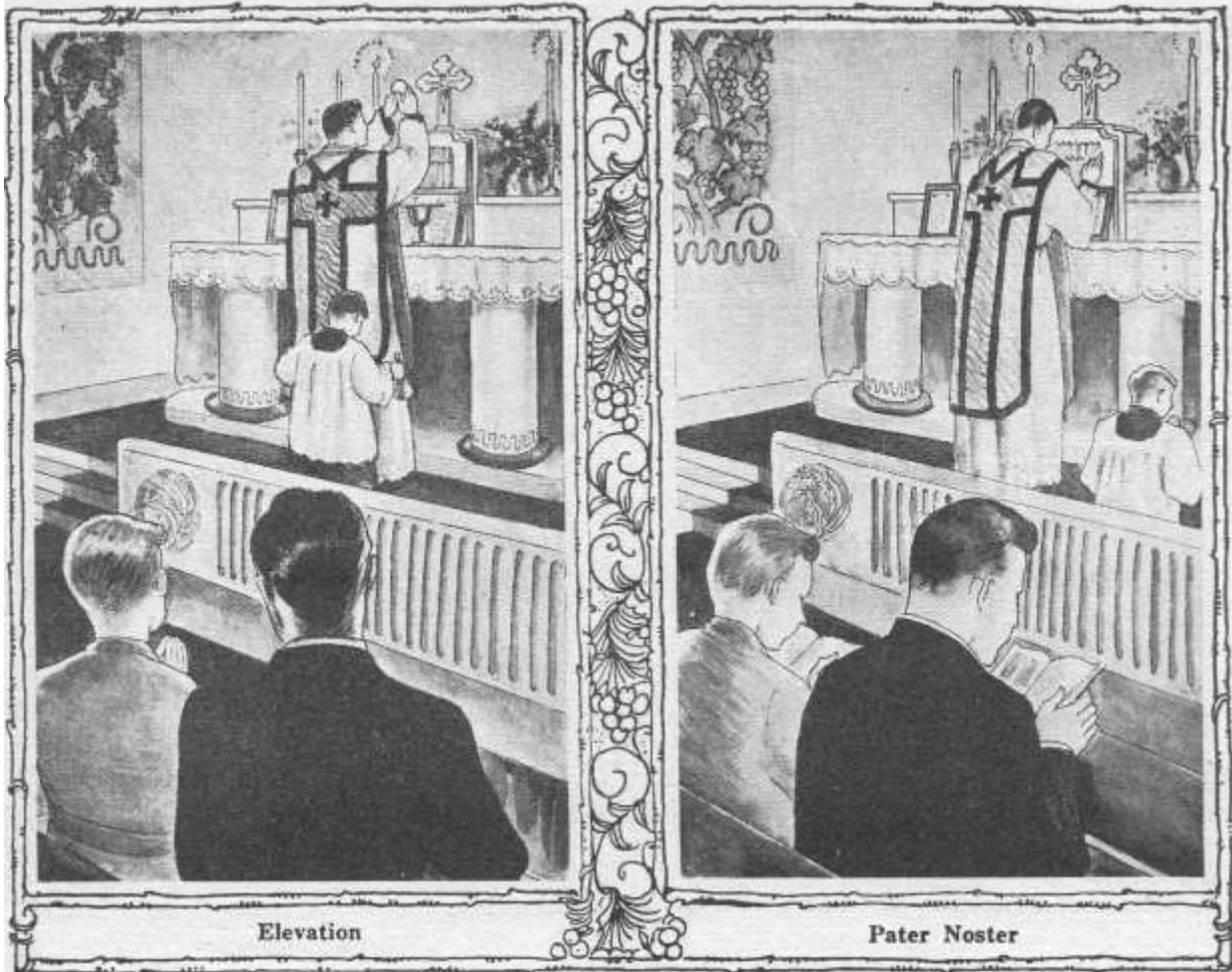
The Canon of the Mass

The *Canon*, or most solemn part of the Mass, follows. A remembrance is made for the Church, the Holy Father, the Bishop of the place, and the faithful. The Pope and the Bishop are mentioned by their first names. The *Memento*, or prayer for the living, is said. This represents too the prayer of Christ for the Church at the Last Supper. The assistance of the saints is invoked.

Thus the Church militant and triumphant are united to honor God.

The priest crosses the oblation of bread and wine five times, in honor of the Five Wounds.

The people should recollect themselves in preparation for the consecration.



Elevation

Pater Noster

The Consecration

The **Consecration** is the principal part of the Mass. The words of Christ Himself are spoken over the bread and wine, the same words He used when He instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper.

By them the bread and wine are changed into the living Body and Blood of the Son of God. The bell is rung.

After adoring, the priest elevates first the Host, then the chalice, for the *people to adore*: The **Elevation** commemorates the lifting up of Our Lord on the Cross, when on Calvary He gave up his life in sacrifice.

At the Elevation the people should look upon the Host and chalice and say, "*My Lord and my God,*" then bow their heads and adore. Everyone should be perfectly silent, to welcome and honor with devotion the coming of the King of Kings.

Immediately after the consecration we should make to God the Father an *act of offering* of His Divine Son. We have a worthy gift to offer to God, Christ Himself.

The Commemoration of the Dead

For the souls in Purgatory the priest then prays, remaining silent while he pleads for certain special souls. Then follows a prayer for those present, beginning with the words audibly said, "*Nobis quoque peccatoribus*" (To us also, sinners).

The Pater Noster

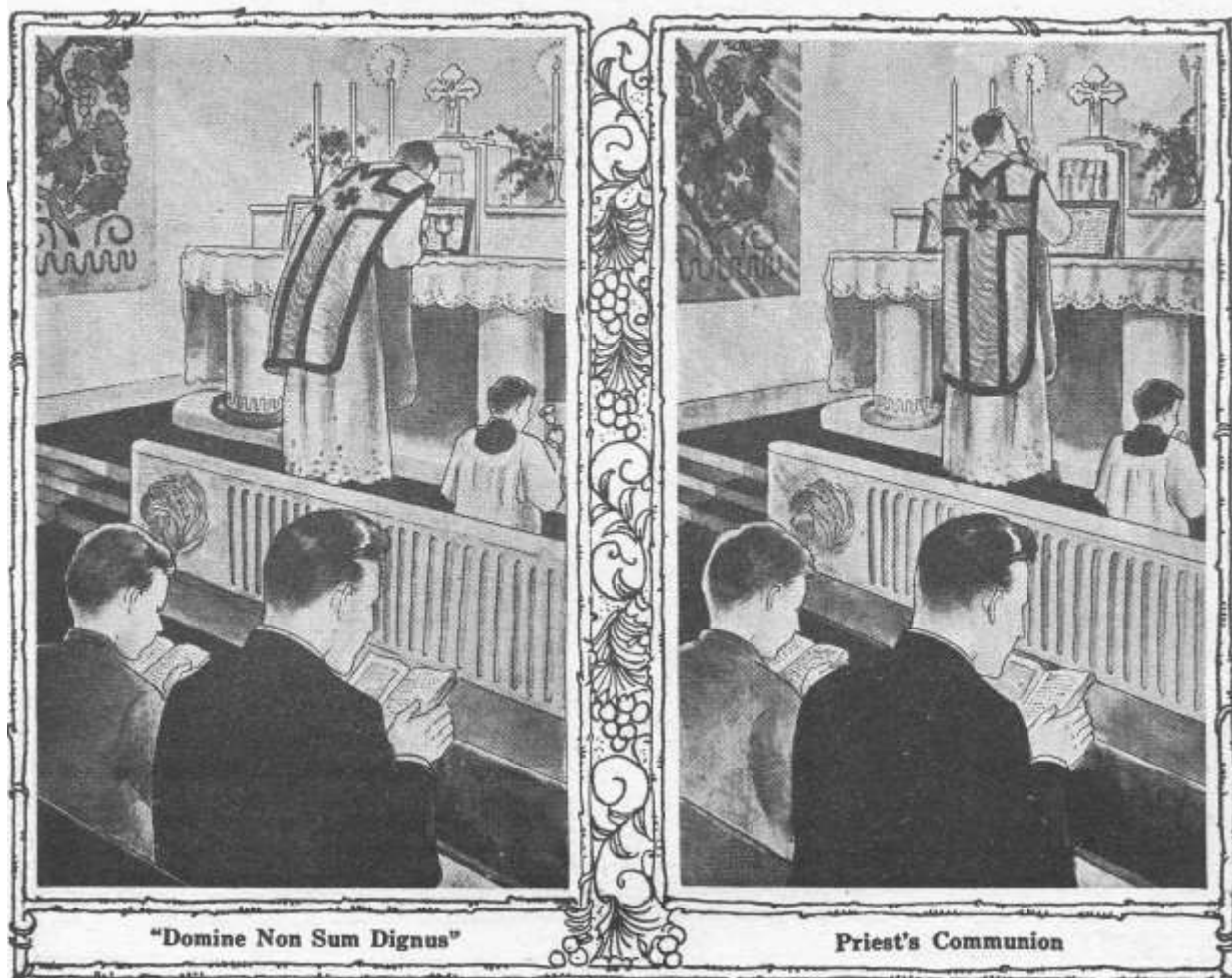
The priest recites the **Pater Noster** (Our Father), the prayer taught by Christ Himself. In high Masses, the people stand at the Pater Noster. Then the Priest, breaking the Host in two, puts a small particle of It into the chalice, while he says a prayer.

This breaking symbolizes the death of Christ.

The Agnus Dei

The **Agnus Dei** is then said, the priest striking his breast three times in sign of humility and penance: "*Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.*"

At High Masses the Kiss of Peace is given.



"Domine Non Sum Dignus"

Priest's Communion

The Communion

After several prayers of preparation, the sanctuary bell is rung, and the priest gives himself **Communion**. He receives the Body of Christ, saying: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting. Amen."

The priest meditates, then uncovers the chalice, genuflects, and says: "What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has rendered unto me? I will take the chalice of salvation" etc. He then receives the Precious Blood, saying, "The Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting. Amen".

The Communion is the *third principal part* of Mass, and ends the actual sacrifice. It represents the burial of Christ.

If there are any to receive Communion, the server says the Confiteor in their name. Those who do not communicate should make a *spiritual communion*.

If there are no communicants, the people may sit down after the priest's Communion.

Communion of the People

The priest absolves and blesses the people. He takes the ciborium and elevates a small Host in the sight of all, saying, "*Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world!*" He repeats three times the prayer of the centurion to Christ, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed."

He makes the sign of the cross with the Host over each communicant, and says to him: "*May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul unto life everlasting. Amen.*"

After administering Holy Communion to the people, the priest returns to the altar.

The priest takes the **Ablution**; that is, he drinks wine and water that are poured into the chalice.

The priest dries the inside of the chalice; folding the corporal, he places it on the chalice as at the beginning of Mass.



The Postcommunion

Going to the Epistle side, the priest reads the **Communion** prayer, termed thus because in early days it was sung by the choir while the people received Holy Communion.

At the center again, the priest turns to the people and says, "*Dominus vobiscum*" (The Lord be with you), being answered by the server, "*Et cum spiritu tuo*" (And with thy spirit).

Once more at the Epistle side, the priest reads the **Postcommunion** prayers, petitions to God read or sung like the Collects. At the middle he faces the people and once more says: "*Dominus vobiscum.*"

These greetings are in commemoration of Christ's two appearances to the Apostles immediately after His resurrection.

The Blessing

The priest turns to the people and says: "*Ite, Missa est* (Go, the Mass is ended)."

These words of dismissal represent Christ's Ascen-

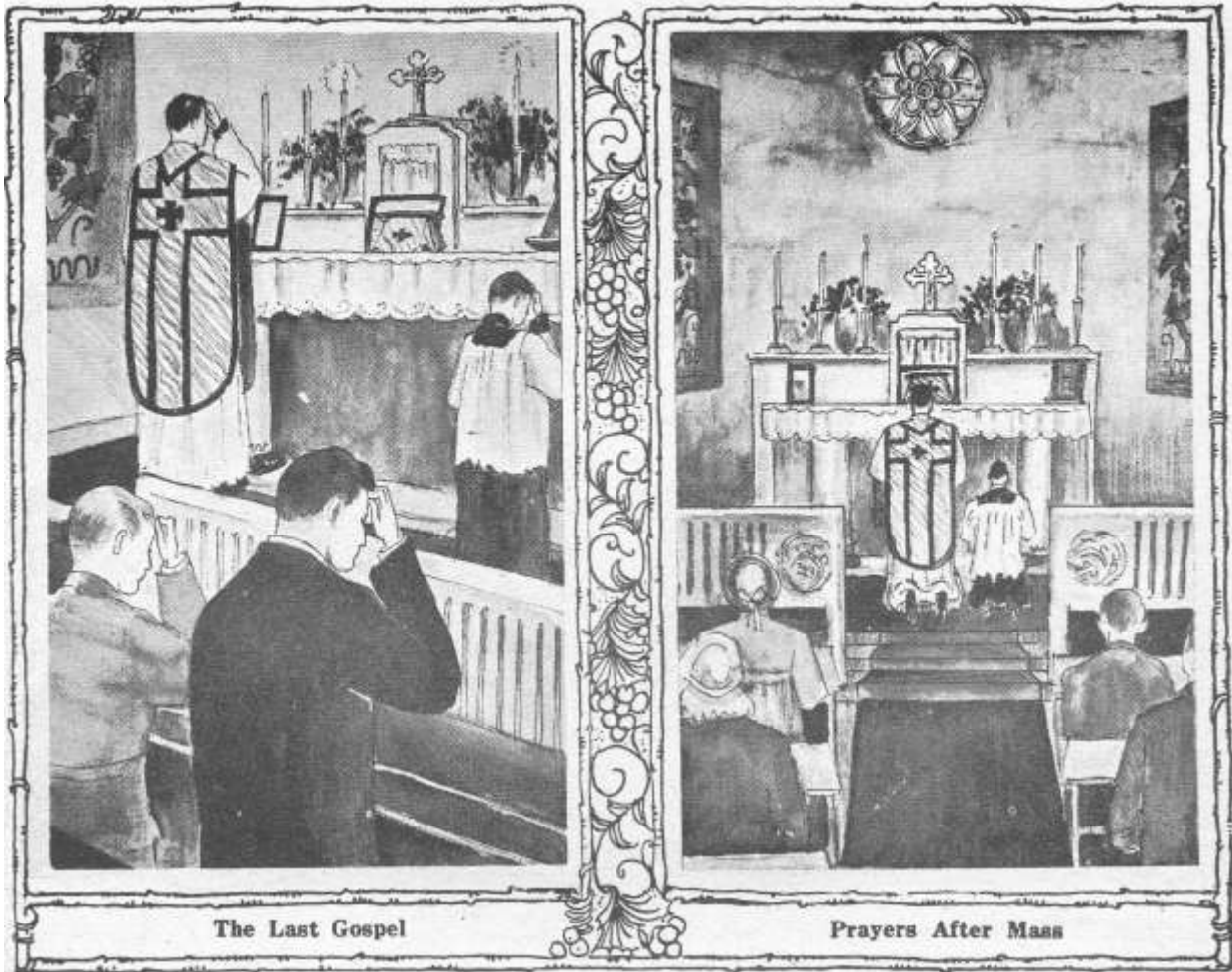
sion, when He sent His Apostles forth to evangelize the world. These words are varied for different occasions. If the *Gloria* has not been said, the words used here are: "*Benedicamus Domino* (Let us bless the Lord)." In Masses for the dead the words are: "*Requiescant in pace* (May they rest in peace)." In Easter week the words *alleluia, alleluia, alleluia*, are added.

But even with the priest's formal words of dismissal, the people must not leave; the Mass is not yet ended. There is a short prayer to the Blessed Trinity, offering devotion and homage.

Then the priest kisses the altar, extends, raises, and joins his hands, bows his head, and gives the people the blessing, saying, "May almighty God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless you."

The people kneel and make the sign of the cross as the priest **blesses** them. A bishop makes three signs of the cross when he blesses at Mass.

At Masses for the dead there is *no blessing*, to show that the Church does not have the same jurisdiction over the dead as over the living.



The Last Gospel

Prayers After Mass

The Last Gospel

The priest turns to the left side to read the *Last Gospel*, which is taken from the opening words of the Gospel of St. John. The *people stand* and make three signs of the cross with the priest, on the forehead, lips, and breast. They *genuflect* with the priest at the words: "And the Word was made Flesh," in honor of Christ's Incarnation.

Sometimes another Gospel is read instead. The Last Gospel represents the propagation of the word of God throughout the world after the descent of the Holy Ghost.

At the end of the Last Gospel the *people kneel*. Mass is ended with the words: "*Deo gratias*" (Thanks be to God).

A *votive Mass* is one said in honor of some particular mystery or saint, on a day not set apart by the Church for the commemoration of that mystery or saint.

Prayers After Mass

Thus in one-half hour, the time required for an ordinary low Mass, the principal events of Our Lord's life are represented, as well as the chief doctrines of His Church.

In the course of the Mass, the celebrant observes not less than 500 ceremonies, such as bowing, striking the breast, and making the sign of the cross. These ceremonies aim not only to give honor to God, but also to impress upon the faithful the sublimity of the Holy Sacrifice.

After most low Masses, the priest kneels at the foot of the altar and recites some *prescribed prayers* with the people.

All should make the proper responses. No one should leave before the priest. Everybody should *stand* when the priest leaves the sanctuary.

No requiem Mass is permitted on great feasts, for our private sorrows must not take precedence over the joy that should reign over the whole Church on such days.





BEGINNING OF MASS



CONFITEOR

140. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The Beginning of Mass

As the priest enters the sanctuary, the people *stand*, out of respect for the representative of Christ. They then *kneel* for the beginning of Mass.

The priest places the covered chalice on the center of the altar, having first spread the corporal. He opens the Missal. He then goes to the foot of the altar, and **begins Mass** by making the sign of the cross.

The people should make the sign of the cross with the priest. They should direct their intention for hearing Mass. Those who come after this point are *late for Mass*.

The priest says an introductory psalm, to express his trust in God, and his awareness of his own unworthiness. The prayers said at the foot of the altar symbolize the thousands of years during which man was far from God, and longing for the Redeemer.

In Masses for the dead, and from Passion Sunday to Holy Saturday exclusively, the psalm is omitted.

The Confiteor

After the psalm, the priest bows and says the **Confiteor**, a confession of sin, as a preparation, an expression of humility before God. The Confiteor is repeated by the server in behalf of the people.

The priest then goes up the altar and kisses it in the place beneath which relics of some Saints are cemented in the altar stone. He goes to the right or epistle side, and reads the opening prayer. In solemn Masses, the altar is incensed.

The Introit

Originally the **Introit** was a psalm chanted by the priest and his assistants when they entered the sanctuary. Today it is reduced to a verse, the first to be read at Mass.

The Introit varies each day, as do certain other parts of the Mass, like the Collects, Epistle, Gradual, Gospel, Offertory, Secrets, Communion, and Post-communions.



GLORIA



EPISTLE

The Kyrie

The priest goes to the center and recites the *Kyrie eleison* alternately with the server, imploring God's mercy. The prayer is repeated nine times: three in honor of God the Father, three in honor of God the Son, and three in honor of God the Holy Ghost.

The Gloria

After the Kyrie, the *Gloria* is said when the Mass requires it. It is sometimes omitted, especially during the penitential seasons, and in the Masses for the dead. At the end the priest kisses the altar.

The Gloria repeats the songs of praise of the angels on Christmas night. In high Masses the most beautiful music is heard from the choir.

The Collect

The priest goes to the epistle side and reads certain prayers, called the *Collect*. There may be more than one Collect. These prayers are recited in honor of the saint or mystery of the day, or for the intention of

the Mass. They express man's subjection to God.

At the Collect we should pray for the intention we have in hearing the Mass.

The Epistle

The *Epistle* or Lesson follows. It is a reading from Scripture, usually from one of St. Paul's letters. At High Mass the subdeacon sings the Epistle.

Often the Epistle is taken from the Acts of the Apostles, from Exodus, Wisdom, etc. At the end of the Epistle the server says, "*Deo Gratias*" (Thanks be to God).

The Gradual

Here follow the Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, and Sequence, all varying in accordance with the season of the ecclesiastical year. Tract and Sequence are not often said.

The Missal is then carried to the left or gospel side of the altar. This act symbolizes the passing of the faith from the Jews to the Gentiles.



GOSPEL

The Gospel

The *Gospel* is taken from one of the four Evangelists. During the reading, the *people stand*, out of reverence for the word of God. The priest begins the reading by crossing himself on the forehead, lips, and breast.

The *people do the same*, to show they believe the Gospel, will always profess it, and will ever love it. At High Mass the Deacon sings the Gospel.

The Credo

After the Gospel the priest on Sundays and holydays of obligation usually preaches a sermon. Often it is an explanation of the Gospel read.

The priest goes to the middle of the altar and recites the *Nicene Creed* or *Credo*. This is not said at all Masses.

At the words, "*Et incarnatus est* (And was made man)", the people genuflect with the priest, in memory of Our Lord's Incarnation. The people may sit down after the Credo.



OFFERTORY

The Offertory

The *Offertory* begins with the Offertory prayer; then the priest uncovers the chalice.

The Offertory is the first of the *three principal* parts of the Mass. It represents Our Lord's preparation for His Passion, and His willingness to surrender His life. The people should *unite themselves* with the priest in making this offering. They should also *offer* themselves and all they have to God. Those who come after this point have *missed Mass*, and must stay to hear another.

The Offertory consists of two parts: the *offering of the bread* and the *offering of the wine*. The priest offers the bread on the paten, and the wine in the chalice.

Water is mixed with the wine because Christ did so at the Last Supper.

In offering the chalice, the priest says: "We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, beseeching Thy clemency, that it may ascend before Thy divine Majesty as a sweet savor for our salvation and for that of the whole world. Amen."



LAVABO

The Lavabo and Orate Fratres

After the Offertory, the priest washes his fingers, as a mark of the purity of body and soul that is required for the Holy Sacrifice. This is the *Lavabo*.

The priest turns towards the people, extends and joins his hands, and audibly invites them to pray, saying: "*Orate fratres*" (Pray, brethren). The server makes the reply for the people.

The Secret

The priest recites one or more prayers forming the Secret. They are prayers of petition, similar to the Collect.

At the end is said or sung in audible tones: "*Per omnia saecula saeculorum*" (forever and ever).

The Preface and Sanctus

The Preface is a prayer of thanksgiving, varying with the day and season.

The prayer ends with the *Sanctus*. This part is indicated by the ringing of the bell three times. The people *kneel*. The priest joins his hands and bows as he says the Sanctus.



SANCTUS

The Sanctus represents the entry of Christ in Jerusalem. The people ought to unite themselves with the angels who hail with praises the coming of the Son of God, soon to descend on the altar.

The Canon of the Mass

The *Canon*, or most solemn part of the Mass, follows. A remembrance is made for the Church, the Holy Father, the Bishop of the place, and the faithful. The Pope and the Bishop are mentioned by their first names. The *Memento*, or prayer for the living, is said. This represents too the prayer of Christ for the Church at the Last Supper. The assistance of the saints is invoked.

Thus the Church militant and triumphant are united to honor God.

The priest crosses the oblation of bread and wine five times, in honor of the Five Wounds.

The people should recollect themselves in preparation for the consecration.



ELEVATION

The Consecration

The *Consecration* is the principal part of the Mass. The words of Christ Himself are spoken over the bread and wine, the same words He used when He instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper.

By them the bread and wine are changed into the living Body and Blood of the Son of God. The bell is rung.

After adoring, the priest elevates first the Host, then the chalice, for the *people to adore*. The *Elevation* commemorates the lifting up of Our Lord on the Cross, when on Calvary He gave up his life in sacrifice.

At the Elevation the people should look upon the Host and chalice and say, "My Lord and my God," then bow their heads and adore. Everyone should be perfectly silent, to welcome and honor with devotion the coming of the King of Kings.

Immediately after the consecration we should make to God the Father an *act of offering* of His Divine Son. We have a worthy gift to offer to God, Christ Himself.



PATER NOSTER

The Commemoration of the Dead

For the souls in Purgatory the priest then prays, remaining silent while he pleads for certain special souls. Then follows a prayer for those present, beginning with the words audibly said, "*Nobis quoque peccatoribus*" (To us also, sinners).

The Pater Noster

The priest recites the *Pater Noster* (Our Father), the prayer taught by Christ Himself. In high Masses, the people stand at the Pater Noster. Then the Priest, breaking the Host in two, puts a small particle of It into the chalice, while he says a prayer.

This breaking symbolizes the death of Christ.

The Agnus Dei

The *Agnus Dei* is then said, the priest striking his breast three times in sign of humility and penance: "*Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.*"

At High Masses the Kiss of Peace is given.



"DOMINE NON SUM DIGNUS"

The Communion

After several prayers of preparation, the sanctuary bell is rung, and the priest gives himself **Communion**. He receives the Body of Christ, saying: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting, Amen."

The priest meditates, then uncovers the chalice, genuflects, and says: "What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has rendered unto me? I will take the chalice of salvation" etc. He then receives the Precious Blood, saying, "The Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting, Amen".

The Communion is the *third principal part* of Mass, and ends the actual sacrifice. It represents the burial of Christ.

If there are any to receive Communion, the server says the Confiteor in their name. Those who do not communicate should make a *spiritual communion*.

If there are no communicants, the people may *sit down* after the priest's Communion.



PRIEST'S COMMUNION

Communion of the People

The priest absolves and blesses the people. He takes the ciborium and elevates a small Host in the sight of all, saying, "*Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world!*" He repeats three times the prayer of the centurion to Christ, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed."

He makes the sign of the cross with the Host over each communicant, and says to him: "*May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul unto life everlasting, Amen.*"

After administering Holy Communion to the people, the priest returns to the altar.

The priest takes the **Ablution**; that is, he drinks wine and water that are poured into the chalice.

The priest dries the inside of the chalice; folding the corporal, he places it on the chalice as at the beginning of Mass.



The Postcommunion

Going to the Epistle side, the priest reads the **Communion** prayer, termed thus because in early days it was sung by the choir while the people received Holy Communion.

At the center again, the priest turns to the people and says, "*Dominus vobiscum*" (The Lord be with you), being answered by the server, "*Et cum spiritu tuo*" (And with thy spirit).

Once more at the Epistle side, the priest reads the **Postcommunion** prayers, petitions to God read or sung like the Collects. At the middle he faces the people and once more says: "*Dominus vobiscum*."

These greetings are in commemoration of Christ's two appearances to the Apostles immediately after His resurrection.

The Blessing

The priest turns to the people and says: "*Ite, Missa est* (Go, the Mass is ended)."

These words of dismissal represent Christ's Ascen-



sion, when He sent His Apostles forth to evangelize the world. These words are varied for different occasions. If the *Gloria* has not been said, the words used here are: "*Benedicamus Domino* (Let us bless the Lord)." In Masses for the dead the words are: "*Requiescant in pace* (May they rest in peace)." In Easter week the words *alleluia, alleluia, alleluia*, are added.

But even with the priest's formal words of dismissal, the people must not leave; the Mass is not yet ended. There is a short prayer to the Blessed Trinity, offering devotion and homage.

Then the priest kisses the altar, extends, raises, and joins his hands, bows his head, and gives the people the blessing, saying, "May almighty God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless you."

The people kneel and make the sign of the cross as the priest **blesses** them. A bishop makes three signs of the cross when he blesses at Mass.

At Masses for the dead there is *no blessing*, to show that the Church does not have the same jurisdiction over the dead as over the living.



THE LAST GOSPEL

The Last Gospel

The priest turns to the left side to read the *Last Gospel*, which is taken from the opening words of the Gospel of St. John. The *people stand* and make three signs of the cross with the priest, on the forehead, lips, and breast. They *genustect* with the priest at the words: "And the Word was made Flesh," in honor of Christ's Incarnation.

Sometimes another Gospel is read instead. The Last Gospel represents the propagation of the word of God throughout the world after the descent of the Holy Ghost.

At the end of the Last Gospel the *people kneel*. Mass is ended with the words: "*Deo gratias*" (Thanks be to God).

A *votive Mass* is one said in honor of some particular mystery or saint, on a day not set apart by the Church for the commemoration of that mystery or saint.



PRAYERS AFTER MASS

Prayers After Mass

Thus in one-half hour, the time required for an ordinary low Mass, the principal events of Our Lord's life are represented, as well as the chief doctrines of His Church.

In the course of the Mass, the celebrant observes not less than 500 ceremonies, such as bowing, striking the breast, and making the sign of the cross. These ceremonies aim not only to give honor to God, but also to impress upon the faithful the sublimity of the Holy Sacrifice.

After most low Masses, the priest kneels at the foot of the altar and recites some *prescribed prayers* with the people.

All should make the proper responses. No one should leave before the priest. Everybody should stand when the priest leaves the sanctuary.

No requiem Mass is permitted on great feasts, for our private sorrows must not take precedence over the joy that should reign over the whole Church on such days.





BEGINNING OF MASS



CONFITEOR

143. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The Beginning of Mass

As the priest enters the sanctuary, the people *stand*, out of respect for the representative of Christ. They then *kneel* for the beginning of Mass.

The priest places the covered chalice on the center of the altar, having first spread the corporal. He opens the Missal. He then goes to the foot of the altar, and *begins Mass* by making the sign of the cross.

The people should make the sign of the cross with the priest. They should direct their intention for offering Mass. Those who come after this point are *late for Mass*.

The priest says an introductory psalm, to express his trust in God, and his awareness of his own unworthiness. The prayers said at the foot of the altar symbolize the thousands of years during which man was far from God, and longing for the Redeemer.

In Masses for the dead, and from Passion Sunday to Easter Sunday, exclusively, this psalm 42 is omitted.

The Confiteor

After the psalm, the priest bows and says the *Confiteor*, a confession of sin, as a preparation, an expression of humility before God. The Confiteor is repeated by the server in behalf of the people.

The priest then goes up the altar and kisses it in the place beneath which relics of some Saints are cemented in the altar stone. He goes to the right or epistle side, and reads the opening prayer. In solemn Masses, the altar is incensed.

The Introit

Originally the *Introit* was a psalm chanted by the priest and his assistants when they entered the sanctuary. Today it is reduced to a verse, the first to be read at Mass.

The Introit varies each day, as do certain other parts of the Mass, like the Collects, Epistle, Gradual, Gospel, Offertory, Secrets, Communion, and Post-communions.



GLORIA

The Kyrie

The priest goes to the center and recites the *Kyrie eleison* alternately with the server, imploring God's mercy. The prayer is repeated nine times: three in honor of God the Father, three in honor of God the Son, and three in honor of God the Holy Ghost.

The Gloria

After the Kyrie, the *Gloria* is said when the Mass requires it. It is sometimes omitted, especially during the penitential seasons, and in the Masses for the dead. At the end the priest kisses the altar.

The Gloria repeats the songs of praise of the angels on Christmas night. In high Masses the Gloria is sung.

The Collect

The priest goes to the epistle side and reads certain prayers, called the *Collect*. There may be more than one Collect. These prayers are recited in honor of the saint or mystery of the day, or for the intention of



EPISTLE

the Mass. They express man's subjection to God. They are never more than three.

At the Collect we should pray for the intention we have in offering the Mass.

The Epistle

The *Epistle* or Lesson follows. It is a reading from Holy Scripture, as from one of St. Paul's letters. At High Mass the subdeacon sings the Epistle.

Often the Epistle is taken from the Acts of the Apostles, from Exodus, Wisdom, etc. At the end of the Epistle the server says, "*Deo Gratias*" (Thanks be to God).

The Gradual

Here follow the Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, and Sequence, all varying in accordance with the season of the ecclesiastical year. Tract and Sequence are not often said.

The Missal is then carried to the left or gospel side of the altar. This act symbolizes the passing of the faith from the Jews to the Gentiles.



GOSPEL

The Gospel

The *Gospel* is taken from one of the four Evangelists. During the reading, the *people stand*, out of reverence for the word of God. The priest begins the reading by crossing himself on the forehead, lips, and breast.

The *people do the same*, to show they believe the Gospel, will always profess it, and will ever love it. At High Mass the Deacon sings the Gospel.

The Credo

After the Gospel the priest on Sundays and holydays of obligation usually preaches a sermon. Often it is an explanation of the Gospel read.

The priest goes to the middle of the altar and recites the *Nicene Creed* or *Credo*. This is not said at all Masses.

At the words, "*Et incarnatus est* (And was made man)", the people genuflect with the priest, in memory of Our Lord's Incarnation. The people may sit down after the Credo.



OFFERTORY

The Offertory

The *Offertory* begins with the Offertory prayer; then the priest uncovers the chalice.

The Offertory is the first of the *three principal* parts of the Mass. It represents Our Lord's preparation for His Passion, and His willingness to surrender His life. The people should *unite themselves* with the priest in making this offering. They should also *offer* themselves and all they have to God. Those who come after this point have *missed Mass*, and must stay to hear another.

The Offertory consists of two parts: the *offering of the bread* and the *offering of the wine*. The priest offers the bread on the paten, and the wine in the chalice.

Water is mixed with the wine because Christ did so at the Last Supper.

In offering the chalice, the priest says: "We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, beseeching Thy clemency, that it may ascend before Thy divine Majesty as a sweet savor for our salvation and for that of the whole world. Amen."



LAVABO

The Lavabo and Orate Fratres

After the Offertory, the priest washes his fingers, as a mark of the purity of body and soul that is required for the Holy Sacrifice. This is the *Lavabo*.

The priest turns towards the people, extends and joins his hands, and audibly invites them to pray, saying: "*Orate fratres*" (Pray, brethren). The server makes the reply for the people.

The Secret

The priest recites one or more prayers forming the Secret. They are prayers of petition, similar to the Collect.

At the end is said or sung in audible tones: "*Per omnia saecula saeculorum*" (forever and ever).

The Preface and Sanctus

The Preface is a prayer of thanksgiving, varying with the day and season.

The prayer ends with the *Sanctus*. This part is indicated by the ringing of the bell three times. The people *kneel*. The priest joins his hands and bows as he says the Sanctus.



SANCTUS

The Sanctus represents the entry of Christ in Jerusalem. The people ought to unite themselves with the angels who hail with praises the coming of the Son of God, soon to descend on the altar.

The Canon of the Mass

The *Canon*, or most solemn part of the Mass, follows. A remembrance is made for the Church, the Holy Father, the Bishop of the place, and the faithful. The Pope and the Bishop are mentioned by their first names. The *Memento*, or prayer for the living, is said. This represents too the prayer of Christ for the Church at the Last Supper. The assistance of the saints is invoked.

Thus the Church militant and the Church triumphant are united to honor God.

The priest crosses the oblation of bread and wine five times, in honor of the Five Wounds.

The people should recollect themselves in preparation for the consecration.



ELEVATION

The Consecration

The **Consecration** is the principal part of the Mass. The words of Christ Himself are spoken over the bread and wine, the same words He used when He instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper.

By them the bread and wine are changed into the living Body and Blood of the Son of God. The bell is rung.

After adoring, the priest elevates first the Host, then the chalice, for the *people to adore*. The **Elevation** commemorates the lifting up of Our Lord on the Cross, when on Calvary He gave up his life in sacrifice.

At the Elevation the people should look upon the Host and chalice and say, "My Lord and my God," then bow their heads and adore. Everyone should be perfectly silent, to welcome and honor with devotion the coming of the King of Kings.

Immediately after the consecration we should make to God the Father an *act of offering* of His Divine Son. We have a worthy gift to offer to God, Christ Himself.



PATER NOSTER

The Commemoration of the Dead

For the souls in Purgatory the priest then prays, remaining silent while he pleads for certain special souls. Then follows a prayer for those present, beginning with the words audibly said, "*Nobis quoque peccatoribus*" (To us also, sinners).

The Pater Noster

The priest recites the **Pater Noster** (Our Father), the prayer taught by Christ Himself. In high Masses, the people stand at the Pater Noster. Then the Priest, breaking the Host in two, puts a small particle of It into the chalice, while he says a prayer.

This breaking symbolizes the death of Christ.

The Agnus Dei

The **Agnus Dei** is then said, the priest striking his breast three times in sign of humility and penance: "*Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.*"

At High Masses the Kiss of Peace is given.



"DOMINE NON SUM DIGNUS"

The Communion

After several prayers of preparation, the sanctuary bell is rung, and the priest gives himself **Communion**. He receives the Body of Christ, saying: "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting. Amen."

The priest meditates, then uncovers the chalice, genuflects, and says: "What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has rendered unto me? I will take the chalice of salvation" etc. He then receives the Precious Blood, saying, "The Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting. Amen".

The Communion is the *third principal part* of Mass, and ends the actual sacrifice. It represents the burial of Christ.

If there are any to receive Communion, the server says the Confiteor in their name. Those who do not communicate should make a **spiritual communion**.

If there are no communicants, the people may *sit down* after the priest's Communion.



PRIEST'S COMMUNION

Communion of the People

The priest absolves and blesses the people. He takes the ciborium and elevates a small Host in the sight of all, saying, "*Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world!*" He repeats three times the prayer of the centurion to Christ, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed."

He makes the sign of the cross with the Host over each communicant, and says to him: "*May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul unto life everlasting. Amen.*"

After administering Holy Communion to the people, the priest returns to the altar.

The priest takes the **Ablution**; that is, he drinks wine and water that are poured into the chalice.

The priest dries the inside of the chalice; folding the corporal, he places it on the chalice as at the beginning of Mass.



POSTCOMMUNION

The Postcommunion

Going to the Epistle side, the priest reads the **Communion** prayer, termed thus because in early days it was sung by the choir while the people received Holy Communion.

At the center again, the priest turns to the people and says, "*Dominus vobiscum*" (The Lord be with you), being answered by the server, "*Et cum spiritu tuo*" (And with thy spirit).

Once more at the Epistle side, the priest reads the **Postcommunion** prayers, petitions to God read or sung like the Collects. At the middle he faces the people and once more says: "*Dominus vobiscum.*"

These greetings are in commemoration of Christ's two appearances to the Apostles immediately after His resurrection.

The Blessing

The priest turns to the people and says: "*Ite, Missa est* (Go, the Mass is ended)."

These words of dismissal represent Christ's Ascen-



BLESSING

sion, when He sent His Apostles forth to evangelize the world. These words are varied for different occasions. If the *Gloria* has not been said, the words used here are: "*Benedicamus Domino* (Let us bless the Lord)." In Masses for the dead the words are: "*Requiescant in pace* (May they rest in peace)." In Easter week the words *alleluia, alleluia, alleluia*, are added.

But even with the priest's formal words of dismissal, the people must not leave; the Mass is not yet ended. There is a short prayer to the Blessed Trinity, offering devotion and homage.

Then the priest kisses the altar, extends, raises, and joins his hands, bows his head, and gives the people the blessing, saying, "May almighty God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless you."

The people kneel and make the sign of the cross as the priest **bles**ses them. A bishop makes three signs of the cross when he blesses at Mass.

At Masses for the dead there is *no blessing*, to show that the Church does not have the same jurisdiction over the dead as over the living.



THE LAST GOSPEL

The Last Gospel

The priest turns to the left side to read the *Last Gospel*, which is taken from the opening words of the Gospel of St. John. The *people stand* and make three signs of the cross with the priest, on the forehead, lips, and breast. They *genuflect* with the priest at the words: "And the Word was made Flesh," in honor of Our Lord Jesus Christ's Incarnation.

The Last Gospel represents the propagation of the word of God throughout, the world after the descent of the Holy Ghost.

At the end of the Last Gospel the *people kneel*. Mass is ended with the words: "*Deo gratias*" (Thanks be to God).



A *votive Mass* is one said in honor of some particular mystery or saint, on a day not set apart by the Church for the commemoration of that mystery or saint.



PRAYERS AFTER MASS

Prayers After Mass

Thus in one-half hour, the time required for an ordinary low Mass, the principal events of Our Lord's life are represented, as well as the chief doctrines of His Church.

In the course of the Mass, the celebrant observes not less than 500 ceremonies, such as bowing, striking the breast, and making the sign of the cross. These ceremonies aim not only to give honor to God, but also to impress upon the faithful the sublimity of the Holy Sacrifice.

After most low Masses, the priest kneels at the foot of the altar and recites some *prescribed prayers* with the people.

All should make the proper responses. No one should leave before the priest. Everybody should *stand* when the priest leaves the sanctuary.

No *Requiem Mass* is permitted on great feasts, for our private sorrows must not take precedence over the joy that should reign over the whole Church on such days.



BEGINNING OF MASS



CONFITEOR

143. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The Beginning of Mass

As the priest enters the sanctuary, the people stand, out of respect for the representative of Christ. They then kneel for the beginning of Mass.

The priest places the covered chalice on the center of the altar, having first spread the corporal. He opens the Missal. He then goes to the foot of the altar, and begins Mass by making the sign of the cross.

The people should make the sign of the cross with the priest. They should direct their intention for offering Mass. Those who come after this point are late for Mass.

The priest says the introductory Psalm 42, to express his trust in God, and his awareness of his own unworthiness. The prayers said at the foot of the altar express the desire of priest and people to withdraw themselves from distractions of their daily life and devoutly prepare themselves to offer the sacrifice of propitiation.

The Confiteor

After the psalm, the priest bows and says the Confiteor, a confession of sin, as a preparation, an expression of humility before God. The Confiteor is repeated by the server in behalf of the people, or with the people.

The priest then goes up to the altar and kisses it in the place beneath which relics of some Martyrs are cemented in the altar stone. He goes to the right or epistle side, and reads the opening prayer. In solemn Masses, the altar is incensed.

The Introit

Originally the *Introit* was a psalm chanted by the priest and his assistants when they entered the sanctuary. Today it is reduced to a verse, the first to be read at Mass.

The Introit varies each day, as do certain other parts of the Mass, like the Collects, Epistle, Gradual, Gospel, Offertory, Secrets, Communion, and Post-communions.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



GLORIA

The Kyrie

The priest goes to the center and recites the *Kyrie eleison* alternately with the server, imploring God's mercy. **The prayer is repeated nine times:** three in honor of God the Father, three in honor of God the Son, and three in honor of God the Holy Spirit.

The Gloria

After the Kyrie, the *Gloria* is said when the Mass requires it. It is *sometimes omitted*, especially during the penitential seasons, and in the Masses for the dead. At the end the priest kisses the altar.

The *Gloria* repeats the songs of praise of the angels on Christmas night. In high Masses the *Gloria* is sung.

The Collect

The priest goes to the epistle side and reads *certain prayers*, called the *Collect*. There may be more than one *Collect*. These prayers are recited in honor of the saint or mystery of the day, or for the intention of



EPISTLE

the Mass. They express man's subjection to God. They are never more than three.

At the *Collect* we should pray for the intention we have in offering the Mass.

The Epistle

The *Epistle* or Lesson follows. It is a reading from Holy Scripture, as from one of St. Paul's letters. At High Mass the subdeacon sings the Epistle.

Often the *Epistle* is taken from the Acts of the Apostles, from Exodus, Wisdom, etc. At the end of the Epistle the server says, "*Deo Gratias*" (*Thanks be to God*).

The Gradual

Here follow the *Gradual*, *Alleluia*, *Tract*, and *Sequence*, all varying in accordance with the season of the ecclesiastical year. *Tract* and *Sequence* are *not often said*.

The *Missal* is then carried to the left or gospel side of the altar. This act may symbolize *the passing of the faith* from the Jews to the Gentiles.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



OFFERTORY PROCESSION

The Gospel and Credo

The *Gospel* is taken from one of the four Evangelists. During the reading, the *people stand*, out of reverence for the word of God. The priest begins the reading by crossing himself on the forehead, lips, and breast. The *people do the same*.

After the *Gospel* the priest on Sundays and holy-days of obligation usually preaches a sermon on the explanation of the Gospel. He then recites the Nicene Creed or *Credo*. This is not said at all masses. The *people stand*. At the words, "*Et incarnatus est* (And was made man)", the *people genuflect* with the priest. After the *Credo* they may *sit down*.

The Offertory Procession

The Offertory begins with the Offertory prayer; then the priest uncovers the chalice.

It is now that the *Offertory Procession* may take place. At the entrance of the church, on a small table are placed the cruets of wine and water, the plate and finger towel. There is one or more ciboriums with the small hosts and the communion-paten with the large host for the celebrant. On extra occasions, candles, vases with flowers, altar linens and vestments are offered.

The collection is taken before the Gospel, unless it is desirable to have it during the Credo. Also during the Credo, or before, if there should be no Credo, those taking part in the procession take their places in the rear of the church with the different objects. The ushers with the baskets of the collection join the procession.

After the *Dominus vobiscum* of the priest, an appropriate hymn may be sung and the procession proceeds up the middle aisle. After reciting the Offertory prayer, the Celebrant and acolytes go to the entrance of the sanctuary. The priest receives first the baskets with the collection that may be carried to their proper place by the same ushers. After he receives one by one, the plate, cruets, towels, and gives them to the acolytes. Then he receives the communion-paten with the large host for the Mass and the ciborium and returns to the altar, and makes the offering of the hosts and wine. Minor details may be changed to suit the different circumstances. The people should unite themselves with the priest in making this offering.

The Offertory consists in two parts: the *offering of the bread* on the paten, and the *offering of the wine* in the chalice. Water is mixed with the wine because Christ did so at the Last Supper.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



LAVABO

The Lavabo and Orate Fratres

After the *Offertory*, the priest washes his fingers, as a mark of the purity of body and soul that is required for the Holy Sacrifice. This is the *Lavabo*.

The priest turns towards the people, extends and joins his hands, and audibly invites them to pray, saying: "*Orate fratres*" (*Pray, brethren*). The server makes the reply for the people, or the people themselves make it during the "*Missa Recitata*."

The Secret

The priest recites one or more prayers forming the Secret. They are *prayers of petition*, similar to the Collect.

At the end is said or sung in audible tones: "*Per omnia saecula saeculorum*" (forever and ever).

The Preface and Sanctus

The Preface is a *prayer of thanksgiving*, varying with the day and season.

The prayer ends with the *Sanctus*. This part is indicated by the ringing of the bell three times. The people kneel. The priest joins his hands and bows as he says the *Sanctus*.



SANCTUS

The *Sanctus* represents the entry of Christ in Jerusalem. The people ought to unite themselves with the angels who hail with praises the coming of the Son of God, soon to descend on the altar.

The Canon of the Mass

The *Canon*, or most solemn part of the Mass, follows. A remembrance is made for the Church, the Holy Father, the Bishop of the place, and the faithful. The *Pope* and the *Bishop* are mentioned by their first names. The *Memento*, or prayer for the living, is said. This represents too the *prayer of Christ for the Church* at the Last Supper. The assistance of the saints is invoked.

Thus the Church *militant* and the Church *triumphant* are united to honor God.

The priest crosses the oblation of bread and wine five times, in honor of the Five Wounds.

The people should recollect themselves in preparation for the consecration.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



ELEVATION

The Consecration

The *Consecration* is the principal part of the Mass. *The words of Christ* Himself are spoken *over the bread and wine*, the same words He used when He instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper.

By them the bread and wine are changed *into the living Body and Blood* of the Son of God. The bell is rung.

After adoring, the priest elevates first the Host, then the chalice, for the *people to adore*. The *Elevation* commemorates the lifting up of Our Lord on the Cross, when on Calvary He gave up His life in sacrifice.

At the Elevation the people *should look* upon the Host and chalice and say, "My Lord and my God," then bow their heads and adore. *Everyone* should be *perfectly silent*, to welcome and honor with devotion the coming of the King of Kings.

Immediately after the consecration we should make to God the Father an *act of offering* of His Divine Son. We have *a worthy gift to offer to God*, Christ Himself.



PATER NOSTER

The Commemoration of the Dead

For the souls in Purgatory the priest then prays, remaining silent while he pleads for certain special souls. Then follows *a prayer for those present*, beginning with the words audibly said, "*Nobis quoque peccatoribus*" (To us also, sinners).

The Pater Noster

The priest recites the *Pater Noster* (Our Father), the prayer taught by Christ Himself. In a "Missa Recitata" *the people* say the *Pater Noster* together *with the celebrant* till "Amen" inclusive. In high Masses the people stand at the Pater Noster. Then the Priest, breaking the Host in two, puts a small particle of It into the chalice, while he says a prayer.

The Agnus Dei

The *Agnus Dei* is then said, the priest *striking his breast three times* in sign of humility and penance: "*Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.*"

At High Masses the *Kiss of Peace* is given.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



"DOMINE NON SUM DIGNUS"

The Communion

After several prayers of preparation, the sanctuary bell is rung, and the priest gives himself **Communion**. He receives the Body of Christ, saying: "**The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting. Amen.**"

The priest meditates, then uncovers the chalice, genuflects, and says: "What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has rendered unto me? I will take the chalice of salvation" etc. **He then receives the Precious Blood**, saying, "The Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul unto life everlasting. Amen."

The Communion is the third principal part of Mass, and ends the actual sacrifice. It represents the burial of Christ.

The communion of the people now takes place. Those who do not communicate should make a **spiritual communion**.

If there are no communicants, the people may sit down after the priest's Communion.



PRIEST'S COMMUNION

Communion of the People

The priest takes the ciborium and facing the congregation, elevates a small Host in the sight of all, saying, "**Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world!**" He repeats **three times** the prayer of the centurion to Christ "**Lord, I am not worthy** that you should come under my roof; but only say the word and my soul will be healed."

He makes the sign of the cross with the Host over each communicant, and says to him: "**May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your soul unto life everlasting. Amen.**"

After administering Holy Communion to the people, the priest returns to the altar.

The priest takes the **Ablution**; that is, he drinks wine and water that are poured into the chalice.

The priest dries the inside of the chalice; folding the corporal, he places it on the chalice as at the beginning of Mass.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



POSTCOMMUNION

The Postcommunion

Going to the Epistle side, the priest reads the *Communion* prayer, termed thus because in early days it was sung by the choir while the people received Holy Communion.

At the center again, the priest turns to the people and says, "*Dominus vobiscum*" (*The Lord be with you*), being answered by the server, "*Et cum spiritu tuo*" (*And with your spirit*).

Once more at the Epistle side, the priest reads the *Postcommunion* prayers, petitions to God read or sung like the Collects. At the middle he faces the people and once more says: "*Dominus vobiscum.*"

The Blessing

The priest turns to the people and says: "*Ite, missa est*" (*Go, it is the dismissal*).

In Easter week the words of joy *alleluia, alleluia*, are added, in commemoration of Christ's two appearances to the Apostles immediately after His resurrection.

In Masses for the dead, instead of "*Ite, Missa est,*" these words are said: "*Requiescant in pace*" (*May they rest in peace*).



BLESSING

In Masses which are followed by a procession, "*Benedicamus Domino*" (*Let us bless the Lord*) is said, and the response is "*Deo gratias*" (*Thanks be to God*).

These various last words of dismissal represent Christ's Ascension, when he sent His Apostles forth to evangelize the world.

But even with the priest's formal words of dismissal, the people must not leave; the Mass is not yet ended. There is a short prayer to the Blessed Trinity, offering devotion and homage.

Then the priest kisses the altar, extends, raises, and joins his hands, bows his head, and *gives* the people *the blessing*, saying "*May almighty God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you.*"

The people kneel and *make the sign* of the cross as the priest *blesses* them. A bishop makes three signs of the cross when he blesses at Mass.

At Masses for the dead there is *no blessing*, to show that the Church does not have the same jurisdiction over the dead as over the living.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



THE LAST GOSPEL

The Last Gospel

*The priest turns to the left side to read the **Last Gospel**, which is taken from the opening words of the Gospel of St. John. The people stand and **make three signs of the cross** with the priest, on the forehead, lips, and breast. They genuflect with the priest at the words: "**And the Word was made Flesh,**" in honor of Our Lord Jesus Christ's Incarnation.*

*The **Last Gospel** represents the propagation of the word of God throughout the world after the descent of the Holy Spirit.*

*At the end of the **Last Gospel** the people kneel. Mass is ended with the words: "**Deo gratias**" (Thanks be to God).*

*A **rotive Mass** is one said in honor of some particular mystery or saint, on a day not set apart by the Church for the commemoration of that mystery or saint.*



PRAYERS AFTER MASS

Prayers After Mass

*Thus in **one-half hour**, the time required for an ordinary low Mass, the principal events of Our Lord's life are represented, as well as the chief doctrines of His Church.*

*In the course of the **Mass**, the celebrant observes not less than 500 ceremonies, such as bowing, striking the breast, and making the sign of the cross. **These ceremonies** aim not only to give honor to God, but also to impress upon the faithful the sublimity of the Holy Sacrifice.*

*After **most low Masses**, the priest kneels at the foot of the altar and recites some **prescribed prayers** with the people.*

*All should make the **proper responses**. No one should leave before the priest. **Everybody** should stand when the priest leaves the sanctuary.*

*No **Requiem Mass** is permitted on great feasts, for our private sorrows must not take precedence over the joy that should reign over the whole Church on such days.*

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



Entrance of the Priest



Confiteor

143. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The simple ceremony of the Last Supper has been expanded by the Church so as to set out the full meaning of the Mass and to help us to take our part in it.

I. THE FOREMASS

The first part of the Mass is made up of prayers, readings and songs. It used to be called *the Mass of the Catechumens*, because in the early Church the catechumens (*those under instruction before baptism*) were present at it. The rest of the Mass, which is essentially a *sacred action*, was reserved to those already baptized and therefore called *the Mass of the Faithful*.

1. Entrance of the Priest

At a High Mass, during the procession of the priest and ministers from the sacristy to the sanctuary, the *entrance chant* is sung; it consists of a psalm (*mostly reduced to one verse*) and a refrain in keeping with the character of the day's Mass or feast. *At a*

low Mass the priest himself reads this 'in-troit' anthem after the preparatory prayers.

As the priest enters, *the people stand*, out of respect for the representative of Christ.

At the foot of the altar, the priest makes the sign of the cross and then says the psalm 42 with the antiphon, "*I will go in to the altar of God.*" It expresses the longing and trust aroused by the thought of the Mass.

It is followed by *a confession of unworthiness*, the *Confiteor*, which is repeated by the server in behalf of the people.

After ascending the steps, the priest *kisses the altar*: it is a sign of reverence for the martyrs whose relics are cemented in the altar stone, but also for *the altar* itself, which is *a symbol of Christ*, the living altar of the New Covenant.

2. Some basic prayer themes

After reading the *Introit verse*, the priest recites the *Kyrie eleison* (*Lord have mercy*)



Gloria

alternately with the server or the congregation. This cry of our creatureliness and misery, so frequent in the Gospel (Mt 9:27, 15:22, 20:30, etc.), is repeated nine times.

The priest then intones the *Gloria*, a joyful hymn of praise addressed to God, the Blessed Trinity. (*It is omitted in penitential Masses and in Masses for the dead.*)

A *Dominus vobiscum* (which at Mass is an invitation to attention and fervour) and an *Oremus* (let us pray) introduce the *Collect*, a prayer in which the priest sums up the intentions suggested by the feast or the mystery.

Like all liturgical prayers it concludes with an appeal to the mediation of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through whom all grace comes to us. The server or the people answer, *Amen*. (*Sometimes there are two or even three Collects.*)

3. The Word of God

In the readings that follow, *God speaks to us through Holy Scripture*. The word



Epistle

of God nourishes our souls, our faith, hope and charity, before we receive the eucharistic body of the Word made flesh.

The *first reading* is called the *Epistle*, because it is most often taken from the epistles (*letters*) of the apostles. On certain days it is preceded by one or several readings from the Old Testament.

Before passing on to the next reading, the Church has inserted *several chants* which express feelings appropriate to the lesson or the feast. They are the *Gradual* and the *Alleluia*; the latter is replaced by the *Tract* from Septuagesima till Easter. On some occasions a poetical composition called *Sequence* is added.

In the *Gospel* Our Lord speaks to us directly. Out of reverence for Him, *the people stand*.

After the Gospel, the priest may explain the word of God in a *homily* or *sermon*. On Sundays and major feasts, this part of the Mass is concluded by a *profession of faith*, the recitation of *the Credo*.



Offertory Procession

II. THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

The main part of the Mass, sometimes called *the Mass of the Faithful*, is essentially *a sacred action* consisting of three acts: the *bringing* of the gifts, the *offering* of the Christian sacrifice, and *Holy Communion*.

1. The Offertory

The priest offers bread and wine. They are *the gifts* of the Church, *of all of us*, to our heavenly Father. They are of little material value, but have a great meaning. Like the gifts of children to their father on his birthday, they are a way of saying: "I love you, I want to be yours, to do your will always."

Remember what has been said in Chapter 133 on the nature of sacrifice.—Our Christian vocation makes us all "*a holy priesthood*, to offer spiritual sacrifices well-pleasing to God through Jesus Christ...You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, God's own people, that you may proclaim the perfections of him who has called

you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter, 2:5, 9). Our baptismal character enables us to share in the liturgical sacrifice.

The *Offertory procession*, in its various forms, is meant to bring out the fact that the gifts presented at the altar by the priest are the gifts of the whole community, of each one of us. Whether there be a procession or not, *what matters is that the exterior offering express our interior sacrifice*, our sincere self-oblation.

At one time the presentation of the gifts was preceded by the *kiss of peace* given by those present to each other. This practice was suggested by the words of Our Lord: "If thou be offering thy gift at the altar, and there remember that thy brother has something against thee, leave there thy gift and go first and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Mt. 5:23). At a later date the kiss of peace was placed before Communion.

The priest offers first the bread, then the wine, with a variety of prayers. The wine is mixed with water, because Christ did so at the Last Supper.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



Lavabo

Sanctus

After offering the gifts, the priest washes his hands (*Lavabo*), as a mark of the purity of body and soul required for the holy sacrifice. Then, turning towards the people, he invites them to pray for "my sacrifice and yours" (*Orate, fratres, Pray, brethren*).

The last *Offertory prayer* is called the *Secret*. Its conclusion is sung or said in audible tones: *per omnia saecula saeculorum* (forever and ever), to which the server or the people answer, *Amen*.

In all these prayers we confidently offer for all our needs and "for the salvation of the whole world," because we know that our humble offering is going to be transformed into something incomparably more precious.

2. The Consecration

The *Offertory* is only the first act, the beginning of our sacrifice. We bring our gifts, the symbol of our devotion, of our love and self-oblation. Then, at the next moment, something wonderful happens.

Jesus through the priest changes our gifts of bread and wine into His own body and blood. **This most sacred action** is called **the consecration**.

Not only does Jesus become truly *present* on the altar to be our food, but at that very moment His body and blood—our gifts transfigured into the Victim of Calvary—are *offered* to the heavenly Father. By the double consecration the sacrifice of the Cross is represented and offered anew, and its power of praise, thanksgiving, impetration and reparation is communicated to us and to the whole Church, in a measure proportioned to the fervour of our offering (See pages 286-287, *The Mass and Calvary*).

Our devotion is no longer conveyed to God by a lifeless gift, a mere symbol, but by the living Christ who presents to the Father our self-oblation in union with His own wonderful offering by which on Calvary He has redeemed us: He now "appears before the face of God on our behalf" (Heb 9:24). The Mass is indeed the great privilege of the Christian.

*Elevation*

The great mystery takes place when the priest, repeating the narrative of the Last Supper, pronounces over the bread and wine the words used by Christ Himself when He instituted the holy Eucharist: "***This is my body... This is my blood...***" These words change our gifts into the body and blood of the living Son of God.

After *adoring*, the priest *elevates* first the Host, then the chalice, so that all may see them. Look at them with deep faith and then adore: "*My Lord and my God.*"

Immediately after the consecration, which is at the same time the offering of the eucharistic sacrifice, we should offer Christ to the heavenly Father: we now have a worthy gift to offer—the Saviour Himself, glorified through His sacrifice. ***And since the gift signifies the interior self-oblation, we should fervently offer ourselves with Christ and through him.***

*Pater Noster*

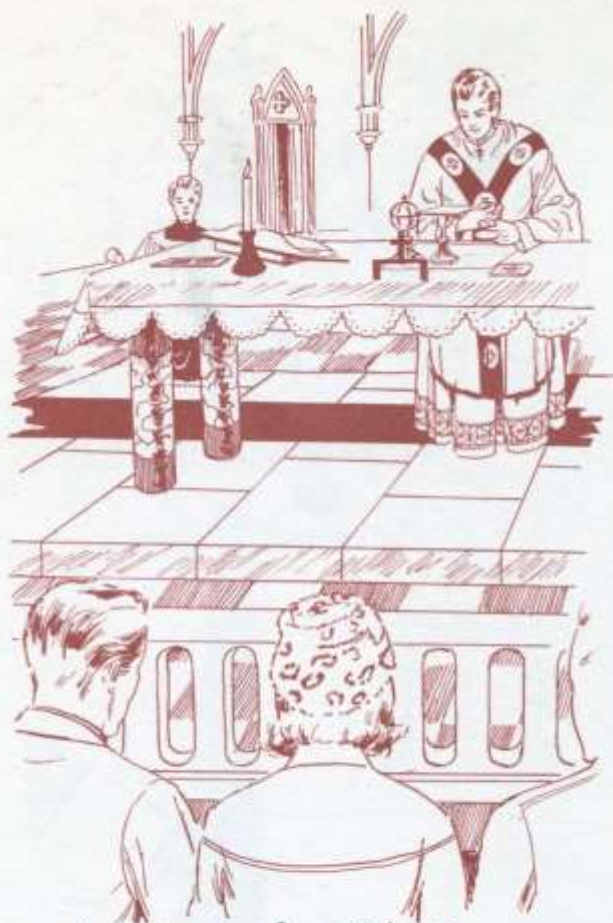
The Canon of the Mass

The part of the Mass which contains the consecration at its centre is called the *canon*, i.e. the fixed norm for the sacred action.

It begins with the *Preface*, a solemn recall of God's gifts to us, which breaks into a hymn of thanksgiving through Christ our Lord. It is followed by the *Sanctus*, the Seraphim's song of adoration (Is. 6:3) and the *Benedictus*, with which the crowd acclaimed Christ as their Messiah (Mt 21:9).

It is but natural, when we offer the sacrifice of the redemption, that we should *remember and intercede* for the whole family of God. After the *Benedictus* we first pray for the Catholic Church, in particular for the *Holy Father*, the *bishop* of the place and all Catholic bishops. We have a special remembrance (*'Memento'*) for certain persons dear to us or in need of prayer.

After the consecration we pray for the *souls in purgatory* (*'Memento'* of the dead) and finally for *ourselves* (*Nobis quoque peccatoribus, To us sinners, also*).



Domine Non Sum Dignus

The *saints in heaven* are remembered both before and after the consecration as shining examples with whom we hope to obtain fellowship.

The concluding prayer of the Canon again gives thanks and glory to God, through Christ the Mediator. It is ratified by the people with a loud *Amen*.

3. Communion

Sacrifice aims at and leads up to friendship and union. At Mass, Communion is God's answer to our offering. Through the offering we have expressed our love, our desire to be His. In response, God invites us to His table, as His family. **Communion** is a *sacrificial meal*; partaking of the divine Victim we have offered, seals our union with God. Communion, then, is part of the Mass; and the best way of preparing ourselves for Communion consists in following the Mass intelligently and devoutly.

This part of the Mass begins with the *Pater noster*, the Lord's prayer, which turns our minds towards the heavenly bread of which we are in-



Communion of the Priest

vited to partake. (In a 'missa recitata' the people say it together with the priest.)

Immediate preparation

After a symbolical breaking of the consecrated host, the priest recites three times the *Agnus Dei* (*Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us... grant us peace*).

It is followed by three prayers, the first of which asks for peace and unity in the Church. (Here, at High Masses, the kiss of peace is given; for Communion is the sacrament of love and unity.)

The Communion

Taking the Host and beating his breast, the priest says three times, "*Lord, I am not worthy...*" He then receives the body of Christ and, after a short meditation, the precious blood.

If Communion is to be distributed to the people, the priest takes the ciborium and, facing the congregation, elevates a small host, saying: "*Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world.*" He repeats three times (to-



Communion

gether with the people, in the 'Missa recitata') an adaptation of the prayer addressed by the centurion to Christ: "*Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof; but only say the word and my soul will be healed.*"

He makes the sign of the cross with the Host over each communicant and gives him Communion with the words: "*May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your soul unto life everlasting. Amen.*"

Thanksgiving

The priest says two prayers while taking the *ablutions* (*the wine and water with which he rinses the chalice*). He then reads, on the Epistle side, the *Communion* anthem, which is really a vestige of the processional song formerly chanted during the distribution of holy Communion; and finally, on behalf of all present, he recites the *Postcommunion* prayer (or prayers: as for the Collect, there may be two or three).

Some samples: "*May this heavenly mystery restore us in body and mind*" (8th Sunday after Pentecost). "May the partaking of your sacrament be for us a source of purity and a bond of unity"



Postcommunion

(9th S. after Pentecost). "Grant, O Lord, that, replenished with your sacred gifts, we may always abide in the giving of thanks" (Sunday after the Ascension). "May this heavenly mystery enkindle in us that ardent love wherewith your virgin Teresa offered herself a victim of charity for mankind" (October 3).

This liturgical thanksgiving is evidently rather short; it ought to be supplemented after the Mass.

Conclusion of the Mass

The priest turns towards the people, and, after a last "Dominus vobiscum," says: "*Ite, missa est*" (*Go, it is the dismissal*).

In Masses for the dead, instead of "Ite missa est," he says: "*Requiescant in pace*" (May they rest in peace).

After blessing the people, he proceeds to read the *Last Gospel*, which is taken from the opening verses of the Gospel of St. John. This wonderful chapter forms an appropriate conclusion to the Mass, where the Word Incarnate has come down again "*and dwells among us,*" to make us ever more perfectly "sons of God."



After most Low Masses, the priest kneels at the foot of the altar and recites some prayers first prescribed by Leo XIII, and now, by order of Pius XI, said for the conversion of Russia.

No one should leave before the priest.

Epilogue: the Mass of our life

A Catholic cannot leave church and then do as though there had been no Mass. *The Mass is a beginning* which calls for a continuation. It is an *offering*, and this implies a promise of love and fidelity; the offering



must be carried out throughout the day—*we must live the Mass.*

The Mass is also *communion*, union with Christ and God; with the Lord in our hearts we shall be strong and face our daily task and trials boldly and joyfully.

The Mass is not a mere ceremony; it is meant to make a difference; it *is meant to shape our lives*. It will do so if we participate in it intelligently and sincerely.



A *votive Mass* is one said in honour of some particular mystery or saint on a day not set apart by the Church for the commemoration of that mystery or saint.

No *Requiem Mass* is permitted on great feasts, for our private sorrows must not take precedence over the joy that should reign over the whole Church on such days.

"To me nothing is so consoling, so piercing, so thrilling, so overcoming, as the Mass, said as it is among us. I could attend Masses forever, and not be tired. It is not a mere form of words—it is a great action, *the greatest action that can be on earth.*"
(Cardinal Newman, *Callista*)



Entrance Rite

143a. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The simple ceremony of the Last Supper has been expanded by the Church so as to set out the full meaning of the Mass and to help us to take our part in it.

Entrance Rite

It is *the procession of the priest and ministers* from the sacristy or the back of the church *to the sanctuary*.

This *procession in a low Mass* may consist of the celebrant and only one acolyte, or two or more acolytes, the lector, commentator, deacon or another priest; and *at high Mass*, a larger number of acolytes may be added, besides a deacon and sub-deacon. If possible one acolyte should bear the processional cross.

The more or less *solemn entrance helps the celebrant and the faithful to prepare themselves for a worthy celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*. During the procession the "Introit" anthem and even the "Lord, have mercy" ("Kyrie") *may be recited or sung* by the faithful or by the choir.

Prayers at the Foot of the Altar

At the foot of the altar *the celebrant makes the sign of the Cross* and says, "I will go in to the altar of God." This is followed by a confession of unworthiness, "*I confess to almighty God*" (the "Confiteor"), which is *repeated by the people or by the servers* on their behalf.

After these prayers the celebrant goes up to the center of the altar and kisses it. *This kiss is a sign of reverence for the altar which is a symbol of Christ*, the living altar of the New Covenant, and for the martyrs whose relics are cemented in the altar stone.

After kissing the altar, the celebrant may remain at the altar, or go to the sedilia; wherever it is most convenient for him to be seen and heard by the people.

The "Introit" verse is here recited by the priest, and also the "*Lord, have mercy*" ("Kyrie eleison"), if they have not been recited or sung during the Entrance procession.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"

The "Gloria" and the "Collect" Prayer

The *celebrant* then intones the "Glory to God in the highest," a joyful hymn of praise addressed to God, the Blessed Trinity. (*It is omitted in penitential Masses and in Masses for the dead.*)

After the "Glory," the *celebrant greets the faithful*, reciting or singing, "The Lord be with you" ("Dominus vobiscum"). Following the response, "And with your spirit," and extending and joining his hands, he says, "Let us pray" ("Oremus"). He pauses for a few moments as an invitation to attention and fervor. Then with extended arms he sings or recites the "Collect" prayer which sums up the intentions suggested by the Mass of the day.

Like all liturgical prayers it concludes with an appeal to the mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through whom all grace comes to us. The server or the people answer, *Amen*. (Sometimes there are two or even three "Collects.") With this prayer, the rite of entrance is concluded.

I. THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the readings that follow, *God speaks to us through Holy Scripture*. The word of God nourishes our souls, our faith, hope and charity, before we receive the Eucharistic Body of the Word made flesh.

The *first reading* is called the "Epistle," because it is most often taken from the epistles (*letters*) of the apostles. However, on many days there are readings from the Old Testament.

The "Epistle" may be read by a lector, usually a layman, if he is available, otherwise by a priest, or by the celebrant himself.

Before passing on to the reading of the "Gospel," the Church has inserted several chants which express feelings appropriate to the lesson or the feast. They are the "Gradual" and the "Alleluia;" the latter is replaced by the "Tract" from Septuagesima till Easter. On some occasions a poetical composition called "Sequence" is added.

These chants should be sung or recited by the faithful, the choir, or the lector. If there is no one to do so, the celebrant himself reads them.

The "Gospel"

The "Gospel" should be read by a deacon or by a priest. In the "Gospel" our Lord speaks to us directly. Out of reverence for him, the people stand.

The deacon or priest addresses the assembly: "The Lord be with you." They reply: "And with your spirit." He says: "A reading from the holy 'Gospel' according to —." The people reply: "Glory to you, O Lord." At the conclusion of the "Gospel" the acolytes or the people say: "Praise to you, O Christ."

After the "Gospel," on Sundays, holydays of obligation and other solemn occasions, the priest explains the word of God in a homily or sermon.

On Sundays and major feasts, this part of the Mass is concluded by a profession of faith, the recitation of the "Creed," "I believe in God."

NOTA BENE: After the homily, the sacraments of Confirmation, Holy Orders, or Matrimony may be conferred. The ceremony of religious profession, that is, making the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, may also take place after the homily.

"Prayer of the Faithful"

After the "Gospel" with its homily, or the "Creed" if it is said, and also after administration of certain of the sacraments, or of the religious profession ceremony, the ancient "Community prayer" or "Prayer of the Faithful" takes place, especially on Sundays and feastdays.

By this prayer, in which the people are to take part, intercession will be made for Holy Church, for the civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all mankind and for the salvation of the entire world" (Constitution on the S. Liturgy, n.53). It is introduced by the priest's invitation "Let us pray" ("Oremus").

These or similar approved invocations may be chanted by the leader of song or by the choir:

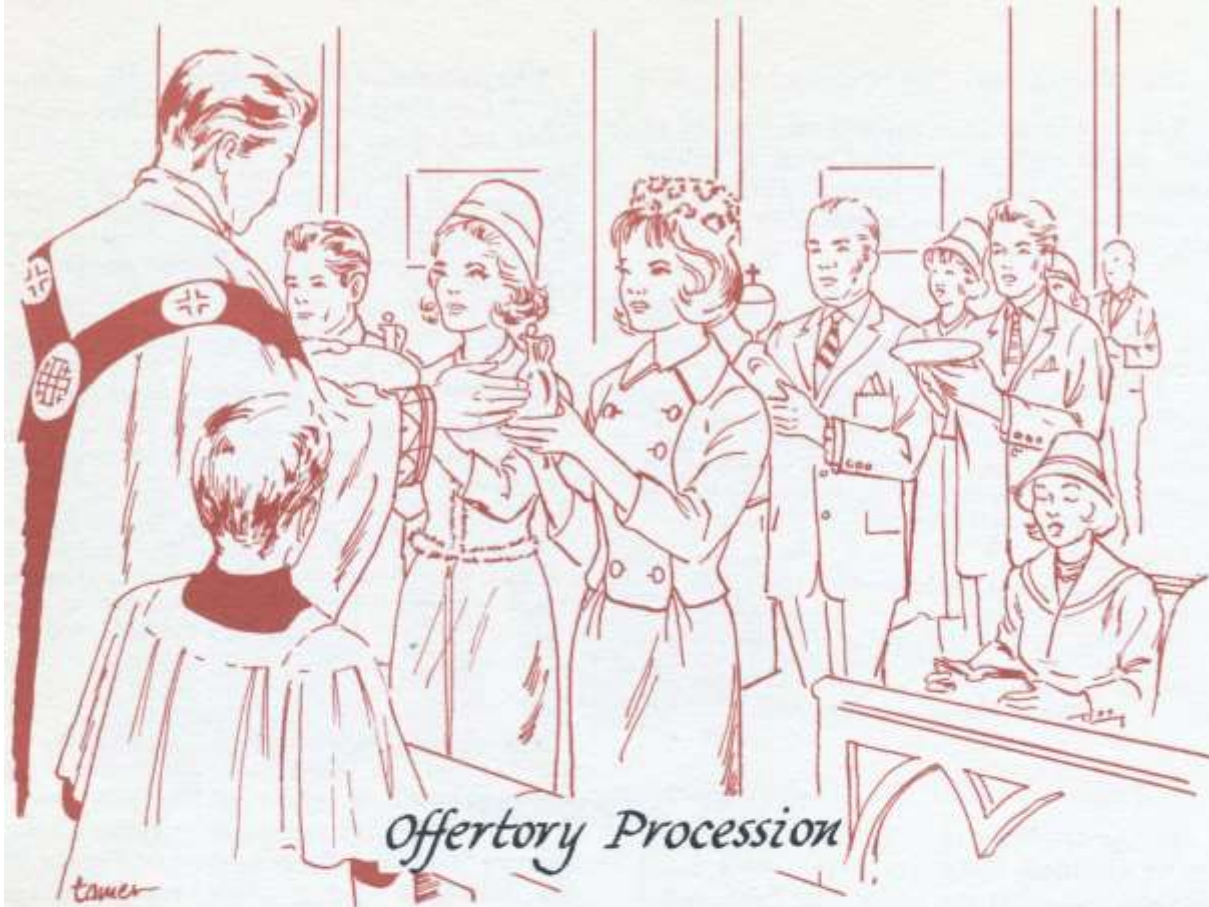
"That all men may know that we are Christ's disciples, because we love one another"—

"That we may not be anxious about our life but seek first the kingdom of God."

The congregation responds after each invocation: "We pray, O Lord," or "Lord, have mercy."

II. THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the "Offertory prayer." After the "Prayer of the Faithful," or if this prayer is not said, after the "Creed" or the "homily" or the "Gospel" itself, the celebrant goes to the center of the altar and recites the "Offertory prayer" if it is not sung or recited by the people, choir or lector. If there is to be an "Offertory procession," it takes place now.



Offertory Procession

The "Offertory Procession"

Near the entrance of the church, or wherever it may be most convenient, on a small table are placed the *cruets* of wine and water, the *plate* and finger *towel*, one or more *ciboria* containing small hosts, and the *paten* with the large host placed on the *chalice* and covered with the chalice veil. On special occasions, vestments, altar linens, candles, and vases with flowers are offered also. During the recitation of "I believe in one God," those participating in the procession take their places in the rear of the church, preparing to carry the various items in the desired order. If possible, the ushers bearing the *baskets of the collection* should join the procession.

After "The Lord be with you" of the priest, and the response, the "Offertory" hymn begins and the procession moves slowly up the middle aisle. After reciting the "Offertory prayer," as stated above, the celebrant and acolytes go to the entrance of the sanctuary. The celebrant receives first the baskets with the collection, that may be carried to their proper place by the same ushers. He then receives one by one the plate, cruets, and finger towel, giving each in turn to the acolytes. Finally he receives the chalice with the paten and large host for the Mass, and the ciborium. Carrying these, he returns to the altar and offers to God first the hosts, then the wine, reciting the prescribed prayers. The wine is mixed with water, because Christ did so at the Last Supper.

After offering the gifts, the priest washes his hands ("Lavabo"), as a mark of the purity of body and soul required for the holy sacrifice. Then, with extended arms, he says: "Brethren, pray" ("Orate, fratres") "that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father almighty."

The "Offertory procession," in its various forms, is meant to bring out the fact that the gifts presented at the altar by the priest are the gifts of the whole community, of each one of us. Whether there be a procession or not, what matters is that the exterior offering express our interior sacrifice, our sincere self-oblation.

We confidently offer these prayers for all our needs and "for the salvation of the whole world," because we know that our humble offering is going to be transformed into something incomparably more precious.

Prayer Over the Gifts

The last Offertory prayer or "Prayer over the Gifts," which was called "Secret," is sung or recited aloud by the celebrant—as are the "Collect" and "Postcommunion prayers"—so that the people by their own "Amen" may join in the praise of God.

The "Preface"

The *Preface* is a solemn recall of God's gifts to us, which breaks into a hymn of thanksgiving through Christ our Lord. It is followed by the "*Holy, holy, holy Lord,*" the seraphim's song of adoration (Is 6:3) and the "*Blessed is he,*" with which the crowd acclaimed Christ as their Messiah (Mt 21:9).

The "CANON" of the Mass

The part of the Mass which contains the "Consecration" at its center is called the "*Canon,*" i.e. the fixed norm for the sacred action.

The "*Offertory*" is only the first act, the beginning of our sacrifice. We bring our gifts, the symbol of our devotion, of our love and self-oblation. Then, at the next moment, something wonderful happens. Jesus through the priest changes our gifts of bread and wine into his own Body and Blood. *This most sacred action* is called the "*Consecration.*"

Not only does Jesus become truly *present* on the altar to be our food, but at that very moment his Body and Blood—our gifts transfigured into the Victim of Calvary—are *offered* to the heavenly Father. By the double "Consecration" the sacrifice of the Cross is re-presented and offered anew, and its power of praise, thanksgiving, impetration and reparation is communicated to us and to the whole Church, in a measure proportioned to the fervor of our offering (See pages 286-287, *The Mass and Calvary*).

Our devotion is no longer conveyed to God by a lifeless gift, a mere symbol, but by the living Christ who presents to the Father our self-oblation in union with his own wonderful offering by which on Calvary he has redeemed us: *he now appears before the face of God on our behalf* (Heb 9:24). The Mass is indeed the great privilege of the Christian.

The "Consecration"

The *great mystery takes place* when the priest, repeating the *narrative of the Last Supper*, pronounces over the bread and wine the words used by Christ Himself when he instituted the holy Eucharist: "*This is my Body...This is my Blood...*" These words change our gifts into the Body and Blood of the living Son of God.

After *adoring*, the priest *elevates* first the host, then the chalice, so that all may see them. Look at them with deep faith and then adore: "*My Lord and my God.*"

Immediately after the "Consecration," which is at the same time the offering of the eucharistic sacrifice, we should offer Christ to the heavenly Father: we now have a worthy gift to offer—the Saviour himself, glorified through his sacrifice. *And since the gift signifies the interior self-oblation, we should fervently offer ourselves with Christ and through him.*

It is but natural, when we offer the sacrifice of the redemption, that we should *remember and intercede* for the whole family of God. After the *Benedictus* we first pray for the Catholic Church, in particular for the *Holy Father*, the *bishop* of the place and all Catholic bishops. We have a special remembrance (*Memento*) for certain persons dear to us or in need of prayer.

After the "Consecration" we pray for the *souls in purgatory* ("*Memento*" of the dead) and finally for *ourselves* ("*Nobis quoque peccatoribus,*" "*To us sinners, also*").

The *saints in heaven* are remembered both before and after the consecration as shining examples with whom we hope to obtain fellowship.

The concluding prayer of the "Canon" again gives thanks and glory to God, through Christ the Mediator.

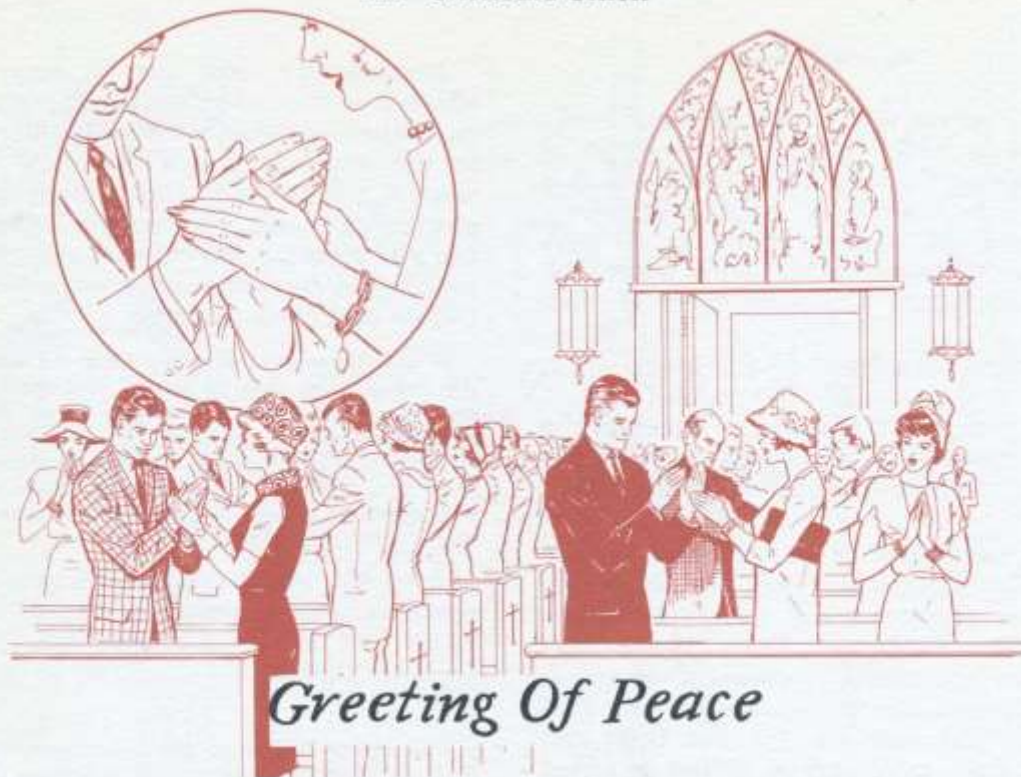
The "GREAT DOXOLOGY"

The "Little Elevation"

The celebrant lifts up the chalice and host for the "*Little Elevation,*" and says aloud the "doxology" ("*Per ipsum...*") : "Through him, and with him, and in him, is to you, God the Father almighty, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory, forever and ever" ("*Per omnia saecula saeculorum*"). *The people ratify this prayer by a loud and full-hearted "Amen."*

The Eucharistic Banquet

Sacrifice aims at and leads up to friendship and union. At Mass, Communion is God's answer to our offering. Through the offering we have expressed our love, our desire to be his. In response, God invites us to his table, as his family. *Communion* is a *sacrificial meal*; partaking of the divine Victim we have offered, seals our union with God. Communion, then, is part of the Mass; and the best way of preparing ourselves for Communion consists in following the Mass intelligently and devoutly.



This part of the Mass begins with the invitation of the celebrant to the faithful to recite together the Our Father, the prayer that can best dispose the assembly for holy Communion.

The celebrant sings or recites together with the people the Lord's prayer, omitting the "Amen." The last petition "Deliver us from evil" is developed in the beautiful prayer "Deliver us, O Lord, we implore you..." which the priest recites or sings aloud. He concludes with the invocation: "The peace of the Lord be always with you."

Immediate Preparation

After a symbolical breaking of the consecrated host, the people recite three times: "Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us...grant us peace"—while striking their breast with the right hand.

After the "Lamb of God" ("Agnus Dei"), the celebrant recites in a low voice the prayer, "Domine, Jesu Christe" ("O Lord Jesus Christ"), the first of three prayers in preparation for Communion. If the "greeting of peace" is to be given it now takes place. The local practice should be followed.

The GREETING OF PEACE

One convenient way of giving the "peace greeting" in large congregations is the following:

The commentator announces that the "greeting of peace" may be passed along to everyone in

church. Each one occupying the first place in each pew on both sides of the center aisle starts by turning to the one next to him, clasping his hands and saying, "Peace be with you." That person replies, "And with your spirit," and he in turn gives the "Peace be with you," to the one next to him, who also replies, "And with your spirit." And so on throughout the congregation.

This practice of the peace greeting is suggested by the words of our Lord: "Therefore, if at the moment you are bringing your gift to the altar, you recall that your brother has a grievance against you, leave your gift there at the altar. Go first and seek a reconciliation with your brother. Then come and offer your gift" (Mt 5:23-24).

The "Communion"

Taking the Host and striking his breast, the priest says three times, "Lord, I am not worthy..." He then receives the Body of Christ and, after a short meditation, the precious Blood.

Communion is now distributed to the people. The priest takes the ciborium and elevates a small host, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world." The people repeat three times an adaptation of the prayer addressed by the centurion to Christ: "Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof. Speak but the word and my soul will be healed."

For each communicant the priest raises the host a little above the ciborium and says, "The Body of Christ." The communicant answers "Amen" and receives the host.



Final Blessing

Thanksgiving

After distribution of holy Communion, the priest says two prayers while taking the ablutions (the wine and water with which he rinses the chalice). He then reads the "Communion anthem" if it was not sung or recited by the people or the choir. Finally, on behalf of all present, he recites the "Postcommunion" prayer (or prayers: as for the "Collect," there may be two or three).

Some examples: "May this heavenly mystery restore us in body and mind" (8th Sunday after Pentecost). "May the partaking of your sacrament be for us a source of purity and a bond of unity" (9th S. after Pentecost). "Grant, O Lord, that, replenished with your sacred gifts, we may always abide in the giving of thanks" (Sunday after the Ascension). "May this heavenly mystery enkindle in us that ardent love wherewith your virgin Teresa offered herself a victim of charity for mankind" (October 3).

This liturgical thanksgiving is evidently rather short; it ought to be supplemented after the Mass.

The Dismissal

After the last "The Lord be with you" the priest says, "Go, the Mass is ended," and gives the final blessing.

This bidding, "Go, the Mass is ended," is not an invitation to leave the church, but an exhortation

to go and live the Mass; that is, to become another Christ, to be able to say with St. Paul, "I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me." To be like Christ means to love our neighbor as ourselves and to go about doing good to everybody.

In Masses for the dead, instead of saying, "Go, the Mass is ended," he says, "May they rest in peace."

The Recessional

AFTER THE BLESSING the congregation stands. The lector or leader of song announces the recessional hymn. While it is sung the celebrant and ministers leave the sanctuary in procession. All should respectfully wait till the priest has returned to the sacristy.

Epilogue: the Mass of our life

A Catholic cannot leave church and then do as though there had been no Mass. The Mass is a beginning which calls for a continuation. It is an offering, and this implies a promise of love and fidelity; the offering must be carried out throughout the day—we must live the Mass.

The Mass is not a mere ceremony; it is meant to make a difference; it is meant to shape our lives. It will do so if we participate in it intelligently and sincerely.



143b. Concelebration

What is CONCELEBRATION?

There is concelebration *when several priests*, instead of each one celebrating Mass separately, *celebrate at the same altar* and offer the same sacrifice, pronouncing together the words of the consecration.

1. In the first place, *concelebration manifests the unity of the Sacrifice of the Mass*, since many Masses represent but one Sacrifice of Christ.

2. *All priests exercise the one priesthood of Jesus Christ*. This is true whether they celebrate together or individually. *In a concelebrated Mass*, even though each priest offers Mass, *the unity of this one priesthood is more clearly manifested*. Concelebration, therefore, has the advantage of giving external expression to a unity that is always there.

3. *The unity of the whole Church* in one sacrifice and one priesthood is *especially manifested when* the faithful, too, *take part actively as a community* in a concelebrated Mass. This is especially so if their Bishop is present. At such a concelebration, with God's ordained ministers and his holy

people gathered around his altar for one and the same act of thanksgiving, *the unity of the people of God is more clearly shown than in any other liturgical action*.

ON WHICH OCCASIONS may concelebration take place?

1. *On Holy Thursday* both at the morning Mass of the blessing of the holy oils, and at the evening Mass.

2. *At Masses for the consecration* of a bishop, *blessing* of an abbot, and *ordination* of priests.

3. At Masses celebrated during *meetings of bishops and priests*, as councils, synods, eucharistic congresses, etc.

4. At the *principal Mass in churches* and oratories if there should be available priests.

5. At conventual Mass, and *at the principal Mass in churches* when the needs of the faithful do not require that all the priests available should celebrate individually (Const. on S. Liturgy art. 57).

6. *Priests who are infirm*, and even those totally blind, if at least they are *able to be seated at an altar*, *may concelebrate* Mass with another priest, the principal celebrant, who is not infirm. However, all must be able to repeat the prayers of the Canon of the Mass together with him.

The regulations for concelebration in each diocese are given by the bishop.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



143c. Holy Communion Under Both Kinds

What do we mean by "receiving holy Communion UNDER BOTH KINDS"?

*It is the receiving of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the holy Eucharist **not only under the form of bread but also under the form of wine.***

It is Catholic doctrine that *our Lord Jesus Christ is present whole and entire under the form of bread as well as that of wine.* Therefore, one who receives *holy Communion under only one kind*, either of bread or of wine, receives *our Lord Jesus Christ, whole and entire*, with all the graces and fruits of holy Communion.

As *our Lord instituted* the Sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper by consecrating both bread and wine, *the faithful* receiving Communion under both kinds *can see more clearly the sign of the Eucharistic banquet.* This is why the Church permits that on some occasions the faithful may receive Communion under both kinds.

Which are the FOUR RITES for receiving Communion UNDER BOTH KINDS?

1. *Communion through intinction.*

The celebrant receives the Body and Blood of the Lord in the usual way, *seeing that enough of the precious Blood remains* in the chalice for the communicants. Then he *hands the chalice* and a purificator *to an assisting priest*, and he himself takes the ciborium with the hosts. Standing, *facing the people*, with the priest holding the chalice at his left, *he says*: "Behold the Lamb of God," and the

communicants add the threefold: "Lord, I am not worthy." *Then the celebrant and the assisting priest stand where they can most conveniently give Communion.*

The communicants come forward singly; each genuflects and, *holding a paten under his chin*, stands before the celebrant. *The celebrant dips part of the host in the chalice* and slightly elevating it says: "The Body and Blood of Christ"; the communicant replies "Amen," receives Communion from the celebrant, and then leaves.

2. *Communion directly from the chalice.*
3. *Communion with a silver reed.*
4. *Communion with a silver spoon.*

The diocesan bishop determines which of the *four rites* is to be used in the various cases.

In the Western Church, who may receive Communion UNDER BOTH KINDS?

1) *Those ordained* at the Mass of their ordination; 2) *the deacon and subdeacon* at solemn Mass; 3) *the abbess* at the Mass of her blessing; 4) *the professed* at the Mass of their religious profession; 5) *the spouses* at their nuptial Mass; 6) *the newly baptized and confirmed* adults at their Mass; 7) *non-Catholics* already baptized who are received into the Church; 8) *religious*, as well as *married couples*, at their Mass of silver and golden jubilee; 9) *priests* who are present at large celebrations and cannot celebrate or concelebrate; and 10) *religious brothers* who are present for concelebration in religious houses.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



Entrance Rite

119. THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The simple ceremony of the **Last Supper** has been expanded by the Church so as to set out the **full meaning of the Eucharistic celebration** and to help us take our part in it (cf CCC 1345-1348).

I. INTRODUCTORY RITES

"The rites preceding the Liturgy of the Word, namely the Entrance, Greeting, Act of Penitence, *Kyrie, Gloria*, and collect, have the character of a beginning, introduction, and preparation." (GIRM 46).

1. ENTRANCE SONG. After the people have assembled, the entrance song begins, and the priest and ministers come in. The purpose of this song is to **open the celebration, deepen the unity of the people, introduce them to the mystery of the season or feast, and accompany the procession.** If there is no singing at the entrance, the antiphon in the missal is recited (cf GIRM 47).

Ordinarily, the **procession** may consist of the **celebrant, acolytes and other ministers.** At a solemn Mass a larger number of acolytes may be added besides a deacon or two. If possible one acolyte is to bear the processional cross.

2. VENERATION OF THE ALTAR AND GREETING OF THE PEOPLE. When the

priest and the ministers come to the sanctuary they greet the altar. The **ordained ministers kiss the altar**; the **celebrant** may also **incense** it (cf GIRM 49).

This kiss is a sign of reverence for the **altar**, which is a **symbol of Christ**, the living altar of the New Covenant. The priest may also incense the altar.

After kissing the altar, the celebrant may remain at the altar, or go to the *sedilia* - wherever it is most convenient for him to be seen and heard by the people.

After the entrance song, the **priest and the congregation make the sign of the cross.** Then through a **greeting** the celebrant expresses the presence of the Lord to the assembly. This greeting and the response manifest the mystery of the Church that is gathered together (cf GIRM 50)

3. THE ACT OF PENITENCE. After greeting the people, the celebrant or any other minister may briefly introduce the Mass of the day. Then the **celebrant invites the congregation for the penitential rite** and is **concluded by the absolution** (cf GIRM 51).

4. THE KYRIE ELESION. After the Act of Penitence, the **Kyrie** is begun, unless it has already been included as a part of the **penitential**

"Father, I pray for those whom you have given me

act. This acclamation is ordinarily implored by the assembly (cf GIRM 52).

5. THE GLORIA. The Gloria is an ancient hymn in which **the Church, assembled in the Holy Spirit, praises and prays to the Father and the Lamb.**

The Gloria is sung or said by the congregation **on Sundays** outside Advent and Lent, **on solemnities and feasts**, and **at solemn local celebrations** (cf GIRM 53).

6. OPENING PRAYER OR COLLECT. After the Gloria, the celebrant invites the assembly to spend some moments in silence and make their petitions. Then he sings or prays the *opening prayer*, which **sums up the intentions of the Mass** (cf GIRM 54).

The collect is **addressed to the Father through the mediation of Christ in the Holy Spirit.** The people answer, "Amen." With this prayer, the rite of entrance is concluded.

II. THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Readings from scripture and the **chants** between the readings form the main part of the liturgy of the word. The **homily, profession of faith**, and general intercessions develop and complete it (cf GIRM 55).

a) SCRIPTURE READING. There are **two readings** and **appropriate chants** or prayers before the gospel. The two readings include "the writings of the prophets," that is, the Old Testament, and "the memoirs of the apostles" (their letters and the Gospels)" (ccc 1349).

1. **God speaks to us through Holy Scripture** i.e., the treasures of the Bible, the table of God's Word are opened to the people (cf GIRM 57).

2. Reading the scriptures is traditionally considered a ministerial, not a presidential, function. Therefore **the readings are read by a lector, usually a lay person** (cf GIRM 59).

3. The **gospel** is to be read **by a deacon** or, in his absence, by a **priest other than the one presiding.** In the absence of a deacon or another priest, the celebrant reads the gospel (cf GIRM 59).

b) CHANTS BETWEEN THE READINGS.

In addition to the pre-gospel readings, the Church has inserted several chants that are appropriate to the lesson or the feast. They are the **responsorial psalm** and the **alleluia.** The latter is replaced by a **sequence on Easter and Pentecost Sundays.** If the psalm after the reading is not sung, it is to be recited. The alleluia or the verse before the gospel may be omitted if not sung (cf GIRM 61, 62).

c) HOMILY. The homily is to be given on Sundays and holydays of obligation at all Masses which are celebrated with a congregation. It is recommended on other days, especially on the weekdays of Advent, Lent, and the Easter season, as well as on other feasts and occasions when the people come to church in large numbers (cf GIRM 66).

d) PROFESSION OF FAITH. On Sundays and solemn feasts, **the Profession of Faith, the Creed,** is said or sung on Sundays and Solemnities by the priest and the people. (cf GIRM 67).

[*NOTA BENE:* After the homily, the sacraments of confirmation, holy orders or matrimony may be conferred. The ceremony for religious profession may also take place after the homily.]

e) PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL. In the general intercessions or prayer of the faithful, **the people exercise their priestly function by interceding for all humankind.** "*By this prayer in which the people are to take part, intercession will be made for holy Church, for the civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all mankind, and for the salvation of the entire world*" (SC 53). It is **introduced and concluded by the celebrant.**

This is followed by the liturgy of the Eucharist. "The liturgy of the Word and liturgy of the Eucharist together form 'one single act of worship';* the Eucharistic table set for us is the table both of the Word of God and of the Body of the Lord"* (ccc 1346; cf SC 56; DV 21).

III. THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The liturgy of the Eucharist **begins with the offertory prayer.** The celebrant goes to the center of the altar and recites the offertory prayer if it is not sung by the people. If there is to be an offertory procession, it takes place now.

and for those who believe in me through their word"



Offertory Procession

"The Most Sacred Eucharistic Sacrifice must be celebrated with **bread and wine**, with which **a small quantity of water** is to be mixed" (c 924 §1). This addition of 'a small quantity of water' is symbolic of the union of divine and human nature in Jesus Christ, and also of the mystical union of the faithful with Christ through his sacrificial death.

1. OFFERTORY PROCESSION. Near the entrance of the church, or wherever it may be most convenient, are placed the bread, wine and water, the gifts to be offered for the sacrifice of the Mass. These **gifts are carried in procession** to the sanctuary entrance. If possible, the ushers bearing the baskets of the collection joins the procession. On certain occasions candles, vases with flowers, altar linens, vestments, fruits, etc. are offered (cf ccc 1351).

As the offertory hymn begins, the procession moves slowly up the middle aisle. The celebrant and acolytes meet the procession at the entrance of the sanctuary. The celebrant receives the gifts carried. He, then returns to the altar and offers to God first the hosts, then the wine, reciting the accompanying prayers (cf GIRM 74).

They are offered "in the name of Christ in the Eucharistic sacrifice in which they will become **his body and blood**. It is the very action of Christ at the Last Supper . . . The presentation of the offerings at the altar takes up the gesture of Melchizedek and commits the

Creator's gifts into the hands of Christ who, in his sacrifice, brings to perfection all human attempts to offer sacrifices" (ccc 1350).

The **offertory procession**, in its various forms, is meant to bring out the fact that the gifts presented at the altar by the priest are **the gifts of the whole community**, of each one of us. Whether there is a procession or not, what matters is that **the exterior offering express our interior sacrifice**, our sincere self-oblation.

We confidently offer these prayers for all our needs and "for the salvation of the whole world," because we know that **our humble offering is going to be transformed into something incomparably more precious**.

The gifts on the altar and the altar itself may be incensed. This is a symbol of the Church's offering and prayer going up to God. Afterwards the deacon or other minister may incense the priest and the people (cf GIRM 75).

After offering the gifts, **the priest washes his hands as a mark of the purity of body and soul** required for the Holy Sacrifice. Then, with extended arms, he invites: "Pray, brethren, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father."

The preparation of the gifts **concludes with the prayer over the gifts**, followed by the eucharistic prayer.

The prayer over the gifts is sung or recited aloud by the celebrant so that the people, by their own "Amen," may join in the praise of God.

"May they be one even as you in me and I in you are one"

2. EUCHARISTIC PRAYER. *The chief elements of the eucharistic prayer are thanksgiving (preface), acclamation, epiclesis, narrative of the institution and consecration, anamnesis, offering, intercessions and final doxology (cf GIRM 79).* The eucharistic prayer is the center and high point of the entire celebration.

a) PREFACE. In the name of the entire people of God, **the priest praises the Father and gives him thanks for the work of salvation or for some special aspect of it** in keeping with the day, feast, or season (cf ccc 1352).

b) ACCLAMATION. United with the angels, the congregation sings or recites the *Sanctus* - "*Holy, holy, holy Lord*" - the seraphims' song of adoration (cf Is 6:3) and "*Blessed is he . . .*" with which the crowd acclaimed Christ as their Messiah (cf Mt 21:9).

c) EPICLESIS. In special invocations the Church **calls on God's power** and asks that the gifts offered may be consecrated (cf ccc 1353).

d) NARRATIVE OF THE INSTITUTION AND CONSECRATION. In the words and actions of Christ, **the sacrifice he instituted at the Last Supper is celebrated** when under the appearances of bread and wine he offered his body and blood, gave them to his apostles to eat and drink, and commanded them to carry on this mystery.

The Holy Spirit, through the priest, **changes our gifts of bread and wine into Christ's own body and blood** (cf ccc 1353). This most sacred action is called *consecration*.

"At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that, **by the words of Christ and the invocation of the Holy Spirit**, become Christ's Body and Blood" (ccc 1333).

Not only does Jesus become truly present on the altar to be our food, but at that very moment his body and blood - **our gifts transfigured into the Victim of Calvary** - are offered to the heavenly Father. By that **double consecration**, the sacrifice of the cross is represented [made present] (cf ccc 1366) and offered anew, and its power of praise, thanksgiving,

intercession and reparation is communicated to us and to the whole Church, in a measure proportioned to the fervor of our offering.

Our devotion is no longer conveyed to God by a lifeless gift, a mere symbol, but by the living Christ who presents to the Father our self-oblation in union with his own wonderful offering by which on Calvary he has redeemed us: he now appears "*before God on our behalf*" (Heb 9:24). The Mass is indeed the great privilege of the Christian.

The great mystery takes place when the priest, repeating the narrative of the Last Supper, pronounces over the bread and wine the words used by Christ when he instituted the Holy Eucharist: "This is my body . . . This is my blood."

After adoration, the priest elevates first the host, then the chalice, so that all may see them, look at them with deep faith and in adoration: "My Lord and my God."

e) ANAMNESIS. In fulfillment of the command received from Christ through the apostles, the Church keeps his memorial by recalling especially **his passion, resurrection, ascension and his glorious return** (cf ccc 1354).

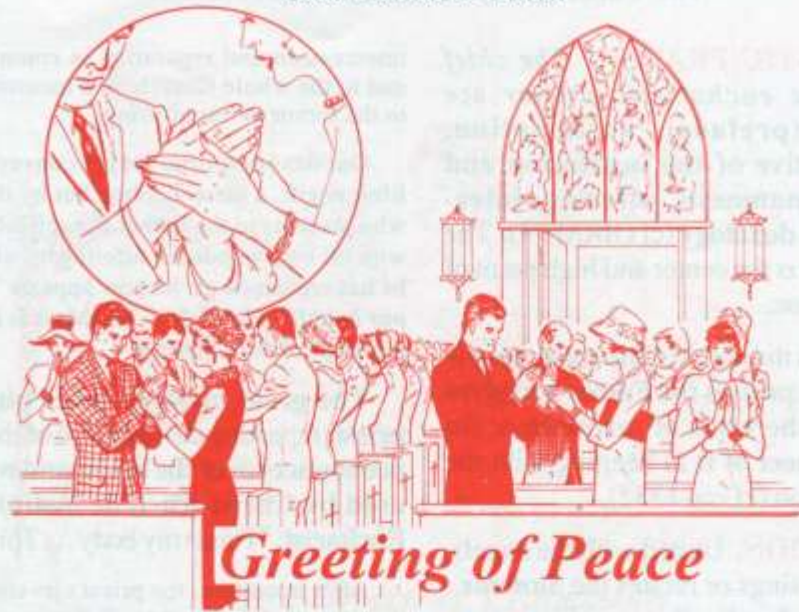
f) OFFERING. In this memorial, the Church - and in particular the assembly - offers the victim to the Father in the Holy Spirit. **The Church's intention is that the faithful not only offer the spotless victim but to learn to offer themselves and daily to be drawn into ever more perfect union with him.**

Since our gift signifies the interior self-oblation, **we are to offer ourselves fervently with Christ and through him** (cf ccc 2100).

g) INTERCESSIONS. When we offer the sacrifice of the redemption we must remember and **intercede for the whole family of God.** We pray for the Catholic Church, in particular for the Holy Father, the bishop of the diocese and all Catholic clergy. We pray in remembrance of **other individuals in need of prayer; we also pray for the faithful departed and, finally, for ourselves** (cf ccc 1354).

The saints in heaven are remembered both before and after the consecration as shining examples with whom we hope to obtain fellowship.

so that the world may believe that you sent me!"



b) FINAL DOXOLOGY. The praise of God is expressed in the doxology which is confirmed and concluded by the acclamation of the people.

All are to listen to the eucharistic prayer in silent reverence and share in it by making the acclamations.

3. COMMUNION RITE

Sacrifice aims at and leads up to friendship and union. At Mass, **Communion is God's answer to our offering.** Through this offering we have expressed our love, our desire to be his. In response God invites us to his table, as his family. Communion is a sacrificial meal; **partaking of the divine Victim we have offered, seals our union with God.** Communion, then, is part of the Mass; and the best way of preparing ourselves for Communion consists in following the Mass consciously, actively and devoutly (cf GIRM 80).

a) LORD'S PRAYER. This part of the Mass begins with the invitation of the celebrant to the faithful to **recite together the Our Father, the prayer that can best dispose the assembly for Holy Communion.**

The celebrant sings or recites, together with the people, the Lord's prayer, omitting the "Amen." After the Lord's prayer, a petition - "Deliver us, O Lord, from every evil . . ." - is made and the people respond with a doxology (cf GIRM 81).

b) RITE OF PEACE. Before they share in the same bread, **the people express their love for one another and beg for peace and unity in the Church and with all humankind.** One appropriate method of extending a sign of peace is to say to your neighbors, "Peace be with you." The form of this rite is left to the conference of bishops to decide in accord with the custom and mentality of the people.

This practice of greeting with a sign of peace is suggested by the words of our Lord:

"Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Mt 5:23-24; cf. ccc 1385).

It also evokes the post resurrection encounter of Jesus with his disciples (cf Lk 24:36; GIRM 82).

c) BREAKING OF BREAD AND AGNUS DEI. During the breaking of the bread, the people recite or sing the *Agnus Dei* ("Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world"). This rite **signifies that in communion we who are many are made one body in the one bread of life which is Christ** (cf 1 Cor 10:17; GIRM 83).

After the breaking of bread the priest prepares himself to receive the body and blood of Christ by praying quietly. The faithful also do this by **praying in silence** (cf GIRM 84).

"Father, I pray for those whom you have given me"



d) RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION.

Taking the Host, the celebrant invites the people to participate in the meal: "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Happy are those who are called to his supper." The congregation responds in humility like the centurion: **Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed** (cf Mt 8:8).

For each communicant *the priest* raises the host a little above the ciborium and says, "**The body of Christ.**" **The communicant answers "Amen"** and receives the host.

The song during the communion expresses the **spiritual union of the communicants**, shows the joy of all and makes the communion procession an act of unity and love. If there is no singing, the antiphon in the Missal is recited either by the people or by the priest himself (cf GIRM 86,87).

e) THANKSGIVING. After Communion, the priest and people may spend some time in **silent prayer**. If desired, a **hymn, psalm or other song of thanksgiving may be sung** by the entire congregation (cf GIRM 88).

f) PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION. In the prayer after communion the **priest petitions for the effects of the mystery just celebrated**, and by their acclamation, "Amen", the people make the prayer their own (cf GIRM 89).

IV. CONCLUDING RITE

At the end of the Mass, the **priest blesses the people**; then he **dismisses them** with one

of the set formulas like: "*The Mass is ended, Go in peace,*" to which the people reply: "*Thanks be to God*" (cf GIRM 90).

This bidding is not an invitation to merely leave the church, but an exhortation to go and live the Mass - that is, to become another Christ, to be able to say with St Paul, "*Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me*" (Gal 2:20). To be like Christ means to love our neighbor as Christ loves and to go about doing good to everybody.

THE RECESSIONAL

After the blessing the congregation stands. **While the recessional hymn is sung, the celebrant and ministers leave the sanctuary in procession.** All are to wait respectfully till the priest has gone back.

EPILOGUE: THE MASS OF OUR LIFE

A Catholic cannot leave the church and then conduct himself or herself as though there had been no Mass. **The Mass is a beginning, which calls for a continuation.** It is an offering, and this implies a **promise of love and fidelity.** The offering must be carried out throughout the day - we must live the Mass (cf ccc 1394).

The Mass is not a mere ceremony. It is **meant to shape our lives.** It will do so if we participate in it consciously and sincerely.

and for those who believe in me through their word"



CONCELEBRATION

WHAT IS CONCELEBRATION?

There is concelebration when **several priests celebrate at the same altar** and offer the same sacrifice, **pronouncing together the words of the consecration**.

1. **Concelebration manifests the unity of the Sacrifice of the Mass**, since many Masses still represent the one Sacrifice of Christ (cf *Ecclesiae Semper*).

2. All priests exercise the **one priesthood of Jesus Christ** (cf OT 2; LG 10). This is true whether they celebrate together or individually. In a concelebrated Mass, even though each priest offers Mass, the unity of this one priesthood is **more clearly manifested**. Concelebration, therefore, has the advantage of **giving external expression to a unity that is always there**.

3. The unity of the whole Church in one sacrifice and one priesthood is especially manifested **when the faithful, too, take part actively as a community in a concelebrated Mass**. This is especially so if the **diocesan bishop is present**. At such a concelebration, with God's ordained ministers and his holy people gathered around his altar for one and the same act of thanksgiving, the unity of the people of God is more clearly shown than in any other liturgical action (cf *Ecclesiae Semper*).

ON WHICH OCCASIONS MAY CONCELEBRATION TAKE PLACE?

1. On **Holy Thursday**, both at the morning Mass of the blessing of the holy oils, and at the evening Mass.

2. At Masses for the **consecration of a bishop, blessing of an abbot and ordination of priests**.

3. At Masses celebrated **during** meetings of bishops and priests, such as **councils, synods, eucharistic congresses**, etc.

4. At the **principal Mass** in churches and oratories if there should be available priests.

5. At **conventual Mass**, and at the principal Mass in churches when the needs of the faithful do not require that all the priests available should celebrate individually (cf GIRM 199, 204).

6. **Priests who are infirm**, and even those **totally blind**, if at least they are able to be seated at an altar, may concelebrate Mass with another priest, the principal celebrant, who is not infirm. However, all must be able to repeat the prayers of the canon of the Mass together with him.

The regulations for concelebration in each diocese are given by the bishop (cf SC 57).

"May they be one even as you in me and I in you are one"

HOLY COMMUNION UNDER BOTH KINDS

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION UNDER BOTH KINDS?"

It is receiving Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist not only **under the form of bread** but also **under the form of wine**.

One who receives Holy Communion under only one kind, either of bread or of wine, receives our Lord Jesus Christ, **whole and entire, with all the gifts and fruits of Holy Communion**.

"Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it is distributed under both kinds. For in this form the sign of the Eucharistic banquet is more clearly evident and clear expression is given to the divine will by which the new and eternal Covenant is ratified in the Blood of the Lord, as also the relationship between the Eucharistic banquet and the eschatological banquet in the Father's Kingdom." (GIRM 281).

As our Lord instituted the sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper by consecrating both bread and wine, the faithful receiving Communion under both kinds can see more clearly the signs of the eucharistic banquet. This is why the Church, on some occasions, but not always, distributes Communion under both kinds.

WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS WAYS OF RECEIVING COMMUNION UNDER BOTH KINDS?

"The Blood of the Lord may be received either by drinking from the chalice directly, or by intinction, or by means of a tube or a spoon" (GIRM 245). As regards distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds to the laity the bishops may exclude Communion with the tube or the spoon where this is not the local custom (cf Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Instruction: *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 25 March 2004, no. 103).

1. Communion under Both Kinds from the Chalice

This method is to be chosen only when it can be distributed without any danger of irreverence towards the Blood of the Lord. The chalice is not to be distributed from one to one another. **A priest or a deacon is to offer the chalice to communicants, one by one.** The minister says *"The Blood of Christ"* and the communicant responds, *Amen* and he gives the chalice to the communicant. He/she drinks a little from the chalice and hands it back to the minister and then leaves. The minister wipes the rim of the Chalice with a purificator. **Communion from the Chalice is offered after receiving the Body of Jesus** (cf GIRM 286; IRS no. 94).

2. Communion under Both Kinds by Intinction

After the celebrant's communion, he gives the chalice and a purificator to the assisting minister and he himself takes the ciborium or the paten with sacred hosts. Each communicant, holding a communion-plate under the chin comes forward to the priest holding the ciborium or the paten, and a minister standing by his side, holding the chalice. **The priest dips a host partly into the chalice and, elevating it says "The Body and Blood of Christ"**. The communicant replies, *Amen*, and receives Communion on the tongue from the priest and then leaves (cf GIRM 287; IRS no. 104).

Communicants who desire to receive Holy Communion under the form bread alone, in the hand or on the tongue, kneeling or standing, should be granted their wish (cf GIRM 160; IRS nos. 90-92).

and for those who believe in me through their word"

EPILOGUE

As one can see from the above, the Catechism by Bp. Louis Morrow underwent quite some changes in the course of going from the original authentic Roman Catholic version to the utterly Novus Ordo version (a different work, rightly given a different title from the first, namely “Our Catholic Faith” [sic], to distinguish it from the original), and furthermore that he was no traditionalist but actually ahead of the game, anticipating Novus Ordo details long before their official introduction.

In the first revision, made for the 1955 Edition, the only thing changed was the new simpler artwork substituted for the original; the text remained exactly the same.

For the second revision, made for the 1958 Edition, little differed but the insertion of several other sections in the Catechism earlier on caused the number of the section to go from 140 to 143 (and commensurate adjustments to the page numbers), but the same artwork was used and only a very few extremely minor adjustments of a proofreading nature made to the text.

The third revision, made especially for the “Silver Jubilee Edition” in 1961, introduced color, but notably also introduced the first truly Novus Ordo element to the Catechism, namely the “Lay Offertory Processional.”

The fourth revision, made especially for the first “Ecumenical Spirit Edition” in 1963, introduced all new drawings, with the priest turned around facing the audience. Even the “Lay Offertory Processional” drawing just introduced was redrawn to be consistent with the style of the others, and to simplify background architecture and clothing styles also subtly more in keeping with the Novus Ordo scheme.

The fifth revision, made for the 1965 Edition, eliminated drawings for all the stages of the Mass that came from the pre-1961 editions, keeping only the “Lay Offertory Processional,” but adding a few new drawings for an “Entrance Rite,” the “Final Blessing,” one for a new subsection on “Concelebration,” and one for another new subsection on “Communion Under Both Kinds.” The text is substantially rewritten to fit the new “theology.”

The editions of the Catechism (the first ones to be titled “Our Catholic Faith”) published from 1968 through 1975 were of portions only and did not include this section.

The final revision, made for the 2004 Edition, retained most drawings included in the 1965 edition (but with altar girls, and the priest’s biretta removed) and significantly revised the text yet again to incorporate extracts from various post-Vatican II documents and renumbered this as section 119 (from 143 in the previous). The “Communion Under Both Kinds” subsection was actually moved to the next section on “Holy Communion” hence the page number gap.